

Endorsements

The heart of the gospel is contained in the doctrines of grace. To understand these truths is to understand the height, depth, breadth, and length of the saving grace of God for sinners. Richard Phillips has done an outstanding job of capturing the heartbeat of these precious truths. Prepare your heart to be greatly blessed as this pastor and author guides you into a greater appreciation of the sovereign grace of God.

—DR. STEVEN J. LAWSON

Senior pastor, Christ Fellowship Baptist Church, Mobile, Ala.

Rick Phillips has an unbounded love for the doctrines of grace and writes about them with an enviable simplicity and clarity. Here is persuasive exposition of biblical teaching that captures the thrill of knowing a sovereign God. *What's So Great about the Doctrines of Grace?* never loses sight of the grace to which these doctrines point. This is a wonderful book to read, study, lend, and give away.

—DR. SINCLAIR B. FERGUSON

Senior minister, First Presbyterian Church, Columbia, S.C.

Richard “Rick” Phillips has done it again! In summarizing the doctrines of grace in this book, he brings us into the arena of historic Calvinism, which, as C. H. Spurgeon said, “is the Gospel and nothing else.” But what we have here is more than just a re-telling of the doctrines themselves; it is an account of why these truths *matter* in the church of the twenty-first century. Its enthusiasm is infectious, its urgency compelling, and its logic irrefutable.

—DR. DEREK W. H. THOMAS

Professor of systematic and practical theology,

Reformed Theological Seminary

Minister of teaching, First Presbyterian Church, Jackson, Miss.

WHAT'S SO
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ABOUT THE

DOCTRINES OF
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RICHARD D.
PHILLIPS



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What's So Great about the Doctrines of Grace?

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To Chuck and Irene Elliott,
whose lives so beautifully exhibit the sovereign grace of God.

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PREFACE

I LOVE THE DOCTRINES OF GRACE. I love them as *doctrines*, that is, as biblical teachings that are sublime and wonderful beyond all human expectation. There can hardly be thrills greater to the mind than those produced by the central doctrines of the Reformed faith. But I especially love these doctrines because of their marvelous theme: the sovereign *grace* of God for unworthy sinners. For even greater than their enlightening effect on the mind, the doctrines of God are utterly transforming to the believing heart. To love the doctrines of grace is to love God as He has revealed Himself in His Word. He is “the God of all grace” (1 Peter 5:10), and unless we anchor our faith in the fullness of grace taught in Scripture, we will never glorify God for our salvation as He so richly deserves.

This book has two purposes. The first is to explain the doctrines of grace, also known as the “Five Points of Calvinism,” through the exposition of Scripture. In this, my aim is not to exhaust the biblical data or to engage in heavy biblical polemics with differing theological views. Instead, I seek to exposit definitive passages as they pertain to the respective doctrines. My approach is to present and explain the doctrines as plainly as possible by drawing out both the clear teaching of the Bible’s text and the necessary implications thereof. The second purpose is one that I find often neglected in treatments of distinctive Reformed doctrines, though to my mind it is equally important.

This purpose is to help believers feel the power of these precious truths in their lives. In other words, I aim not merely to teach the doctrines of grace, but to show what is so great about them. And how great they are! If we really believe the Bible's teaching on the sovereign, mighty, and effectual grace of God, these doctrines not only will be dearly beloved, they will exercise a radical influence on our entire attitude toward God, ourselves, the present life, and the life to come.

I have written this book with an intended audience of those interested in (or alarmed by!) the Reformed view of salvation. There are other books that provide more detailed and extensive treatment of the doctrines of grace, and I would recommend them for the reader's study. But the aim of this book is to present these gracious truths briefly and directly, fortified only by the persuasive power of the plain truth of God's Word. My hope is that Reformed believers will find this book to be a helpful resource to place in the hands of inquiring friends, and that those who already believe the doctrines of grace will drink more deeply of their saving significance. At the heart of my desire, and my prayer to God in offering this book, is that Christians will come to see the grace of God as so great that it transforms their entire spiritual experience. What's so great about the doctrines of grace? It is a fair and important question. May God bless to the readers of this book the Bible's answers, and may God cause more and more of His people to receive the grace revealed in these doctrines to the praise of His wonderful name.

