



# BANNER of *Love* MINISTRIES

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## Is God in Control?

### Godhead or Figurehead?

For some time now, we have been hearing so called revival leaders and teachers making the frightening proclamation that God is not in control. Many pastors have ignored the rant assuming it's either a rattle from the lunatic fringe or a misinterpretation by a critic. However, as crazy as it sounds, it is actually a not so carefully thought out doctrine originating from the Hyper Grace side of the church that is quickly becoming "mainstream." In this article I want to examine a few of the outrageous claims and twists on Scripture that are undermining the God of the Bible and rewriting the Christian faith. If you care about your God given call and destiny, it would be wise for you to read and make sure you are not misled by the subtlety and celebrity status of those peddling this latest "revelation."

### In Charge but Not in Control?

The argument is generally made that God is sovereign, but not in control of what happens on earth. He is "in charge but not in control." The meaning of the word "Sovereign" is changed to make it merely a title rather than a functioning role, sort of like the queen of England. Except that she could intervene if she wished. God, on the other hand, cannot act since He has given up His authority to these churchmen. And no matter how ludicrous it sounds, it seems to escape their notice that the terms King, Ruler, Master, Head, Dominion, all likewise imply more than ownership, but also an overarching influence and control. However, this is no longer acceptable to them, since their God is too nice to let bad things happen or allow human beings to suffer. Therefore, they have decided to give Him an out, while they come up with a scheme to explain His Old Testament vengeance and genocidal tendencies. Of course, they will also have to find a way to explain His outbursts in the New Testament as well, such as the following:

*"Then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains, and those who are in the midst of the city must leave, and those who are in the country must not enter the city; because these are days of vengeance, so that all things which are written will be fulfilled. Woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days; for there will be great distress upon the land and wrath to this people; and they will fall by the edge of the sword, and will be led captive into all the nations; and Jerusalem will be trampled under foot by the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled." Luke 21:21-24*

In this passage, Jesus is affirming the words of the prophets and declaring the destruction of Jerusalem and millions of Jews including pregnant women and babies. But for some reason they are not bothered by this since it was God's wrath on the Jews. How convenient. And besides, most of them are also into Preterism and Hyper Grace, so they are content to throw all of God's outbursts of wrath, including those in the Book of Revelation, into the time frame of the first century AD or thereabouts. This was the time when God was getting it all out of His system and coming around to a more civil and loving approach to discipline. Of course, since 70 AD is nearly 40 years after the Cross, and 95 AD much later still, there is a little problem with their timeline. It seems that even after Jesus came presenting a much more "complete picture of God" than the angry vengeful One of the Old Testament, He still found ways to let go once in a while. Ananias and Saphira seemed to meet the same fate as Uzzah when he touched the Ark, and Elymas was made blind by the Apostle of Grace and the God who never puts sickness on anyone. And then there is Herod in Acts 12, who was struck by an angel of the Lord and eaten by worms. These are ghastly acts for such a nice God, are they not? But then since He was no longer in control, who can we attribute them to. Perhaps the early church did it with Jesus' authority, in which

case we have to conclude that they were not aware of the correct theology of Jesus. That would explain however, much of the other inconsistencies in their writings with the theology of niceness unveiled by Jesus. Perhaps it is time to sanitize the whole New Testament and come up with a Jeffersonian alternative. Perhaps it could be called "The Theology of Jesus Bible." In any event the following Scriptures and many more will have to be expunged.

*"For the wrath of God **is** (Present tense) revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness..." Rom 1:18*

*"And for this reason **God will send upon them a deluding influence** so that they might believe what is false, in order that they all may be judged who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness." 2 Thess 2:11*

*"For he who eats and drinks, eats and drinks judgment to himself, if he does not judge the body rightly. For this reason **many among you are weak and sick, and a number sleep**. But if we judged ourselves rightly, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are disciplined by the Lord in order that we may not be condemned along with the world." 1 Cor 11:29-32*

*"For we know Him who said, "VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY." And again, "THE LORD WILL JUDGE HIS PEOPLE." It is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God." Heb 10:30-31*

