**Grace to You** :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time*

**The Bread of Life, Part 2**
Scripture: John 6:41-50
Code: 1513

Turn in your Bible to John chapter 6, our Scripture lesson for this morning, John chapter 6 beginning at verse 41. "The Jews then murmured at Him," that is at Christ, "because He said, 'I am the bread that came down from heaven.' And they said, 'Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph whose father and mother we know? How is it then that He saith I came down from heaven?' Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, 'Murmur not among yourselves, no man can come to Me except the Father who hath sent Me draw him and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets and they shall all be taught of God. Every man, therefore, that hath heard and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto Me. Not that any man hath seen the Father, except He who is of God, He hath seen the Father. Verily, verily I say unto you, he that believeth on Me hath everlasting life. I am that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness and are dead. This is the bread that cometh down from heaven that a man may eat of it and not die.'" May God bless this portion to our hearts.

Now we come this morning to a passage that's in many ways very, very difficult to understand, a passage that has many, many mysteries. And I am the first one to admit to you that there are mysteries here that are far beyond my comprehension. I'm not going to attempt at all this morning to resolve the mysteries, I'm not going to attempt to give solutions to all of the paradoxes of God's sovereignty. We shall explain it as the text indicates it and what we do not understand shall leave to the mind of God. But these are very, very simple truths in one sense, and yet in another sense, tremendously profound.

Now as we come to verse 41 we are in the midst of the continuing discourse of Christ in which He presents Himself as the bread of life. In the gospel of John, Christ says over and over again, "I am the bread of life, I am the water, I am the resurrection and the life, I am the good shepherd, I am the door." There are many "I ams" in the gospel of John. One such I am is this one, "I am the bread of life." And in this claim, Christ is saying that He is the satisfier of the soul. That He is the One who completely satisfies human need from a spiritual standpoint. As food satisfies the body, so does Jesus Christ ultimately, finally, and everlastingly satisfy the soul. That claim is in the words "I am the bread of life."

Now as we come to verse 41 we are in the middle of this discourse. Now this is a long sermon, from verse 26 to 71, that whole passage is one long sermon, the theme of which is the bread of life. Verses 1 to 25 of John 6, as we have told you, are merely a historical setting for this sermon and they are, in some sense, though not incidental truth, incidental at least to the building up, to the climax

which is this great sermon in which Christ presents Himself as the bread of life.

Now the whole sermon, or the whole discourse takes place in Capernaum in the synagogue. You remember how they got there. Christ the day before had fed the multitude on the other side, the eastern side of the Galilee, northeastern. Having fed them, they were sent away, they didn't go away. The disciples left in a boat, however, and went toward Capernaum. Christ stayed part of the night praying, then during the night walked across the sea, met the disciples and together they were at the shore at Capernaum. So Christ had come to Capernaum. The multitude had not found Him and so had followed Him to Capernaum on boats provided by the people of Tiberias. So now the crowd that He fed on one side of the Galilee has met Him again in Capernaum. They followed Him there. And it is to those people largely, with the addition of certain other people, obviously, but to those people largely, the ones He had fed the day before, that He speaks regarding the bread of life. And a fitting message it is in view of the fact that He had just the day before completely satisfied them physically and He uses that as an illustration to set the stage for His speaking of Himself in terms of spiritual satisfaction.

They had followed Him to get more food. You remember, we talked about the reason they followed Christ. It wasn't even to see His miracles, they said, it was purely on the basis of free food. They got in the morning situation and nobody had any breakfast and so they figured, "Well let's go over to Jesus, He'll give us free food." I told you last time also that they were completely enamored of the idea of making Jesus Messiah so He could open a welfare state with free meals for everybody. In fact, they even challenged Him by saying, "You think You're something great, You fed fifteen thousand people on one day, Moses fed hundreds of thousands in the wilderness for forty years. Now if You're going to be equal to Moses in our eyes, You better get with it." So their attitude was...we would like a welfare state with continual food. They even say to Him in verse 34, "Evermore, keep on giving us this bread." They thought He was talking about physical bread, and they wanted it from now to the end. They had designs on Christ of political power, throwing off Rome, and of the idea of providing food for them so they could do nothing to earn it and exhibit their depravity, I suppose, in their wasted moments. And so they followed Him in order to get more food.

