

# God is Truly Sovereign

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Preacher: William Philip

[ 0 : 00 ] We're going to read now in our Bibles, and if you'd turn with me to the Old Testament, to 1 Samuel, 1st book of Samuel, and we're looking at chapter 4 tonight.

We're beginning a little series in 1 Samuel 4 to 7, a little story that stands there in this book, all about the ark of the covenant of God, the ark that is lost and then found again.

So I'm calling this little series Raiders of the Lost Ark. Some of you might be old enough to remember the film version, but this is far more exciting and certainly far more true.

We're going to read just from the end of chapter 3, 1 Samuel 3, just at verse 19. That just sets the scene as Samuel, the young man Samuel, is called by the Lord and really begins his ministry, a renewal of the word of God among the people of God in Israel.

Samuel grew, says verse 19, and the Lord was with him and let none of his words fall to the ground. And all Israel, from Dan to Beersheba, knew that Samuel was established as a prophet of the Lord.

[ 1 : 18 ] And the Lord appeared again at Shiloh. For the Lord revealed himself to Samuel at Shiloh by the word of the Lord. And the word of Samuel came to all Israel.

What an anticipation there is as you come to those words. After the bleakness of all that's gone before in the book of Judges.

The recovery of the word of God. The beginning of a new power at work among God's people. In the ministry of Samuel. And that's really what makes what follows here so remarkable.

Now Israel went out to battle against the Philistines. They encamped at Ebenezer and the Philistines encamped at Aphek. The Philistines drew up in a line against Israel.

And when the battle spread, Israel was defeated by the Philistines. Who killed about 4,000 men on the field of battle. And when the troops came to the camp, the elders of Israel said, Why has the Lord defeated us today before the Philistines?

[ 2 : 22 ] Let us bring the ark of the covenant of the Lord here from Shiloh. That it may come among us and save us from the power of our enemies. So the people sent to Shiloh and brought from there the ark of the covenant of the Lord of hosts.

Who was enthroned on the cherubim. And the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas were there with the ark of the covenant of God. As soon as the ark of the covenant of the Lord came into the camp, all Israel gave a mighty shout so that the earth resounded.

And when the Philistines heard the noise of the shouting, they said, What does this great shouting in the camp of the Hebrews mean? And when they learned that the ark of the Lord had come into the camp, the Philistines were afraid.

For they said, A God has come into the camp. And they said, Woe to us! For nothing like this has happened before. Woe to us! Who can deliver us from the power of these mighty gods?

These are the gods who struck the Egyptians with every sort of plague in the wilderness. Take courage and be men, O Philistines, lest you become slaves to the Hebrews as they have been to you.

[ 3 : 31 ] Be men and fight. So the Philistines fought. And Israel was defeated. And they fled every man to his home.

And there was a very great slaughter. For there fell of Israel 30,000 foot soldiers. And the ark of God was captured.

And the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, died. A man of Benjamin ran from the battle line and came to Shiloh the same day with his clothes torn and with dirt on his head.

When he arrived, Eli, that's the high priest, was sitting on his seat by the road watching, for his heart trembled for the ark of God. And when the man came into the city and told the news, all the city cried out.

When Eli heard the sound of the outcry, he said, What is this uproar? And the man hurried and came and told Eli. Now Eli was 98 years old.

[ 4 : 33 ] And his eyes were set so that he could not see. And the man said to Eli, I am he who has come from the battle. I fled from the battle today. And he said, How did it go, my son?

He who brought the news answered and said, Israel has fled before the Philistines. And there has also been a great defeat among the people. And your two sons also, Hophni and Phinehas, are dead.

And the ark of God has been captured. As soon as he mentioned the ark of God, Eli fell backward from his seat by the side of the gate.

And his neck was broken and he died. For the man was old and heavy. He had judged Israel 40 years. Now his daughter-in-law, the wife of Phinehas, was pregnant, about to give birth.

And when she heard the news that the ark of God was captured, and that her father-in-law and her husband were dead, she bowed and gave birth, for her pains came upon her.

[ 5 : 37 ] And about the time of her death, the woman attending her said to her, Do not be afraid, for you have borne a son. But she didn't answer or pay attention. And she named the child Ichabod, saying, The glory has departed from Israel, because the ark of God had been captured, and because her father-in-law and her husband.

And she said, The glory has departed from Israel, for the ark of God has been captured. Amen.