*"For certain persons have crept in unnoticed, those who were long beforehand marked out for this condemnation, ungodly persons who turn the grace of our God into licentiousness and deny our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ. Now I desire to remind you, though you know all things once for all, that the Lord, after saving a people out of the land of Egypt, subsequently destroyed those who did not believe. And angels who did not keep their own domain, but abandoned their proper abode, He has kept in eternal bonds under darkness for the judgment of the great day, just as Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities around them, since they in the same way as these indulged in gross immorality and went after strange flesh, are exhibited as an example in undergoing the punishment of eternal fire." Jude 1:4-7*

### **Too Nice to Control**

In a video by Craig Hill called "If God is In Control, Then Why?," he suggests that in order to be in control God would have to be manipulating people and events to guarantee the outcome, and this is something that a loving God would never do. Hill and his cohorts who promote this heresy, contend that if God were in control, His perfect will would be done on earth. Therefore, He would never have allowed a Hitler or a Stalin to exist, and there would be no suffering or disease or presumably natural disasters. They even go as far as to suggest that all men would be saved since that is God's will. Thus they proclaim God a universalist, who would have saved everybody, had He not lost control of the planet by giving it to the church. Furthermore, while making a big issue of man's free will and God's inability to override it, this infantile and twisted logic says that if God were in control He would have done exactly that, since how else would He have brought compliance to His will. Therefore, they again indict God as a megalomaniac and suggest it is a good thing He is not in control. However, they also indict themselves since if God has given them control, they too must operate in manipulation or the planet and its inhabitants will all be lost. But even more alarming is the obvious conclusion of their warped theology that since God is not in control even of the devil, and the church after 2000 years of trying to exercise His authority has hopelessly failed to "bring in the kingdom," then the work of God has failed. However, they console themselves with the fantasy that everything on planet earth is really getting better for those who have eyes to see.

### **God is Sovereign but Has no Authority to Act**

Proponents of this ignorance of God and the Bible, suggest that God is Sovereign, on the Throne, has Supreme Rule and Reign, but lacks authority. Imagine! Jesus lacks authority to act on the earth and in our lives because He gave away His authority to the church and did not take it to

heaven with Him! However, rule means to be in charge and in control. That is the meaning of all these terms. Is Jesus Lord or not? Is He King or not? How can He be Lord and King unless He has authority? One cannot have authority without control.

Listen to the testimony of Scripture.

*“For in Him all the fulness of Deity dwells in bodily form, and in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority...” Col 2:9-10*

*“These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in the one to come.” Eph 1:19-21*

*“...and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the first-born of the dead, and the ruler of the kings of the earth.” Rev 1:5*

To rule over the kings of the earth one has to have authority over them. Also, these verses all imply this dominion and authority was current and eternal at the time of their writing many years after the Ascension of Jesus to heaven. It was a functional rule which is emphasized by the addition of “in this age” as well as the one to come. Jesus did not give up His authority at any time. Matthew 28:18-19 does not say that He relinquished His authority by delegating others and sending them out. He did not in any way cease to operate at will throughout the earth. In fact, after Jesus said these words, He promised to be with them until the end of the age and Mark’s gospel adds that He worked with them performing signs and wonders. He did not limit His authority and work only through delegated authority. On the contrary, we are the ones that work with him. We are his fellow workers which means we work alongside Him, under His authority and jurisdiction. To delegate authority does not mean that the one who delegated it loses authority. This is nonsensical. One cannot delegate what one does not have, and one does not lose one’s authority by delegating it to others. The wonderful and truly comforting reality is that God continued to be active in the church and the world throughout the centuries, watching over His purposes to perform them. Who intervened in the life of Paul? The church or Jesus? Who has restored the church through many sovereign revivals? Indeed, the church would not exist today had it not been for His continual intervention. Furthermore, if God has given His authority to the church and no longer has it Himself, then how can He take it back, without exercising authority, which He no longer has. Thus, we are all doomed to man’s schemes and sick twisted plans – heaven forbid.