And He stops them and says, "I'm not interested in giving you physical food, you don't need physical food, you need spiritual food. You need something that satisfies the soul, something that fills the hunger of the heart. That's what you need." Well they didn't even understand what He was talking about, which is par for the course. They never do understand. And what makes them not understand? Simply this, unbelief. Unbelief is the greatest shield against understanding in the world. Just don't believe and you'll never understand. And they didn't. They were so wrapped up in their selfish, self-centered desires that they were far too unconscious of their own spiritual sickness, far too blinded by Satan to ever see in Jesus Christ any kind of spiritual satisfaction. I mean, you can't feed somebody who's not hungry. And if they don't understand their spiritual hunger, they don't want any spiritual food. That's why we say in presenting the gospel, the first thing you have to do is make somebody

know they're missing something, is let somebody know that that hunger, that void, that vacuum in their life is there for a purpose, it can be filled with what God has provided. And that's exactly what these Jews would not recognize. They refused to see their need, consequently they didn't have a desire for food. If you're not hungry, you don't need anything to eat.

So they've come expecting free food on a continually daily provision, like Moses in the wilderness, but Jesus has an eternal bread for them and that eternal bread is the kind of bread that doesn't satisfy the body, but it satisfies the soul. And as I said, they're not interested in satisfying their souls. They don't think there's anything wrong with their souls.

But keep this in mind. This is a very important thought as we look at this text. It is true, it is true that although Jesus was talking about spiritual things, they never got their eyes off the spiritual on...off the physical on to the spiritual. They were always thinking He was talking of physical, even when He said, "I'll give you bread so that you can live forever." Even when He said, "I'll give you spiritual sustenance that is permanent." They were thinking of physical things for He said to them, "I'll give you the bread of life," and they said, "Oh, give it to us, keep on giving it to us," and they were thinking He was talking about some super...super-duper physical bread that makes you, you know, live forever. That's how far off they were. No matter how He spoke of it, they never ever got the message. And so as we see in this text, they are still bewildered and as we come to verse 41, we're going to see them murmuring and griping and sort of an undercurrent of solemn whispers against Christ because they just don't believe that they need anything spiritual. And when He stopped them in their tracks by saying, "I am that bread," He really irritated them. All along they were thinking they were going to get physical food, and then all of a sudden He steps in and says, "Hold it, I just want to inform you of one other thing, I am that bread that I've been talking about." And I can just hear them say, "Ohhh...you know, what a deal! You're the bread? We've been standing here waiting for food, it's breakfast time, you've been telling us You've got food that's going to make us live forever. We say give me it, give us that food and You say You're that food?" And they really got irritated. They not only got irritated because He said He was that bread, they also got irritated because He said He came down from heaven. Both those things irritated Him.

And so as we approach our lesson this morning, we're going to meet their reaction. And then there's a progression of what happens, and I want you to see it this way. First of all, their reaction to Jesus' words, they murmured. Then the rebuke of Christ, He told them to stop their murmuring. Then the restatement of who He is, where He says again, "I am the bread of life." So we see a reaction, a rebuke and a restatement.

First of all, notice the reaction to Jesus' words in verses 41 and 42. They really react to Jesus Christ. Verse 41, "The Jews then murmured at Him because He said, 'I am the bread that came down from heaven.'" There are the two things they didn't like. They didn't like the fact that He said "I am the bread," and they didn't like the fact that He said He came down from heaven. When He said, "I am

the bread," that I've been talking about, He shattered all of their misconceptions. He just destroyed their hopes for physical food. And then when He said He came down from heaven, they thought He was some kind of a lunatic, or a liar and to begin to mock Him.