I am grateful to the session and congregation of First Presbyterian Church, Margate, Fla., to which these messages originally

were preached, as well as to my present church, Second Presbyterian Church of Greenville, S.C., for their support of my teaching and writing ministry. This book is dedicated to Chuck and Irene Elliott for the gracious spirit of their lives and for their loving devotion to my ministry. Moreover, I thank my beloved wife, Sharon, for the joy and beauty she brings to my life and to our church, as well as our five children for the many sacrifices they cheerfully make because of God's calling on Daddy's life. Lastly, I give praise and glory to the God and Father of my Lord Jesus Christ, with grateful thanks for the transforming power of His grace in my life.

—*Richard D. Phillips*
Greenville, South Carolina
December 2007

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WHAT'S SO GREAT ABOUT THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD?

ISAIAH 6:1–7:14

✦ ✦ ✦

In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and the train of his robe filled the temple. (Isa. 6:1)

THERE ARE MOMENTS IN LIFE YOU NEVER FORGET: the first time you kiss your spouse, the birth of your first child, your favorite baseball team finally winning the World Series. For many of us, the awakening of our minds to the sovereignty of God is one of these unforgettable moments. “It’s like being born again, again,” many Christians remark after their faith is renewed by an understanding of the doctrines of grace. Everything changes. It is not that they begin to trust God—all believers must trust God—but that they see the truth about the God they trust. And

the truth, as Jesus promised, sets us free: free to rejoice in the glory of a divine grace that truly is gracious.

This book is about the doctrines of grace, biblical teaching about the sovereignty of God at work in our salvation. The doctrines of grace offer a perspective on salvation in which God truly is God, so that everything depends on His will and works to His glory. As with all God's attributes, sovereignty is not a mere abstraction, but a reality that shapes the warp and woof of our experience. The real God is a God who really is sovereign over all reality. Reality in this world is always governed by the statement that begins the Bible: "In the beginning, God . . ." For, in truth, everything—every event, every truth, every experience—begins with God. And so it must be if God really is the God of the Bible: a God who sees all, who knows all, and who is almighty. This is the great truth that opens our eyes to the glory of our sovereign God: He is Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end of all things. "For from him and through him and to him are all things," Paul writes. "To him be glory forever. Amen" (Rom. 11:36).

By *sovereignty*, we mean that God actively governs everything. By *everything*, we mean all things that happen, from the greatest to the least of occurrences. "Are not two sparrows sold for a penny?" asked Jesus. "Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from the will of your Father" (Matt. 10:29, NIV). So *sovereignty* means "according to God's sovereign will." God's sovereignty in salvation means that believers are saved for this sole ultimate reason: "according to God's sovereign will." Or as Paul wrote, our salvation was "predestined according to the

purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will” (Eph. 1:11). That sums it up about as well as possible: we are saved according to God’s sovereign purpose, by God’s sovereign working, according to God’s sovereign will. Salvation truly is “from him and through him and to him” (Rom. 11:36). When this truth breaks into our minds and hearts, we glory in God forever.

Isaiah’s Vision of Sovereignty

A great many Christians can bear testimony to the earth-shaking effects of realizing the sovereignty of God. These same kinds of testimonies are found in the Bible, perhaps none more profound than the prophet Isaiah’s account of his life-changing encounter with the sovereign Lord. If the apostle Paul is the New Testament figure most associated with the teaching of God’s sovereignty, his Old Testament counterpart is surely Isaiah. How did Isaiah gain his understanding of God’s sovereignty, and what influence did this have on his life? In other words, how would Isaiah answer the question, “What’s so great about the sovereignty of God?”

The prophecy of Isaiah contains some of the boldest proclamations of God’s sovereignty in Scripture. In chapter 45, he compares God’s relationship with mankind to that of a potter and his clay, making of His creation whatever He will. In chapter 46, Isaiah points out the utter sovereignty of God’s will: “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” (Isa. 46:9–10). In chapter 59, Isaiah speaks of God’s sovereignty in terms of the long arm of the Lord, by which He is able to will the salvation of His people anywhere: “His own arm brought him salvation, and his righteousness upheld him” (Isa. 59:16).

