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Sermon Notes

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## **Christ Teaches Divine Sovereignty**

**Matthew 11:25-27**

### I. Earth Out of Step with Heaven

Mysteries of Revelation: A Throne in Heaven

***Revelation 4:2-6 At once I was in the Spirit, and there before me was a throne in heaven with someone sitting on it. 3 And the one who sat there had the appearance of jasper and carnelian. A rainbow, resembling an emerald, encircled the throne. 4 Surrounding the throne were twenty-four other thrones, and seated on them were twenty-four elders. They were dressed in white and had crowns of gold on their heads. 5 From the throne came flashes of lightning, rumblings and peals of thunder. Before the throne, seven lamps were blazing. These are the seven spirits of God. 6 Also before the throne there was what looked like a sea of glass, clear as crystal. In the center, around the throne, were four living creatures, and they were covered with eyes, in front and in back.***

BUT... the earth seems so out of control.

- Somewhere on this planet today, a tyrant will sit in his warroom and plot the destruction of thousands of innocent people by weapons of mass destruction.
- Somewhere in the world today an old man will die in a Muslim village without ever having heard the gospel of Jesus Christ. Somewhere in the world today, an infant will be born with AIDS, acquired from his mother.
- Somewhere in this city today, the parents of a young Hispanic girl are asking questions, "Why, O God did you let our girl die through a tragic error? Why didn't you answer our prayers?"
- Somewhere in this sanctuary, some of you are facing deep questions about God's rule over this troubled earth
- Sometime long ago, our Lord Jesus Christ faced similar heartbreak with the failure of Jewish cities where He lived to repent... and in that case He answered by turning to His Father and praising Him for His sovereign rule:

***“I praise you Father, Lord of heaven and earth...”***

The sovereignty of God is at once the most challenging and the most comforting doctrine in the Scripture

Let us draw near the throne of grace and learn!!!

## II. Overview: Divine Sovereignty and Human Responsibility

A. Christ Denounces Unrepentant Cities (vs. 20-24)

B. Christ Praises God for Sovereignty (vs. 25-27)

C. Christ Invites All Burdened Sinners to Come to Him (vs. 28-30)

Start and finish of this text: human responsibility

Center of this text: Divine sovereignty

Perfect blending together in text... no controversy, no confusion, no cacophany

D. Human Responsibility

1. Korazin and Bethsaida responsible for their unrepentance

2. Jesus appeals to all sinners to come

E. Divine Sovereignty

1. Divine Power: Christ's Miracles

***Matthew 11:20 Then Jesus began to denounce the cities in which most of his miracles had been performed, because they did not repent.***

2. Divine Perception: Supernatural Knowledge of Gentile Cities

***vs. 21 If the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.***

***vs. 23 If the miracles that were performed in you had been performed in Sodom, it would have remained to this day.***

3. Divine Prerogative: NOT to Do Miracles There

Christ was in Tyre and Sidon, and chose not to do those same miracles there. This was His choice, His prerogative, and He exercised it.

4. Divine Praise: Christ Praises Father for Sovereignty

**vs. 25** *"I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children."*

5. Divine Position: Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth

**vs. 25** *"Father, Lord of heaven and earth..."*

6. Divine Preference: Concealing to Some, Revealing to Others

**vs. 25** *"I praise you... because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children."*

7. Divine Pleasure: All Things Done According to God's Pleasure

**vs. 26** *"Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure."*

8. Divine Presentation: Father Commits the Universe to the Son

**vs. 27** *"All things have been committed to me by my Father."*

9. Divine Privacy: No One Knows the Father or the Son

**vs. 27** *"No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son..."*

10. Divine Privilege: The Son Chooses to Reveal the Father to Some

**vs. 27** *"...no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him."*

#### IV. Christ Teaches on Divine Sovereignty (vs. 27)

**vs. 27** *"All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son, and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him."*

Three astonishing statements, especially in light of context: Korazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum

## 8. Divine Presentation: Father Commits the Universe to the Son

**vs. 27 *"All things have been committed to me by my Father."***

Christ is claiming dominion over the entire earth... no one can receive anything except what is given him from God... God has entrusted all things to Christ!!

