

The Preacher's Monday & A Rock-Like Pillow

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Spurgeon said it well: "The sovereignty of God is the pillow upon which the child of God rests his head at night, giving perfect peace." I agree with this statement with all my heart. I preach this truth and I heartily embrace this doctrine. I love it. No doctrine captivates my heart more and occupies my mind more than God's sovereignty. Nevertheless, for me as a preacher of the gospel, Sunday nights and Mondays are by far the hardest times of the week.

Every preacher, myself included, finishes preaching and at the end of the day (or the night, or the following morning) reflects on the exposition and wishes that he could have done better, or said something clearer, or exalted Christ higher, or made application more piercing. But I want to reflect on something that God has taught me, and is *still* teaching me, that the sovereignty of God is the pillow upon which the *preacher of the gospel* rests his head at night, giving perfect peace knowing that the exposition he preached is done and God *will* most certainly and effectually use His Word according to His sovereign purposes for His glory. God does this not *because* of me or because of my eloquent exposition. It's not about how many commentaries I perused or how many verses I diagrammed in the languages. It's not about my memorable homiletical outline or my nicely-packaged opening and closing illustrations. God uses His Word *in spite of me*, for His glory, by His powerful Spirit, through His Word.

Satan knows when to attack faithful preachers of the gospel. I would assume that many faithful expositors have those sermons when they felt dry in the pulpit, there was a sort of coldness in heart, a lack of connecting with the people, and a certain impotency in the proclamation. Satan loves to whisper this into the preacher's ear and tell him he's not doing any good.

Praise be to the Lord that I can -- and must intentionally -- remember these truths:

1. God sovereignly rules over all things in creation -- including every sermon I give.
2. God promises to use His Word because the power is in the living and powerful Word of God as it goes forth, not in the brilliant exposition that I may preach.
3. God decreed from eternity past -- in His glorious and everlasting councils -- not only every exposition that I will ever preach but also every hearer that will ever listen to every sermon I preach and furthermore, every effect that will ever come from the sermon I herald.
4. God sanctifies me as His child as I continually grow in childlike faith in my Father who comforts His people with radiant beams of divine excellencies in Christ from His Word.
5. God humbles me to continually reinforce in my heart the reality that I am weak and impotent in myself and that I must daily and deliberately cast myself fully upon the mercy of God, the power of Scripture, the glory of the gospel, and the comfort of the Spirit.
6. God will receive all glory through the reading of His Word and the faithful expounding of His Truth. Sermons are not about me. And that's one of the subtle temptations the Evil One darts at the preacher's heart, that every sermon is *about* him. Sermons are about God, pointing to Christ, expounding His

Word, energized by the Spirit, and delivered with passion. God will receive glory regardless how the preacher may feel or how I perceive the message may have been received.

So, again, I conclude where I began that, for the preacher, the sovereignty of God truly is the pillow upon which the preacher really can lay his head at the end of each Sunday, knowing that God gives perfect peace! And for that, I rejoice and rest! It is the Rock-like pillow upon which every minister lays his head.