Isaiah’s message about divine sovereignty wouldn’t have been any more popular in his time than it is in many circles today. But where did Isaiah get this radical conception of God? Was Isaiah under the influence of eighteenth-century Enlightenment thinking (as is often said of those who espouse his teaching today)? Was Isaiah a closet rationalist, under the influence of Plato and Aristotle, so that he can be written off as a prophet of the Greek philosophers rather than of Israel’s God? These can hardly be the case, given that Isaiah wrote in the late eighth and early seventh centuries BC. So where did Isaiah gain these peculiar views in which God is truly God?

The answer is that Isaiah learned of God’s sovereignty through his personal experience of the Lord. And he wasn’t the only one. Paul got his view of a sovereign Christ on the Damascus Road, Jonah attained his “Calvinism” in the belly of the whale, and Habakkuk gained his grasp of God’s sovereignty in his watchtower. In other words, Isaiah—like the other prophets and the apostles, who worshiped God’s sovereign glory—gained his doctrine from the Lord Himself.

Isaiah’s grasping of God’s sovereignty was the great event that changed his life forever. “It was like being born again, again,” he might have said about the event that convinced him of sovereign grace. Just like believers today who find that the doctrines of

grace change their lives forever, Isaiah's encounter with the sovereign God shaped his life and ministry from that time onward. It was the turning point of his life.

If we can pinpoint the turning point of someone's life, we gain a portal into the very vitals of his or her heart. For one it is the death of a parent. For another it is, sadly, his father walking out on his mother. For still another it is the experience, at long last, of putting on the uniform worn by his father and his father's father before him. Isaiah 6 records the pivotal moment in Isaiah's life, when he gained the insights that governed all the years of his prophetic ministry to come.

Isaiah's turning point was also his call to ministry as a prophet. It came "in the year that King Uzziah died" (Isa. 6:1). Uzziah was one of Judah's great kings. He reigned for fifty-two years of prosperity and expansion. For those of us younger than 52, that would be like having one president govern for our entire lives with a godliness and ability that few modern politicians ever display. With Uzziah as king, Isaiah grew up in a rare period when Judah had been restored to something like the righteousness and prosperity known during the time of David and Solomon.

But now the king was dead, the nation was in mourning, and an unproven youth was taking the throne. Isaiah understandably found himself walking to the temple, seeking consolation. He was from a priestly family, so the temple was a comfortable and familiar place. But this time Isaiah entered the temple to see something wholly unfamiliar. R. C. Sproul, in his singular study of this passage, writes: "The king was dead. But when Isaiah entered the temple he saw another king, the Ultimate

King, the One who sat forever on the throne of Judah. He saw the Lord.”¹

Isaiah tells us what he saw with these words:

In the year that King Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and the train of his robe filled the temple. Above him stood the seraphim. Each had six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one called to another and said: “Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!” And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of him who called, and the house was filled with smoke. (Isa. 6:1–4)

Uzziah’s death had brought a crisis of sovereignty. In that crisis, Isaiah’s eyes were opened to behold the true Sovereign in Israel, the true King who sat enthroned over the nation. His vision revealed *the sovereignty of God*. There was the Lord Himself, “high and lifted up.” Uzziah had gone down to the grave, vacating his throne in Jerusalem, but Yahweh reigned on high. Isaiah saw Him seated, firmly ensconced in the place of regal authority.

Notice the details that Isaiah provides, all of which speak to God’s utter sovereignty. He says that “the train of his robe filled the temple.” As God sat enthroned, His regal garments filled the temple, His throne room, leaving no room for another. God utterly fills the sphere of sovereignty. Isaiah would express this truth over and over by saying on God’s behalf: “I am God, and

there is no other” (Isa. 46:9). Not only is God sovereign, He *alone* is sovereign. “My glory I give to no other” (Isa. 42:8), He insists.

How easily we bring things into our lives alongside the presence of God. How often we consider our allegiance to God as just one of many commitments, the Lord as one of many we seek to please. But He does not accept a shared sovereignty.