And may God bless to us his word. Well, let's turn to 1 Samuel chapter 4, page, whatever it is, 227, I think, in the church Bibles.

If I had to have a text this evening, I think it would be the question that you see there in verse 3 of 1 Samuel 4. Why has the Lord defeated us today?

We're going to spend the next few Sunday evenings looking at this little section of 1 Samuel. As I said, it's exciting. It's an extraordinary story, really, this story of the raiders of the lost ark.

[ 6 : 55 ] And certainly, as I said, more exciting than Indiana Jones, but much more truthful, because this is a story that's actually true. This is real history. Don't confuse this with Hollywood fiction.

But of course, it is also more than just history, isn't it? Because this is history with a message. The books of 1 and 2 Samuel are part of what we call the former prophets, beginning with Joshua, going right through to the end of 2 Kings.

And Samuel himself is the first in a long line of prophets that God raised up in Israel to lead God's people to speak for God into their lives.

So this is a prophetic word. It's a word which the New Testament tells us above all, therefore is written actually for us, for the Christian church today.

It's for the age in which we live, first and foremost. These last days, as Jesus called them. The days when his kingdom is now reaching out way, way beyond the boundaries of Israel, right to the very end of the whole earth, through, of course, the gospel of the risen Lord Jesus.

[ 8 : 08 ] So actually, it is a very contemporary story because it tells us, doesn't it, about the very present assault of enemies against the heart of God's kingdom presence here on this earth.

That's what this story is about. Then it was about the Ark of the Covenant, which contained God's eternal word. It contains the tablets of the covenant, the gospel of the Old Testament, if you like. But today, of course, it is as the gospel as we know it. The gospel ultimately revealed in the Lord Jesus Christ. And it is the gospel which causes God's power and presence to be known in this world.

And therefore, it is the gospel against which there will always be the same relentless attack by enemies, the same assaults by those who hate everything that God's presence in this world represents.

And that's going on all the time around us. Just this week, some of you may also have read about a minister in Scotland who was in the news because the pupils in his school had a vote to try and oust him as chaplain in that school because he would not support gay marriage in flagrant denial of Christian teaching.

[ 9 : 27 ] And I heard about another minister to whom the same thing happened not that long ago. He'd served the school for 25 years as a chaplain but was pushed out on this issue. And when he protested, all the service he'd done to the school for 25 years, relentlessly, it counted for nothing.

And when he pointed out to them that the imam, who had a far more extreme view about these matters of sexuality than he ever did, was still welcome into the school, that also had absolutely no

effect.

And that just demonstrates, doesn't it, the utter confusion in our culture today which is so self-contradictory in its so-called love of tolerance. But it also demonstrates very clearly to us that there will always be those who most bitterly oppose the gospel because they are bitterly opposing the one true God.

Because it is the one true God, the truly sovereign God, who is most threatening to the hearts of human beings who want to rule their own lives. It's not false gods, it's not idols who are really threatening to people's autonomy.

They can always be tamed, they can be contained, they can be controlled one way or another so as not to be too troublesome to the autonomous self-rule that each human being really wants to have over their own life.

[10:47] But it is always, friends, always in the end, a very big mistake to underestimate the true gospel of God and to underestimate the true God of the true gospel.

And that's what this story in 1 Samuel is all about and reminds us of so very clearly. And these Old Testament stories, by the way, don't dismiss them. They are so vitally important for us because without them, we will never have a true doctrine of God.

We'll never understand that true way of looking at God which the whole of the New Testament presupposes. These stories teach us about God, about his kingship, about his kingdom and about how he is going about bringing his kingdom rule to the very uttermost parts of this earth.

So whenever you read a Bible story in the Old Testament or indeed any part of scripture, you need to ask yourself these right questions. What is it teaching us about that great goal of God and his kingdom?

What does it tell us about God's grace and his favor, his promises and his commands? What does it tell us about people's responsibilities to obey him and to follow him? And what does it teach us about the blessings that follow that obedience and also what does it teach us about the chastisement that follows disobedience and unbelief?

[12:12] And it's that latter thing which these stories here in 1 Samuel 4-6 are teaching us so very forcefully and so very necessarily so that we will be in no doubt about who and what our God, the God of the Bible, really is.

He is truly sovereign and unique and holy and therefore at times he can be a very disturbing God to be around.