1. "Committed" = handed over, for sovereign authority... also "entrusted"
2. God the Father entrusted "all things" to Christ
3. The very thing the devil claimed, and said he was offering to Christ

***Luke 4:5-6 The devil led him up to a high place and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. And he said to him, "I will give you all their authority and splendor, for it has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want to."***

But the devil is a liar!

***Psalm 24:1 The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it***

4. God entrusted everything to do with the universe into Christ's hands
  - a. authority over heaven and earth

***Matthew 28:18 "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me."***

***Ephesians 1:22-23 And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.***

- b. authority to forgive sins

***Matthew 9:6 "the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins...."***

- c. authority to judge all people

***John 5:22 Moreover, the Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son that all may honor the Son even as they honor the Father***

- d. authority to rule over God's enemies

***1 Corinthians 15:24-26 Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. For he must***

*reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. 26 The last enemy to be destroyed is death.*

5. Most especially, God has entrusted the elect into Christ's hands
  - a. God's elect are those who have been **given** to Christ
  - b. God has committed them to Christ to bring them safely home to heaven

*John 6:37-39 All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away. 38 For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me. 39 And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all that he has given me, but raise them up at the last day.*

*John 10:27-30 My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me. 28 I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. 29 My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand. 30 I and the Father are one."*

*John 17:1-3 After Jesus said this, he looked toward heaven and prayed: "Father, the time has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you. 2 For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him. 3 Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.*

*John 17:6-7 "I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your word. 7 Now they know that everything you have given me comes from you.*

All of this is what Christ means in Matthew 11 when He says, "All things have been committed to me by my Father."

The universe to rule, and the elect to give them eternal life and bring them safely to heaven

#### 9. Divine Privacy: No One Knows the Father or the Son

*vs. 27 "No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son..."*

1. Greek word: "epignosko"... deep, personal complete knowledge
  - a. people know facts about God

- b. people know facts about Christ
  - c. but they do not know them... with deep, personal, complete relational knowledge
2. This is the goal and treasure of our lives... nothing is worth more than knowing God and His Son Christ

***Jeremiah 9:23-24 This is what the LORD says: "Let not the wise man boast of his wisdom or the strong man boast of his strength or the rich man boast of his riches, but let him who boasts boast about this: that he understands and knows me,***

3. Knowing God is eternal life... this is the very thing no one naturally has

***John 17:3 Now this is eternal life: that they may know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.***

4. BUT God conceals Himself, and cannot be found naturally

***Isaiah 45:15 Truly you are a God who hides himself, O God and Savior of Israel.***

Amazingly, this includes Christ... no one knows the Son except the Father... we don't really know Christ. We know where He was born, we know that He did miracles, we know information about Him. But do we KNOW Him. Christ said no one knows the Son except the Father.

Many Psalms show the struggle we have with a God who hides Himself:

***Psalm 13:1 How long, O LORD? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me?***

Our God hides Himself from His enemies because of their sins and wickedness

Our God hides Himself from believers to cause them to seek Him more aggressively, putting sin and idols away

5. The Father KNOWS His Son... He knows Him completely, and He delights in Him

***Matthew 3:17 And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."***

6. The Son KNOWS His Father... He knows Him completely

***John 17:25 "Righteous Father, though the world does not know you, I know you***

Divine Privacy is one aspect of Divine Sovereignty. You cannot know Him if He does not reveal Himself.

10. Divine Privilege: The Son Chooses to Reveal the Father to Some

**vs. 27 “...no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.”**

1. Praise God that anyone knows Father and Son at all!!!
2. As a wretched sinful race, we could have been closed our forever from knowing God
3. But God sent the Son into the world to reveal His nature to us

**Hebrews 1:1-3 *In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, 2 but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe. 3 The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word.***

**John 14:6-9 *Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. 7 If you really knew me, you would know my Father as well. From now on, you do know him and have seen him." 8 Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us." 9 Jesus answered: "Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father.***

4. However, not everyone gets the same revelation

**vs. 27 “...no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.”**

This is the divine privilege. The Son chooses to reveal God to some, and He reveals Him savingly to His sheep. Not everyone gets the same treatment. Korazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum had a glorious revelation of God's power through the miracles... a better display than what Tyre and Sidon received. And some Jews got an even better revelation... a saving revelation of God the Father and God the Son

**Matthew 16:15-17 *"But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?" 16 Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." 17 Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven.***

This revelation comes only at the divine will. It is those to whom the Son CHOOSES or WILLS to reveal the Father... it is His kingly right and privilege to choose. And He exercises that choice according to His own will and pleasure.