Isaiah saw other beings in this throne room. He relates: “Above him stood the seraphim. Each had six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew” (Isa. 6:2). These angels were standing in deference while the Lord was seated. Though they are beings of great glory, they covered their faces in awe of God. They covered their feet in creaturely humility, just as Moses had to remove his sandals before the burning bush. They also were flying, indicating their readiness to perform God’s will without hesitation. Awe, humility, readiness to serve—this is the angels’ example of how the sovereign God is to be worshiped.

The angels were calling to one another: “Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!” (Isa. 6:3). Here we have an insight about the worship of heaven. It is God-centered, focused on the glory of God’s attributes, especially His thrice-exalted holiness. Holiness is the sum of who and what God is. His is a holy love, a holy goodness, a holy wrath, and a holy faithfulness. Holiness is God’s exalted singularity, the separation between God and His creatures, between the holy God and all evil. If the holy angels must cover their faces for the glory of God, how much more should men fall prostrate as sinners before so holy a Lord!

Finally, the prophet tells us what he felt and smelled: “And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of him who called, and the house was filled with smoke” (Isa. 6:4). By now we surely get the idea: this God is not to be toyed with, manipulated, or offended. How much less did Isaiah find that heavenly assembly boring or irrelevant, as so many people today say of theology. Indeed, the effect on Isaiah was shattering: “And I said: ‘Woe is me! For I am lost; for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of hosts!’” (Isa. 6:5).

“Woe!” Isaiah pronounces—the first of many prophetic “woes” he would utter over the years—and he cries it against himself. Isaiah despaired of himself and all his works. You know you have met with God when you cry, “Woe is me!” This is what self-awareness produces when accompanied by God-awareness. Here we see the link between the sovereignty of God’s grace and the self-abandonment that flows from the doctrine of total depravity. These truths go together, like two parts of a locket. When these pieces click, the good news of God’s grace in Jesus Christ makes sense as it never has before.

Isaiah’s gospel also was centered on a savingly effective atonement. A generation such as ours that finds it hard to accept God’s sovereignty also finds it increasingly hard to accept the atonement of Christ. But apart from an atonement for sin, a meeting with the thrice-holy God can only be disastrous for depraved men. This is why the Bible’s gospel of salvation centers on the atoning work of Christ. And what happened next to Isaiah was all about the atonement of Christ: “Then one of

the seraphim flew to me, having in his hand a burning coal that he had taken with tongs from the altar. And he touched my mouth and said: ‘Behold, this has touched your lips; your guilt is taken away, and your sin atoned for’” (Isa. 6:6–7). Atoning grace was applied to the place where Isaiah most keenly felt his sin—his lips—sanctifying the instrument by which he would serve God as a prophet. So it must be for us all: true service to God flows from the application of Christ’s redeeming work to our lives.

In Isaiah’s life and ministry, we see perhaps more clearly than anywhere else in the Bible the impact of an awareness of the sovereignty of God. What’s so great about the sovereignty of God? What difference does God’s sovereignty make? For Isaiah, it meant everything. In his response to the vision of God’s sovereign lordship, we can observe four hallmarks that will also play out in our experience as our faith is centered on a biblical vision of the sovereign grace of God.

A Readiness to Serve

I have been saying that everything in a believer’s life changes when he or she grasps the truth of God’s sovereignty. The first change for Isaiah came immediately upon his vision of the Lord enthroned. The first mark of his awareness of God’s utter sovereignty was a readiness to serve: “And I heard the voice of the Lord saying, ‘Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?’ Then I said, ‘Here am I! Send me’” (Isa. 6:8). We don’t know about Isaiah’s attitude prior to receiving this vision, but we do know

what it was immediately afterward. Seeing God's sovereign glory, he exclaimed, "Here am I! Send me."

Since God is the true sovereign, there is no greater privilege than to serve Him. Awe before His glory makes other pursuits diminish. Not all are called to the prophetic office. God calls people to be carpenters, lawyers, doctors, sound engineers, and garbage men. But those who have seen the sovereignty of God see all of their labor as an opportunity to extend His reign and serve His kingdom. It is when we realize how great is the God we serve, how total is His sovereignty over all, and how glorious is His kingdom that we want to serve Him in all we do. Isaiah had not even learned what labor God had in mind for him, but when he heard the question, "Whom shall I send?" his newly consecrated lips broke forth: "Here am I! Send me." If we see just a portion of what he saw, we will do the same, considering not the difficulties but the high privilege of serving so great a Lord.