Well, to understand the message we need to understand a bit of the background of what's going on here. 1 Samuel begins at a time of great upheaval for God's people straight after the time of the judges.

We studied that some year or two ago. That was a time really of national anarchy. Long after Moses and Joshua had gone, everything that we read Moses predict in the book of Deuteronomy in fact came to pass and Israel were in a very bad place indeed.

The book of Judges ends with these words, In those days there was no king in Israel. Everyone did that which was right in his own eyes. Well, we in our country still do have a queen who's 92 this weekend.

[13:28] I personally thank God for her longevity. We have a government which is relatively stable. but still those words are not a bad description really are they of western society in the 21st century.

Do what is right in your own eyes. And as well as no king to carry God's authority and his lordship there was something else which so often goes along with anarchy in society.

Look at 1 Samuel 3 verse 1. The word of the Lord was rare in those days. The word of God was not spoken and not heard.

And so what we see here is a pretty bleak picture. There is no evidence of God's rule among his people and there is no evidence of God's word. So these are dark days.

But of course the whole point of the book of Samuel is that God was working. God is working quietly mysteriously but he is at work.

[14:33] He is at work to restore his word. That's what the first three chapters of 1 Samuel are all about. Raising up Samuel the young man the prophet to speak God's word to his people to guide them once again into God's truth.

And God is at work to bring a king. His king David ultimately a man after his own heart to rule his people in righteousness. That by the way is what the little book of Ruth is really all about stuck

between Judges and 1 Samuel.

The whole point of the book comes at the very very end where it explains to us that it's all working towards the birth of this one David who will be a king after God's own heart. So God is at work and that work is just beginning to be seen.

By the end of chapter 3 things are wonderfully hopeful aren't they? Look at verse 21. the Lord appeared again at Shiloh. The Lord had been absent from his people for so long. Even in the midst of a very corrupt religious establishment which you read about in chapter 2 God's word once again is being heard and revealed through Samuel.

So when you get to the end of chapter 3 there is great expectation isn't there? Look at the first line of chapter 4 and compare it with the first line of chapter 3.

[15:57] The word of the Lord is coming now to all Israel where previously the word of the Lord was rare unheard. And so you expect don't you to turn the page and to begin chapter 4 and think everything's got to be getting better from here.

Things can only get better. Well we know how true that is. chapter 4 begins with a story of absolute disaster.

And so the question arises what is going on? And that's a question that even today in the Christian church we find ourselves so often asking isn't it? When there are promising signs when things seem to be happening when perhaps a breakthrough is coming for the gospel in a particular place in a church in a group in a nation and then all of a sudden bang it all falls flat.

And we ask ourselves well what is God doing? And what we have to learn is that God is working his purpose out. But we also need to learn that God works his purpose out his way.

And we also need to learn that God will not be pushed around. God will not be pressed into quick fixes for the sake of his people who want something snappy.

[17:15] And God is not content to do small things like that. God's work is a long term work. It's a thorough work. And he is doing something which his people will see at last is far greater far bigger far more far reaching than they could ever have imagined.

And we need to understand that. And we also need to understand that God God is a holy God. He's an awesome God. He is a God of grace and mercy. But his mercy must be a just mercy.

God will not take shortcuts. Because if he does his people might fail to see him as he really is. His people might desperately underestimate him.

And that can be calamitous. And so these chapters if they teach us anything they teach us this never underestimate your God the God of Scripture. And first of all this chapter chapter 4 reminds us forcibly that God is truly sovereign.

Our God the God of the Bible is a sovereign God. And that means he cannot and he will not be used. Not by enemies but nor even by those who name him as their God and who are his favored people his Israel his household of faith his own church.

[18:42] And this chapter leaves us in no doubt whatsoever. We must never think that even we as Christian people that we can contain or that we can somehow control the God of Scripture.

Let's look at this story then and see what we are to learn about God. What is going on people's question there in verse 3 really is the key question isn't it? Why has the Lord defeated us today before the Philistines?

You see there they know their doctrine don't they? They know that God is a sovereign God so if they're defeated it must be God's doing. But they also know that it's Philistines who are meant to get defeated by God isn't it?

Remember all those stories in Judges about Samson and Gideon and all of that? And so it just it seems so strange. That's why after the first defeat in verse 3 they decide actively to bring God much more into the center of the picture.

