

More Than a Manger #5
The God Who is Sovereign

Word

Scripture Reference

Luke 2:1-7

Discussion Questions

1. In what way have you experienced God's control over your life? Share with the group.
2. God's sovereignty—His right to rule over and control all things—was clearly manifested in the first Christmas. At that time Rome ruled the world with an iron fist, yet it is God who remains in control of the world. His will continued to reign even over a world power: Jesus was born in the town of Bethlehem, a fulfillment of the prophecy in Micah 5:2. Read Luke 2:1-3. There was no mention in the scriptures that either Joseph or Mary knew that God wanted Mary to give birth in Bethlehem. However, it was not a coincidence that they happened to be in Bethlehem when she did give birth. It was God who orchestrated the whole situation because He wanted to reveal His sovereignty to mankind. God's sovereignty is seen in three areas: First, He is sovereign over events (v. 1-4). Who ordered that a census be taken of the whole Roman world (v. 1)? What did the Roman census demand of everyone (v. 3)? What was the reason of Joseph and Mary's journey to Bethlehem (v. 1-4)?
3. God appoints government leaders. You may not agree and may question His choices, but you need to trust Him. You may wonder why God would orchestrate such a thing to teach you a lesson of trust, but trusting God is not about the outcome; trusting God is about who He is. Discuss how the seemingly unfairness of the Roman government affected God's plan for the birth of the Savior. Think about an episode in your life where you were treated unfairly, yet it turned out to be something constructive. How would you credit it to God's sovereignty over your life's events? Discuss.
4. Secondly, God is sovereign over time (v. 5-6). The timing of Joseph and Mary's journey to Bethlehem seemed to be all-wrong. Why was the journey particularly hard for Mary (v. 5)? When did Mary actually give birth, according to the Scripture? Wondering about when something is going to happen is a waste of time when you can actually trust God, because His timing is based on His love for us. What does Isaiah 60:22 assure us about God's time? Share how a situation in your life was resolved according to God's time. Are you faithfully praying for something? How does waiting for God's perfect time give you the confidence to not give up?
5. Lastly, God is sovereign over all circumstances (v. 7). When the Savior of the world was about to be born, there was no available room in the inn. All rooms were taken before Joseph and Mary came to Bethlehem. Do you think God could have prepared a more fitting place for Jesus to be born? God, in His sovereignty and infinite wisdom, had already prepared a kind innkeeper who sacrificed his animals' shelter to house Joseph and Mary, way before time began. God ordained the circumstances—there was a room with a bassinet, a manger, which was a perfect place to put a baby. How do you react when life throws you in a unique situation? Do you accept it as a challenge and with a grateful and contented heart? How has God worked out a circumstance in your life that confirmed His presence and sovereignty? Share and discuss.

Walk

In the story of the incarnation, God proved Himself as sovereign over events, time, and circumstances—three areas that most people worry about. Are there worries in your life concerning events, time and circumstance? Would you trust the Lord and commit them into His hands with confidence that He will see you through, because He is your sovereign God? Honor Him as sovereign God as you celebrate this Christmas.

Worship & Prayer

Father, in times that are favorable to me I find it so easy to believe that You are the God who is in control. But in this time of my life where hardships are the norm, I find it so difficult to trust You, to trust that everything is in Your hands. Forgive me, Lord, for the times I doubted. Give me the strength of heart to hold on to the hope I have in Jesus Christ that Your will is above all else, that Your purpose remains, that You remain the same now and forever, and that in my surrender to Your perfect will and Your perfect time, You are glorified. In Jesus' name. Amen.