Many people do not believe in God's sovereignty, yet still serve the Lord. But there is a great difference. Those who see the Lord in His sovereign glory have an inward compulsion to serve this God. Serving God is the glory of their lives. Their service is measured not so much in what they achieve—or what God achieves through them—but rather in the sheer wonder of the God they serve. Like little boys dividing up into teams on the playground, being picked to play on this team is the greatest joy imaginable, especially for those who are so unworthy. "Here am I! Send me," is not merely the response of those who see God's

sovereign glory, it is their delight. Since God is certain to be glorified, they want to be among those glorifying God.

Humble, Trusting Obedience

A second mark of an awareness of God's sovereignty appears in this passage: a humble, trusting obedience to God's commands. Chapter 6 concludes with God's description of what He wanted Isaiah to do, the shock of which caused even the awe-struck prophet to flinch:

And he said, "Go, and say to this people: 'Keep on hearing, but do not understand; keep on seeing, but do not perceive.' Make the heart of this people dull, and their ears heavy, and blind their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their hearts, and turn and be healed." Then I said, "How long, O Lord?" (Isa. 6:9–11)

Isaiah's calling was to bring about a hardening in Jerusalem. His ministry would cause calluses as a prelude to judgment, because God intended first to purify and only then to deliver His people. We can hear Isaiah stifle a cry at this instruction, yet without complaint, without quarreling with the wisdom of his Sovereign. He simply asked the reasonable question, "How long, O Lord?" The answer could not have failed to shock the prophet:

And he said: "Until cities lie waste without inhabitant, and houses without people, and the land is a desolate waste, and the Lord removes people far away, and the forsaken places are many in the midst of the land. And though a tenth remain in it, it will be burned again, like a terebinth or an oak, whose stump remains when it is felled." The holy seed is its stump. (Isa. 6:11–13)

Undoubtedly, Isaiah entered the temple because he was concerned for the well-being of Jerusalem with King Uzziah gone. Having met the true Sovereign, he learned of terrors far beyond his original fears. But Isaiah is singular among the major prophets in that he never complained. He had seen a sovereign, saving God. If he was called to a ministry of hardening, then hardening it would be. It did not occur to Isaiah that he knew better than the Lord of Hosts. If it pleased the Lord through a faithful ministry to reduce His church to the stump of a holy seed, then Isaiah would make that remnant the object of his labor.

A similar commitment to God's saving sovereignty would inspire us to a humble, trusting obedience to God's Word. Relying on God's sovereign purpose, knowing that there is a decree of marvelous grace behind everything that happens, we can face difficult circumstances without wavering from God's law. We can face the hostility of the world or even the apostasy of the church without faltering in our ministry. We can trust the wisdom and obey the commands of a sovereign God who works all things out according to the purpose of His holy will.

As Isaiah later declared: “I will wait for the LORD, who is hiding his face from the house of Jacob. I will put my trust in him” (Isa. 8:17, NIV).

Holy Boldness

A third mark of Isaiah’s ministry surfaces in the passage that immediately follows, a passage that is surely linked in theme to chapter 6 even if the events are separated by almost a decade. Jotham, Uzziah’s son and successor, had finished his reign. It had been a time of decline and the beginning of decay. But with Jotham’s successor, Ahaz, a period of flagrant disobedience to God was about to begin.