Let's get the Ark of the Covenant of God. He'll be the one who'll save us from our enemies. At first sight that seems like exactly the right thing to do. That's what Moses used to do isn't it?

[19:56] You read back in Numbers chapter 10 for example Moses would go out and the Ark would go before the people and he would say arise O Lord and let all your enemies be scattered and that's what happened.

And that's why in verse 5 when they see the Ark coming into the camp there's this great confident shout. Victory is here! And yet this time again there is absolutely no scattering at all.

Now the Philistines look at verses 7 and 8 they were scared enough weren't they when they heard this shout and knew the Ark was coming. Their theology is a bit dodgy but they knew something of the history at least vaguely they're a bit wrong aren't they?

The plagues were in Egypt they weren't in the wilderness they've got a bit of a sort of vague understanding it's just like people who go to Ari at school and have a bit of a vague understanding of God and things like that but not really much but when trouble strikes well in a crisis they rack their brains don't they?

What was that I learned about God in Ari at school? I must pray and the Philistines were genuinely worried by this so all they could do was muster themselves verse 9 be men and fight do everything they can but they went into that battle absolutely terrified and yet to their absolute surprise once again they completely righted the Israelites a slaughter verse 10 30,000 infantrymen killed and verse 11 the ark captured and if the Philistines were surprised my goodness the Israelites were absolutely shocked what is going on?

[ 21 : 37 ] well what was going on is that God was teaching them something that they desperately had to learn about himself and about themselves a very very hard lesson indeed that he their God the real God of scripture is not just some fairy godmother he is a sovereign God he will not be used even by his own people he cannot and will not be contained or controlled the first thing to note is that a truly sovereign God cannot ever be contained by man they thought they could contain the Lord of hosts contain him within their religion as though you could possess God's kingdom power even when they had no real love for his kingship and didn't really want to serve him but we can have his power in his ark but you see that is so wrong because real kingdom faith means real relationship with the

Lord who is your king and that relationship can't be substituted by any amount of religion or religious paraphernalia it's no good talking about the ark of the covenant of the Lord and taking that into baton where all the time you've been spitting in the face of the God whose covenant is in that ark by the way you live as if as if somehow just by having the ark of God the sign of God's presence you could contain him and constrain all the power of God and put it to your use that's like constantly showing everybody your wedding photographs and treasuring your wedding rings and sending lots of flowers at anniversaries and yet all the time just committing adultery those things can never make a real marriage can they they can never make a marriage real and lasting marriage is not contained in the ring the ring doesn't mean a thing without the reality of faithfulness if you read the first couple of chapters of first

Samuel there you'll see just how far away the people's hearts were from God just how corrupt their whole religious life was the chief priests the ring leaders Eli's sons Hophnius Phineas were worthless men who did not know the Lord not at all and the rest of chapter two speaks about their appalling behavior and the people simply had the leaders that they deserved and Eli their father well he was a weak man a feeble man he gave protests feebly but then just gave up and so what happened was what so often happens in the life of God's people the religious trappings became the things that really mattered lots of religion but then just go and do as you please they loved the ark but they ignored completely the God of the ark and they scorned his ways they convinced themselves that as long as they still had the language of faith as long as they still had the trappings of religion well of course

God will be fooled to be on our side he'll come out to play when we want him he'll do what we want he'll bless us he'll favor us as soon as we go into battle and that's so common isn't it that is that's something that's so basic to the human heart it just reverses the way things truly ought to be that God is Lord and we serve him but the natural drift and tendency of the human heart always is to say no we are number one and God if there is a God is there to serve me the astonishing thing is that we can fool ourselves so much of the time into actually believing that's the case and living as though it were the case and that's the mark of all merely human religion it wants a God who is contained in regulations in trappings in ceremonies rituals whatever so that he can't really threaten our lives with all that sort of troublesome interference if we let him out of his box but nevertheless a God who can be called on when we want him just like the genie of

