

Sermon Study: Luke 1:57-80

Main Idea:

God's hand is upon the momentary details as well as the unfolding of history... Yet, we must remember that with His sovereign control came the cross.

Problem:

The problem that we are facing today is that we love control. We are all control-freaks to one level are another. It is just a matter of degrees.

- William Henley's famous poem, *Invictus*, cries out that he is in control. It reads:

Out of the night that covers me,
Black as the Pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever gods may be
For my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance
I have not winced nor cried aloud.
Under the bludgeonings of chance
My head is bloody, but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears
Looms but the Horror of the shade,
And yet the menace of the years
Finds, and shall find, me unafraid.

It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll.
I am the master of my fate:
I am the captain of my soul.

The problem with this poem is that it is just wrong. William Henley could not control his fate any more than you can.

Text:

Sovereign Over The Details (Luke 1:57-66)

- The passage is about the fulfillment of a promise. (**Isa. 48:3-5,11 Luke 1:13-14**)
 - o The Lord has done this. He has shown great mercy (**vs. 58**). It is His hand upon John (**vs. 66**). God is the main character!
- It is the celebration of the birth of a child, and circumcision is at its center.
 - o Circumcision is the mark of the covenant. (**Gen. 17:12-14**)
- They name the child John as commanded by the angel (**1:13**).
 - o Also, remember the names of Zechariah, meaning the Lord remembers, and Elizabeth, meaning God's oath. The Lord has brought this couple together to bring about His oath after 400 years of silence, and their names together mean the Lord remembers His oath! God is sovereign over the details.

Sovereign Over The Big Picture (Luke 1:67-80)

- God has planned the end from the beginning! (**Isa. 46:8-11**)
 - o Just look at how many times in this song Zechariah speaks about God's oath, God's covenant, remembering...
- Zechariah first mentions the Davidic Covenant in verse **69-70**, then the Abrahamic in verse **72-73**, and finally, implies the New Covenant in verse **75-77**.
 - o Note: We examined it chronologically Abrahamic, Davidic, New.
- Abrahamic **Genesis 15:17-21**: *Unilateral, covenant made in customary way, promised offspring and land.*
 - o Abrahamic Covenant mentioned 8 times in Genesis: chapters 12, 13, 15, 17, 22, 26, 28, and 35). In fact you could say that all of Genesis is truly tracing out the line of the covenant.
 - o This is the foundation of the Jewish faith. Look at **Psalm 105:7-11**. A thousand years later, they are still holding on to this promise.
- The Davidic Covenant then promised a King. **2 Samuel 7:12-16**.
 - o David sought to build God a house... but God had different plans, and He promised to build David a house.

- **Jeremiah 31:31-34.** The New Covenant – God makes the people ready for the kingdom. (You’ll get much more in depth with this soon- **Hebrews 8**).
- God has planned the end from the beginning, and He has progressively revealed His plans. All of these covenants depended upon no other thing. God has promised to bring them to fruition no matter what. He is in control of the large picture.

Application: God’s sovereignty has freed us to serve Him fearlessly. (**Luke 1:74-75**)

- Examine **Acts 4:23-31** and see how the disciples were inspired and emboldened by God’s sovereignty.

Dorothy Day’s *Conquered*, a response to *Invictus*:

Out of the light that dazzles me,
Bright as the sun from pole to pole,
I thank the God I know to be,
For Christ - the Conqueror of my soul.

Since His the sway of circumstance,
I would not wince nor cry aloud.
Under the rule which men call chance,
My head, with joy, is humbly bowed.

Beyond this place of sin and tears,
That Life with Him and His the Aid,
That, spite the menace of the years,
Keeps, and will keep me unafraid.

I have no fear though straight the gate:
He cleared from punishment the scroll.
Christ is the Master of my fate!
Christ is the Captain of my soul!