

## GOD'S WILL

- God gets whatever he wants whenever he wants because he is Omnipotent, Omniscient, and Sovereign
  - as he wills he does: he does whatever he pleases in heaven and on earth (Psa 115:3; 135:6)
    - he "works all things after the counsel of His will" (Eph 1:11)
- for convenience we speak of God's sovereign, moral, individual, revealed, and permissive wills—but God only has one will
- since God is perfect, his will is perfect: he always makes the best decision among many available options

## SOVEREIGN WILL

- God's sovereign will consists of the decisions he makes that cannot be resisted by men or angels; e.g., allowing sin, the way of salvation, the chosen people of Israel, dispensations, prophetic events, resurrection program, end-time judgments, imprisonment in hades and the lake of fire, new heavens and new earth
  - everything exists because God willed it (Rev 4:11)
- before creation he predetermined in his foreknowledge everything that would happen (Acts 2:23; 4:28; 1 Peter 1:20)
  - he has the right to make these decisions because he is the Creator
    - our opinion was not asked and we have no say in the matter
- most of God's sovereign will is secret: it is hidden from men and can only be discovered after it happens
  - God doesn't tell us everything he knows (Deut 29:29)
- some of his sovereign will has been progressively revealed in the Scriptures (Matt 13:34–35; Rom 16:25–26; Eph 3:3–12)
  - history reveals God's sovereign will for the past; prophecy reveals God's sovereign will for the future
    - God's sovereign will cannot be thwarted, hindered, or frustrated (Dan 4:34–35; Rom 9:19)
      - we have no right to question his sovereign will (Rom 9:20–21)
  - his sovereign will includes both good and evil, always comes to pass, and ultimately leads to God's glory
    - testing, handicaps, and tragedy are all part of God's sovereign will for your life (Exod 4:11; Job 2:10)
  - his sovereign will also includes (1) our predestination as adopted sons (Rom 8:29–30; Eph 1:5; 2 Thess 2:13), (2) our spiritual gifts (1 Cor 12:11; Heb 2:4; cf. 1 Cor 1:1), (3) open doors for ministry (Rom 1:10), (4) his plan for our lives (Acts 13:36), and (5) the predetermined blessing and suffering that comes into our lives (Heb 11:32–38; 1 Peter 3:17)
    - the proper response to God's sovereign will for your life is to humbly accept it and give thanks (1 Thess 5:18).

## MORAL WILL

- God's moral will consists of the decisions he makes that can be resisted by men and angels
- God's moral will consists of the commands and prohibitions that are revealed in the Bible (1 Thess 4:3–6)
  - all of God's moral will is revealed in the Bible and can be understood by both believers and unbelievers
    - it is an expression of his character, touches every aspect of our lives, and is fully revealed in the Bible
- his moral will is not done as fully on earth as it is in heaven ("Thy will be done, On earth as it is in heaven" Matt 6:10)
  - we have to know God's moral will before we can do it (Psa 143:10; Rom 2:17–21)
  - a knowledge of his moral will enables us to walk worthily and to please him in everything (Col 1:9–10)
    - we can ignore, disobey, or resist his moral will—but not without punishment
      - not to know God's moral will is to be foolish (Eph 5:17)