### **Making God Nicer?**

Those who claim that God is not in control, are trying to defend God against the charge that if He were so good and powerful He would not allow such suffering and evil in the world. However, in their defense of God (who needs no defense) they create a monarch who has all power, all wisdom, and who knows the past present and future, yet fails to act or take responsibility. Indeed, their God is an absentee Creator, who abandoned the church and the world to a sinful, flawed bunch of humans that have perpetuated the suffering, when He could have ended long ago. It would be so simple for Him to get everyone saved and establish heavenly order, but instead He chose to stay away and watch it from a distance. How this heretical understanding and twisting of Scripture brings us to a kinder and nicer God, is beyond comprehension. Indeed, what it reveals is that those who teach this infantile nonsense, no longer believe in the God of the Bible, and have replaced Him with an idol who is unconcerned and uninvolved in the affairs of mankind. How fitting it is for Mr. Hill to end his message scolding those of us who “chant God is good all the time” and declare that we are trying to convince ourselves that He really is. On the contrary, the God of the Bible is so good all the time, but this deity that has given over control and authority to men is cruel and vindictive and no god at all!

### **If God is Not in Control, Then Why?**

If God gave up His authority in the garden as these individuals assert how did he bring a worldwide flood or destroy Sodom and Gomorrah? How did He deliver the Jewish people from

Egypt, drowning Pharaoh and his army? How and why did He destroy all the nations that were in the land of Canaan? Why do the prophets of Israel continue to declare Him ruler of all mankind?

*“He changes times and seasons; he removes kings and sets up kings; he gives wisdom to the wise and knowledge to those who have understanding.” Daniel 2:21*

*“...the Most High God is ruler over the realm of mankind, and that He sets over it whomever He wishes.” Dan 5:21*

*“Remember the former things of old; for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, ‘My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose.’” Isaiah 46:9-10*

*“The king’s heart is a stream of water in the hand of the Lord; he turns it wherever he will.” Proverbs 21:1*

*“Many are the plans in the mind of a man, but it is the purpose of the Lord that will stand.” Proverbs 19:21*

If God is not in control and Jesus has given up his authority and control, then who scattered the Jewish people and who gathered them again from all the nations to their own land in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century? Who? These same people claim to love Israel while they deny these things and try to hide the fact that their whole house of cards is built on Replacement Theology. But of course, the ignorant hordes of conference goers and miracle chasers would never know the difference. Why is it so hard for them to just open their Bible and read it? A very casual reading of Romans would educate them as to the reason sickness, death, suffering, and evil are in the world. It’s because of sin.

*“Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned...” Rom 5:12*

*“For the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope....” Rom 8:20*

Because God gave man free will and man chose sin, the whole creation became subject to sin, suffering, death and futility of all kinds. This is a basic Sunday School lesson. And because God is patient, and not wishing for any to perish (though many will) he allows evil to continue. The only way to rid the world of these things would be to wipe out the perpetrators which God in His love and mercy did once before. However, God’s plan of redemption is to reconcile mankind with Himself which He made provision for at the cross, and while that offer is lovingly and patiently presented, He continues to allow and use the calamity in the world to facilitate that purpose.

*“...also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who **works all things after the counsel of His will...**” Eph 1:11*

This does not mean that it is God’s perfect will or desire for these things to exist, but they are necessary for His overall purpose to be accomplished. He uses evil and calamity to sift out the good from the wicked. God does not force us to do His will, but He works in circumstances and situations to bring us to a place of choice. Consider the following verses and their impossibility if God were not in control.

*“...for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.” Phil 2:13*

*“For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.” Phil 1:9*

*“And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.” Rom 8:28*

How can God work all things for the good of those who love Him and are called according to His purpose? How can we be assured He will complete His work in us? How can He be at work in us both to will and to work for His good pleasure? How can He do any of these things if He is not active in this world and in control? He does not force us to do His will but anyone who knows Him as Lord, knows that He often manipulates events because of His love for us. The God of the Bible is not absentee, He is involved in everything and cares for all especially those who love Him. To suggest anything else is to malign His character and nature.

*“And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power.” Heb 1:3*

Jesus holds all things together, every atom and all the minutest parts spinning around are kept together by His control. He also disciplines His children, so He is obviously exercising authority!

*“It is for discipline that you endure; **God deals with you as with sons**; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline? But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons.” Heb 12:7-8*

Another reality of God’s control is that He uses false teachers to sift and test his people. These are the ones who sooner or later deny the God of the Bible and our only Master and Lord, Jesus Christ to who belongs all authority and dominion.

*“...so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, **to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever.** Amen.” 1 Pet 4:11*