

Teaching Points

This is our last group meeting until the fall. Our final lesson before the break will continue to focus on John 6. This lesson will cover the remaining teaching points in this discourse between Jesus and the crowd.

So far, we've seen 1. The shallow motives of the crowd. 2. Jesus' identification as the bread of life (greater than the Old Testament manna. 3. Jesus' identification as "I AM". Let's continue by considering:

1. Man's moral inability and the necessity/effectiveness of God's drawing.

Jesus makes some incredible statements in the midst of this discourse about what man can and cannot do apart from the help of divine grace. There are at least three statements from Jesus that we need to consider under this heading:

v. 37, ***"All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out."***

v. 39, ***"This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day."***

v. 44, ***"No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day."***

It's clear in these verses that there's an unbreakable connection between the Father's drawing, man's coming to Christ, and Christ's saving work.

See how absolute these statements are:

- Jesus says ALL that are given to Him by the Father WILL come. Every single one of the elect will come to Christ. Why? Because they are given to Christ from His Father.

- Jesus says that He will lose NOTHING that has been given to Him. No one who comes to Christ will be lost. Salvation is not an on/off blessing. Once someone is alive in Christ they are alive forevermore.

- Jesus says that NO ONE can come to Him UNLESS the Father draws him. Man, in his natural state, does not possess the ability to come to Christ. This is contained in the Bible's description of man being "dead" in sin and trespasses (Ephesians 2:1). Unless God heals the will, a sinner will remain spiritually dead.

Discussion Question: These statements are often the topic of intense debate. Why do you think many professing Christians struggle with these words of Christ?

Thoughts: *These verses, and many others, depict mankind as incapable of creating faith in themselves. In other words, humans can only believe if God creates faith in them. This is very offensive to carnal notions of man's "free-will". We prefer to think of ourselves as being capable of believing whatever we want whenever we want. And yet these words from Jesus are not ambiguous or unclear at all. In short, humans don't like to think of themselves as under the sovereign power of God's will. We prefer to think that we are the masters of our own fate.*

These statements are good news indeed. God the Father has promised to redeem a people unto Himself out of the world. He has freely chosen to "give" these people to His Son Jesus. In turn, Jesus declares His perfect ability to save each and every one of them - all the way through to raising them up at the last day. These words describe our salvation as rock solid and certain from start to finish. It's also clear that this has been settled within the Godhead - a "transaction" between God the Father and God the Son. Nothing is left to chance or human autonomy.

2. The incredible reality of our union with Christ.

The climax of this discourse between Jesus and the crowd occurs in verses 53-58. Up to this point in the conversation the people have asked Jesus questions and listened to His responses. But here at the end things hit a breaking point.

vs. 53-54, ***"Then Jesus said to them, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day.'***"

Jesus had previously told them that He is the bread of life that came down from heaven. Now He tells them that eternal life is only found in "eating His flesh" and "drinking His blood."

Discussion Question: What does Jesus mean by this illustration?

Thoughts: *In graphic terms, Jesus is describing the profound reality of our union with Him. Believers are not those who merely hear Christ's word externally. True believers are those who "partake" of Christ completely. Think of it like the difference between looking at a piece of bread and analyzing its qualities versus picking the bread up and eating it. Only when the bread is consumed will it bestow benefits to the eater's body. Similarly, just considering Christ and His claims is not enough. Salvation is found in believing in Him and embracing all the promises, benefits, and blessings that are found in Him. This illustration depicts saving faith as experiencing Christ "in us". It's the inner reality of the new birth.*

3. The crowds departure and Peter's statement of faith.

After being fed miraculously and then receiving all this instruction from Jesus most of the crowd is offended and they walk away! Rather than believing Christ's claims, these people are bothered by the illustration of "eating flesh" and "drinking blood."

Discussion Question: What can we learn from Christ's reaction to the crowd's departure?

Thoughts: Notice how Jesus doesn't run them down and beg them to come back. He spoke the truth to them and He wasn't insecure when they rejected Him. This is a good reminder to us when people despise us and reject us for speaking the truth. If we are abandoned by others for the sake of truth then we are walking in Christ's steps.

When Jesus asks the disciples if they will leave just like the crowd, Peter responds with a solid statement of faith, **"Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."** (vs. 68-69). Even when many walk away, there are still those who persevere in faith. (1 Kings 19:18).

Lastly, we get one more glimpse of Christ's sovereign command of His ministry. Verses 70-71 make it clear that Jesus knew Judas was a fraud, **"Did I not choose you, the twelve, and one of you is a devil?" He spoke of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, for it was he who would betray Him, being one of the twelve.**" Nothing caught Jesus off guard. The story unfolded exactly according to plan from start to finish... including His betrayal by Judas.

Prayer Focus

Praise God for the sure salvation we have in Christ!

Worship Jesus as the living bread of life that we partake of to live forever.