

# **Bottle, Hoop, And Pen (Sovereignty Of God) (God Is In Control) (God Has A Plan)**

*You have searched me, Lord, and you know me. 2 You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar. 3 You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways. 4 Before a word is on my tongue you, Lord, know it completely. 5 You hem me in behind and before, and you lay your hand upon me. 6 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain. Psalm 139:1-6*

## **The Basic Bible Truth**

It is impossible to understand God without acknowledging that He has an incredible eye for detail. A simple look at creation and the complexity on display there should convince us that He plans in great detail and then executes His program flawlessly. The Scripture says that before time began, He knew us. Every step of our way has been thought out long before we came on the scene.

## **The Object**

A Bottle, Any Size, But With A Small Neck  
A Wooden Hoop  
A Pen With A Flat End



This is a basic physics demonstration. It has to do with inertia and acceleration. Basically, when the wooden hoop is snatched away very quickly, the pen balanced on top will fall straight down and be caught in the bottle opening.

## **The Lesson**

I would like to emphasize a point I think we overlook sometimes when discussing the attributes of Christ. Often we think of Jesus in terms of what He has done—past tense. He created the universe, He died on a cross, He rose again, and He offered salvation to all. Colossians 1:17 points to a very “present

tense” aspect of the creation story. All things consist, or are held together by Him. The reality of that thought may be even more impressive than the creation story found in Genesis 1. It points to the ever present, active interest that God has in His creation. In Matthew 21 we find the somewhat odd story of Jesus and a fig tree. His interaction with the tree resulted in the tree immediately dying. Here’s my take on that subject. It was Jesus who was holding that fig tree in the palm of his hands, so to speak, and causing it to grow and become a tree. He had an efficacious part in it’s sprouting, growth, and maturity.

I wonder if, rather than thinking of what He said as a pronounced curse, we should see it as an announcement to the world that His sustaining power would no longer continue with that particular plant. With the withdrawal of His input, the plant immediately died. To continue on with the passage, what keeps a mountain together? The basic physics term is friction. Were it not for friction, the mountain would collapse and disappear into a flat waste. Were it not for the sustaining hand of Christ upholding the law of friction, the mountain would indeed flow into the sea and be gone.

Introduce the demonstration at this point, emphasizing the preplanning and perfect balance required to successfully perform this trick. When everything is aligned and as it should be, things fall into place. So it is with God, He plans, sets things in order, overlooking no details, and then perfectly executes His plans.

Jesus then talks of faith and doubt and accomplishing amazing things. But I think the definition of it all is found in verse 22. If you believe, you will receive. It’s not about what you or I can do or will do. It’s not about how much faith we can muster. The focus is on what God does. When we recognize the tremendous power of God, and that He is actively and aggressively holding everything together, we can trust Him in all things and in every situation.

The last thing He mentions is prayer. He saved the most important item for last. It is our opportunity to be involved in what God does. The great mystery of prayer is that God allows us to petition Him. Why would a God of that magnitude value our input in anything? But He is genuinely interested in our concerns, so much so that He commands us to always pray! Those last few words reminding us to pray may well be the most striking part of this passage.

In short, I would argue with those who claim this passage as a definition of hyper-faith and it’s necessary position in the life of a Godly Christian. I see it rather as an amazing display of the ever-present sustaining power of Christ in even the smallest of things—a fig tree! And a personal reminder from Jesus Himself, that a God with that kind of incredible power is interested in my input, my prayers, and my thoughts. It is humbling.