Aladdin's lamp rub it and up he pops to do what you want that's exactly what is happening here in this story God is contained neatly quite literally in that box in the ark to be ignored most of the time but wheeled out and called upon in times of trouble that is just like so many people today isn't it even in even in Christian churches God's there to be ignored pretty much or serve nominally until a

crisis comes and you pull him out and become all very devotional it's so typical of the church's behavior so often God's people have not changed very much in the 3,000 years of these events happened we still love to have a God who's contained a God who'll serve us happen in so many different ways so many different stripes and flavors sometimes it's the sacraments you see that in some churches like the church of Lone quite literally actually in the Roman church the power of [ 27 : 03 ] God is locked up in a box with a light with a sacrament you ring there some people it's very opposite of the Roman church so before you talk about that sometimes it's people who have signed as a pound Protestant theology and they think oh that's what'll make God to be on my side he's almost as reformed as I am sometimes it's the absence of ministers and the presence of hats that people think bring the real power in the Christian church sometimes it's particular spiritual gifts or the coolest of spiritual songs that will release it in our midst but friends these and many other things that we tend to think today are so foolish and make us just as foolish as the Israelites of Samuel's day if we think that there is any way that we can contain

God by our particular favored religious trappings even the very best ones even the most biblical ones that God himself gave to his people could not contain God's power with them if their hearts were far from him and the truth is you simply cannot share his kingdom power if you have no love for his kingly person and if Israel couldn't contain and use God even within the religious trappings that God himself had given them the covenant was God's own idea by the way if they couldn't do that how much less can we think that we could ever possess God's power just because we make a fuss of our cherished religious trappings or procedures or whatever they are even if they are in and of themselves good and true and right at best these things are all things to point us to the truth and a reality of

God himself to lead us into knowledge of him and fellowship with him not as a substitute for him never as a means of containing God so we need to be warned about that this tells us so very plainly that God will not be mocked he is a real sovereign he can't be contained even within his own covenant signs they're worthless if the covenant faithfulness they represent are being ignored you can't replace being taken up with the Lord himself just by being taken up with the things of God God will never be contained even in the best practices and disciplines that he gives to his people to help them and to lead them to him and we need to recognize it's possible for us just to pay lip service to these things at heart to be just like these people ignoring him we have to be so careful about that that's why sometimes there are people who seem to be on the outside so very devoted to the church and to

Christ and yet sometimes when a crisis comes into their life everything absolutely collapses and falls apart and you see that reveals the truth that their faith their trust their love was not really in the Lord himself but it was just in those things they thought they could contain God's power by those things and keep him on side not so now you see brings us to the second thing because the real reason that we want to contain God within our sort of manageable religion is really because we want to control him but a truly sovereign God cannot and will not ever be controlled by man the Israelites here wanted to control the Lord of hosts they thought they could presume upon their kingdom promises even when there was no obedience even when there was no submission to his commands and his kingly rule that's why some human beings love religion because they love to try and contain

God within their rituals within their practices within their devotion whatever it is the do's and don'ts of their particular religious subculture because that helps us to forget the real demands of God's gospel and his kingdom upon our lives and it helps us forget that though God's call is a great call of grace he calls us to respond and to love him and to follow him and to do it his way see the answer to their bemused question in verse three why has this happened it's absolutely plain if only they'd read their Bibles God's God's covenant is a call of grace but it is also a calling always always that makes demands that we not see that nearly every single study in the book of Deuteronomy that I love him with all their hearts and mind and strength but they're to show that love by their obedience and

[ 32 : 29 ] Jesus says exactly the same thing over and over if you love me you'll keep my commandments you won't ignore me and do the opposite of what I say and their Bible would have told the people that disobedience would lead them to exactly this kind of defeat as a chastisement because God is a loving father he disciplines his children he doesn't want them to think wrongly and therefore to go away from him we saw it didn't we in Deuteronomy chapter 28 and so on if you to fall

into the hands of your enemies plain there in black and white in their Bibles in the Ark of the Covenant if they read it they would know it's no good just doing more sacrifices better sacrifices great shouts of this or that that's not what God wants it's humble hearts it's penitent hearts it's the man who trembles at my word that

I honor says the Lord it's not the one who's proud of their sound theology it's not the one who's proud of their superior spirituality it's not the one who wears the colorful robes has the cleverest prayers all of these things it's not the church with the smartest buildings or the greatest reputation it's a real warning isn't it you can have all the gospel trappings all the evangelical credentials and paraphernalia and be left asking the question why has God let us be defeated but God won't bless a people whose hearts are disobedient to his kingdom rule who forget that he is a truly sovereign God who begin to think that they can contain him and command him and control him instead of the very opposite of what it should be that they're humbly seeking him and submitting to him and looking to him for his leadership and his guidance and that's the lesson that

