Divine Sovereignty and Human Responsibility - posted by tjservant (), on: 2009/12/8 13:06

The following excerpt is from "The Father's Will," a sermon first published in 1873 by Charles H. Spurgeon.

Starting with the text Spurgeon was preaching from:

"This is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day" (John 6:39-40).

The two phrases set forth the divine side of salvation and the human side of salvation.

You know, beloved friends, that the general custom is, with the various sects of Christians, to take up one part of the Bible and preach that part, and then it is the duty of all divines on that side of the question not to preach anything but that. Or if they find a text that looks in rather a different direction, these gentlemen are expected to twist it round to suit their creed, it being supposed that only one set of truths can possibly be worth defending, it never having entered into the heads of some people that there can be two apparently irreconcilable truths which nevertheless are equally valuable.

Think not that I come here to defend the human side of salvation at the expense of the divine; nor am I desirous to magnify the divine side of it at the expense of the human; rather would I beseech you to look at the two texts which are together before us, and to be prepared to receive both sets of truths. I think it a very dangerous thing to say that the truth lies between the two extremes. It does not: the truth lies in the two, in the comprehension of both; not in taking a part from this and a part from that, toning down one and modulating the other, as is too much the custom, but in believing and giving full expression to everything that God reveals whether we can reconcile the things or not, opening our hearts as children open their understandings to their father's teaching, feeling that if the gospel were such that we could make it into a complete system, we might be quite sure it was not God's gospel, for any system that comes from God must be too grand for the human brain to grasp at one effort; and any path that he takes must extend too far beyond the line of our vision for us to make a nice little map of it, and mark it out in squares.

This world, you know, we can readily enough map. Go and get charts, and you shall find that men of understanding have indicated almost every rock in the sea, almost every hamlet on the land; but they cannot map out the heavens in that way, for albeit that you can buy the celestial atlas, yet as you are well enough aware there is not one in ten thousand of the stars that can possibly be put there; when they are resolved by the telescope they become altogether innumerable, and so far exceed all count that it is impossible for us to reckon them up in order and say, that is the name of this, and that is the name of that. We must leave them: they are beyond us. There are deeps into which we cannot peer; even the strongest glass cannot show us much more than a mere corner of the starry worlds.

Thus too it is with the doctrines of the gospel: they are too bright for our weak eyes, too sublime for our finite minds to scan, save at a humble distance. Be it ours to take all we can of their solemn import, to believe them heartily, accept them gratefully, and then fall down before the Lord, and pour out our very souls in worshipping him. C.H. Spurgeon

Re: Divine Sovereignty and Human Responsibility - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2009/12/8 13:30

Quote:

I think it a very dangerous thing to say that the truth lies between the two extremes. It does not: the truth lies in the two, in the complete comprehension of both; not in taking a part from this and a part from that, toning down one and modulating the other, as is too much the custom, but in believing and giving full expression to everything that God reveals whether we can reconcile the things or not.

I agree in part to this statement. But there also has to be a "truth that lies between them." God has given men responsibility and free will. Such as the picture of Jacob wrestling with the angel. And overcoming Him. Or Moses praying interceding on behalf of Israel.
There definitely needs to be a balance. But not a throwing away of one truth in favor of another but an embracing of "all that is true."

Re: - posted by tjservant (), on: 2009/12/8 16:56

Quote:
--------------------I agree in part to this statement. But there also has to be a "truth that lies between them."
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I do not believe Spurgeon was denying the fact that there is truth in the middle, just that it is not the only truth.

Just my take on SpurgeonÂ’s comments anyway...

The Bible clearly teaches GodÂ’s sovereignty in salvation alone side manÂ’s responsibility to heed the call and believe. I do not know how or why this is, but I believe Spurgeon is correct when he says the truth lies in embracing both.

Balance is indeed key.

Re: , on: 2009/12/8 17:38

Joh 17:6 I have revealed Your name to the men whom You gave to Me out of the world. They were Yours, and You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word.

Joh 17:8 For I have given to them the Words which You gave Me, and they have received them and have known surely that I came out from You. And they have believed that You sent Me.

Joh 17:12 While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name. Those that You have given Me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition, that the Scripture might be fulfilled.

Joh 6:39 And this is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all which He has given Me I should lose nothing

17:20 And I do not pray for these alone, but for those also who shall believe on Me through their word.

Jesus is praying for two groups of believers. First He prays for those the Father gave Him, the Disciples and none were lost(except Judas) Then He prays for all that would come after and believe. One group chosen, the other group(us) have to believe........Frank