The proximate cause of the trouble was an invasion of Judah by the northern nation of Israel along with its neighbor Aram. Unbelieving Ahaz began hunting around for a worldly ally who would bail him out, even if it meant leading his people into idolatry. His choice was Assyria, the growing power on the northern side of his enemies. But God sent Isaiah to confront and proclaim a message to this king:

Say to him, “Be careful, be quiet, do not fear, and do not let your heart be faint because of these two smoldering stumps of firebrands, at the fierce anger of Rezin and Syria and the son of Remaliah. Because Syria, with Ephraim and the son of Remaliah, has devised evil against you, saying, ‘Let us go up against Judah and terrify it, and let us conquer it for ourselves, and set up the son of Tabeel as king in the midst of

it,' thus says the Lord GOD: 'It shall not stand, and it shall not come to pass.'" (Isa. 7:4–7)

God's message to Ahaz was an application of the vision Isaiah had seen earlier: the mighty kings of Israel and Aram were not real sovereigns. The true Sovereign is the Lord who reigns over all. Isaiah pointed this out to King Ahaz with classic words calling for faith: "If you are not firm in faith, you will not be firm at all" (Isa. 7:9).

This was the message God sent Isaiah to deliver to King Ahaz, a monarch equipped with all his earthly sovereignty. If you don't think this was a frightening encounter, you are kidding yourself. Most of us are terrified at the thought of mentioning God to friends at work, much less issuing an ultimatum to a king. But that is the difference it makes to have seen the sovereignty of God. Whatever fear Isaiah felt for King Ahaz was brushed aside by his much greater fear of the sovereign Lord God.

A consciousness of God's sovereignty bestows in us *a holy boldness* before the world and its powers. This is what made Isaiah useful: he could proclaim the Word of the Lord, even the word of judgment, to a decadent and dangerous generation. "Ah, sinful nation," he accused in the opening chapter, "a people laden with iniquity, offspring of evildoers, children who deal corruptly! They have forsaken the LORD, they have despised the Holy One of Israel, they are utterly estranged" (Isa. 1:4). I realize that this kind of talk may not fill a stadium today. It may not place a congregation on the roster of church-growth success stories. But the willingness to speak the truth of God, preaching

God's judgment to a generation as depraved as ours, is a sure sign that the speaker has beheld the sovereignty of God.

The great Scottish Reformer, John Knox, was another prophetic figure who was famous for his brave confrontations with the Catholic Mary, Queen of Scots. Once Knox was asked how he could defy the queen's religious views so audaciously, given that she was the sovereign of the land. Knox famously replied, "When you have just spent time on your knees before the King of Kings, you do not find the Queen of Scotland to be so frightening." Awareness of the sovereignty of God, especially as it brings us to our knees in supplication before His throne of grace, gives us the holy boldness so desperately needed in our time.

Reliance on Sovereign, Saving Grace

Finally, we see in the prophet Isaiah a sure mark that he had beheld the Lord in His sovereign majesty—an utter reliance on God's sovereign, saving grace.

This is seen in the sign Isaiah gave to King Ahaz. Isaiah urged this sign on Ahaz to enliven his faith. It was a sign that was foolish in the eyes of the world, but glorious in the eyes of God: "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel" (Isa. 7:14). In the presence of Ahaz's apostate unbelief, Isaiah laid his hand on the greatest sign of sovereign grace of which he could think: the virgin who would be with child.

Later, Isaiah would speak of childbirth through a barren womb as a sign of saving grace (Isa. 54:1). A barren womb

represents human labor that has failed. But the virgin womb speaks of a field where man has not sown at all. From that womb comes the Savior, Jesus Christ. Imagine how little a man such as Ahaz would have esteemed the birth of a baby as a reason to trust God with his problems, just as many today consider the preaching of the gospel to be “foolishness.” But both the divinely incarnated baby and the preaching of His gospel today are the power of God for the salvation of those who believe.

This reminds us that a true gospel ministry can succeed only if a virgin girl gives birth to a son. What foolishness to the world! But she has. And the miracle of grace continues today. If this does not encourage us to labor in the otherwise barren fields of prayer and simple Bible preaching, not to mention humility, long-suffering, self-denial, and holy obedience to God, then nothing ever will. Isaiah’s sign of the virgin birth tells us not to trust human wisdom, even as we must not despair in the face of human difficulty or personal failure. For if we, like Isaiah, gain a vision of God’s sovereign glory, especially in the salvation of sinners, we will count it our privilege to serve this sovereign Lord, who brought our Savior into the world through a virgin womb, and who will bring many to salvation as we likewise rely on His sovereign, saving grace.