Israel learned very plainly and very painfully in this chapter you cannot control God like that Leviticus 26 verse 17 says if you will not listen to me I will set my face against you and you shall be struck down by your enemies in their Bibles possession of the ark of the covenant possession of the gospel revelation which was within it is not a guarantee of God's presence and his blessing it's not possessing the gospel and knowing the gospel that will save you Jesus says it's what you do with it it's obeying it it's submitting your life to it your heart to it it's not Lord Lord that counts as Jesus it's doing the will of my father

I wonder if some of us this evening need to take that word very very seriously ponder it in our hearts ask ourselves is that true of me it's not possession that guarantees God's presence but in this case it was withdrawal of the ark that signified so very clearly God's absence and his power against them because he was still present but no longer in blessing now in judgment and you see when you think you can control God to bring blessing no matter what you think of him no matter how you disregard his sovereignty you will discover a terrifying truth not only is it impossible to have his blessing that way instead what you find is that you inevitably face the other side of his covenant which is his judgment and his wrath and that is what Israel experienced here and verse 18 tells us that Eli when he heard it and saw it he understood and that is what killed the old man he keeled over overweight on his stool and his neck snapped it was a pathetic end wasn't it for Eli

Eli was a decent man Eli was an orthodox man but like far far too many decent orthodox churchmen and clergymen many of them in the churches today he was weak he hadn't pressed the truth of God into the life of his own family far less of his people back in chapter 2 God said to Eli you've been guilty of putting your sons before me why do you honor your sons above me you've put your reputation with your family and with the church above fidelity to the truth but now in verse 18 you see the full horror of it has hit home the horror of God's glory departing and you see there that eclipses for Eli even the death of his family because he knows it's the mention of the capture of the ark that kills him tragic isn't it it's tragic when it's only through such terrible judgments at the hand of [ 38 : 05 ] God that at last the penny drops and you realize the real truth the problem is it's often that way isn't it it's often only when God has had to chasten us hard that the penny does drop and we realize and we finally learn that lesson that God must come first even above family above reputation above wealth above progress many of us have found that haven't we it's through those very painful lessons sometimes only through those that we finally learn so there's a real warning to us here because we are the same people of God he is the same God and it is possible the Bible teaches us that by living so as to forget that he is truly a sovereign Lord and by trying to domesticate God by trying to contain him and control him in our religious boxes it is possible to grieve him away from us still that wasn't so what is

Paul saying in Ephesians 4 when he says do not grieve the spirit of God what is Jesus the risen Lord saying to the seven churches don't grieve me away it's possible and this chapter says to us friends don't do that don't do that don't underestimate the God of the Bible he will not be used even by his own people his church he will not be contained like a genie of the lamp and he will not be controlled like a whipping boy who is here to serve us at our beck and call God is truly sovereign I will not share my glory with another he says look at verse 22 it's tragic the glory has departed a tragic truth made a permanent witness in the name of poor fatherless son of

Phineas and it's a warning isn't it to Christian people don't presume upon God be careful don't relegate God behind all the other things in your life behind your family your sons your friends your

career don't do it God is truly sovereign he must be Lord and King with first call over your life and my life it's a warning to Christian churches don't presume that just keeping up a show of evangelicalism will fool God he sees he knows and a time can come when he says too late the glory is departing you travel around this country today and almost every city and every town you will see empty churches you'll see churches falling down you'll see churches changing to pubs and restaurants and flats and all of these things just like that name of

Phineas's son all of these things are living witnesses to a glory that has departed from a people that have presumed upon God our God the God of Scripture is a truly sovereign God he will not be used you and I can never contain him never control him don't ever think that do not underestimate the God of the Bible the chapters that follow will teach us that it's a real warning to any who would be enemies of the progress of God's kingdom on earth absolutely you can't do that but this chapter is a reminder to us to the church to those of us who name his name as our God to those of us who call ourselves his it's a reminder of what it really means that God is truly sovereign so that we will learn to kneel humbly before him always so that we won't find ourselves of people asking that question in verse three why why has

God defeated us never underestimate our God let's pray almighty God who shows to them that are in error the light of thy truth to the intent that they may return into the way of righteousness grant unto all of us in this fellowship of Christ church that we may turn away from things contrary to our profession and follow all things as are agreeable to our profession through our Lord Jesus Christ Amen Hese heaven