Matthew 11 removes forever the false assumption that Christ must and does reveal the Father equally to everyone. Sodom got no healing miracles, only wrath and judgment. Tyre and Sidon got one healing miracle, but not leading to their repentance. Korazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum got the incarnate Son of God living in their home town, but did not repent. Simon Peter got a direct revelation of the true nature of God and Christ, and it saved his soul.

## IV. Applications

### 1. Be humbled:

This doctrine has the powerful work of humbling the human soul. We recognize that we are not the ones calling the shots, sovereignly determining anything when it comes to knowing God. We cannot choose a greater revelation than what He has chosen to give us. He is a King and rules like a King. Spurn human wisdom which means nothing. Be one of those "little children" to whom God reveals these things.

### 2. Be incredibly joyful

Recognize that, if the Son has revealed the Father to you, and if the Father has revealed the Son to you, you are one of His sheep, you were given to Christ, and nothing in heaven or on earth will prevent you from seeing His glory in heaven.

***John 17:24 "Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.***

### 3. Be expectant: there is yet more to know about God

We don't fully know God the Father or God the Son yet. Christ will continue to reveal the Father to us forever in heaven.

***John 17:25-26 "Righteous Father, though the world does not know you, I know you, and they know that you have sent me. 26 I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them."***

Heaven will thus be a place of great discovery and learning about the Father.

### 4. Be seeking God constantly

This passage reveals the depth of the Triune Godhead... we will NEVER be done knowing God. There's always more to learn about Him, even here on earth. Seek Him with all your heart.

***Psalm 27:7-9 Hear my voice when I call, O LORD; be merciful to me and answer me. 8 My heart says of you, "Seek his face!" Your face, LORD, I will seek. 9 Do not hide your face from me, do not turn your servant away in anger; you have been my helper. Do not reject me or forsake me, O God my Savior.***



5. Be sorrowful for the cities (and people) that reject Christ

The most grievous and tragic thing any city or person can do is receive some revelation from God and ignore it, spurn it, reject it, harden their hearts, and fail to repent. Christ denounced Capernaum, wept over Jerusalem. Paul had great sorrow and unceasing anguish in his heart for his lost fellow Jews.

6. Be steadfast doctrinally: Christ is the only Savior

Nowadays, people are getting criticized for proclaiming that Christ is the only way to God. Even in our own city, a Baptist preacher from the pulpit denied that Christ is the only way to God. But here in this text, Christ says **"No one knows the Father except the Son, and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal Him."**

8. Repent

The whole passage is brought about by the failure to repent of privileged cities like Capernaum. You are also privileged. It is a grave sin to hear the word of God and continue in sin. Repent, even if you are a believer, from all sin in your life. Hate it, fight it, kill it.

9. Be evangelizing constantly

A strong meditation on and belief in the sovereignty of God, far from destroying evangelism, actually empowers it greatly. If the Son chooses to reveal Himself to a Simon Peter, He will be saved. All things have been committed to Christ by the Father... the whole world is HIS. Therefore we must go and make disciples of all nations... and most definitely they will listen!!! Clearly Christ did not think the sovereignty of God and a gospel appeal are mutually exclusive, because He ends with one of the most glorious invitations you will find anywhere!!! **"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."**

10. Delight in God's sovereignty as much as Christ does

Don't resist, don't rebel, don't turn away from the plain meaning of the text. Rather, Praise your Father, who is Lord of heaven and earth, that He rules like a King. Be delighted in the Good News of the Kingdom of God!!

11. Be confident: even in a age of uncertainty, facing financial pressures, sickness, death, wars & rumors of wars... our God sits on His throne in heaven and rules over all things

12. Come to Christ

If you have never trusted Christ, I end this morning the way Christ did

***"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."***