At this point, folks, the Galileans became hostile to Christ. The Jewish people in Galilee began to be hostile. And you have beginning right here what was already begun in Jerusalem. You remember how the Jews became hostile to Jesus and drove Him to Galilee? Now He gets to Galilee and immediately they become hostile to Him there. So wherever He has been He has breeded hostility because hostility springs from the root of unbelief. And so, already Galilee is moving into this hostility and the death of Jesus Christ is very impending now because He has created hostility everywhere He went. And it's a kind of interesting thought here, that it's not His deeds that created this hostility, it's always His definitive claims, see. Nobody ever griped when He fed the multitude. Nobody ever gripes when He heals them, you know. They love that. As long as He does all these wonderful things, everything is great. But as soon as He started making definitive statements about who He is and what He wants out of people, automatically men just move away. And unbelief comes from that, not the deeds of Christ, from the definitive claims of Christ when He says, "I am that bread," "I came down from heaven," and they walk away. As long as He's feeding their faces, as long as He's healing their diseases, as long as He's doing those kind of things they'll stay around, they'll stick around but, boy, when He starts making definitive claims and demands on their lives...then they walk away. And they don't walk away indifferent, they walk away hostile.

You'll notice a very interesting thought here, the word in verse 41 is "Jews." Now, of course, we know that this refers to the people of Israel, the Hebrews, the seed of Abraham. But this word "Jews" carries a very significant connotation in John's gospel, for it is always used in connection with hostility. The word "Jews" is always the selected word to speak of the children of Israel when it speaks of their hostility toward Christ. And John uses it again and again as a term in connection with their hostility. So whenever you see it, note the text because it's an indication of the breeding hostility. And so, their hostility begins. They are, of course, completed blind of Christ's purpose. As I said, they wanted to make a political economic Messiah out of Him. They had no idea of His plan. They were ignorant of everything He came to do. They were too self-righteous to think they needed spiritual food, too self-satisfied to think that He could do anything for them. And so they missed the whole point of repentance and faith, and that's what really destroyed Christ's image, as it were, in their minds. They could not see a Messiah who demanded repentance cause they didn't think they had any problem, that again being the same problem.

All right, so this illustrates the common treatment not only in those days, but, you know, today men treat Christ the same way. They reject Christ because they feel no need of Him, because they are too smug, too indifferent, too self-centered, too self-righteous to think they have need of anything. People are the same way. And it's kind of an interesting thing because most people spend all their time gorging themselves on the husks that are fit for the swine and refusing the sweet bread of life. And

like those Jews, when men today are faced and confronted with the claims of Jesus Christ, they still grumble, they still mutter, they still mock in whispers of unbelief.

But, you know, there's a fantastic truth here and I want you to get it because it's one of the most important truths in the Bible. It's not an easy truth to swallow, but it's here. Listen to it. When a person comes to the Lord Jesus Christ honestly, genuinely, earnestly seeking to know the truth, that person will know the truth. I'll say it again. When a person comes to Jesus Christ honestly, genuinely, earnestly seeking to know the truth, that person will know the truth. God will reveal it. But may I say something else? In fact, Isaiah says it, "A wayfaring man though he be a fool need not err." A little child can understand when a heart is right. But let me say something else, and here's the truth I want you to get and don't ever forget it. On the other hand, if the Savior presents some truth clearly but the unbelieving heart refuses to believe that truth and an open rejection and self-righteous unbelief turns away...watch this...Jesus invariably seems to make the truth more difficult rather than simpler. Did you get that? When somebody refused to believe the clear statement of truth, then He didn't make it more clear, He began to make it more bewildering, confounding them in their own unbelief.

You say, "Well how does that work?" Well the parables are great examples because in the parables Jesus Christ was hiding things from the wise and prudent and revealing them to...what?...to babes. If men will not have the truth of God when it is presented to them, it deliberately can be taken away from them and they can be blinded by God so they cannot see the truth. That's serious. You say, "Illustrate it."

Okay, Pharaoh hardened his heart so God hardened Pharaoh's heart so he couldn't see the truth. Israel willfully chose the path of disobedience. When they did that, God said, quote: "I will choose their delusions." In the day of Antichrist the Bible says that that man that does not believe in Christ and is not saved, listen to this, the Bible says to those people God will send strong delusion and they will believe...what...a lie. Who sends the delusion? God does. Now this is...this is a deep, deep truth. Listen, great serious responsibility is put on the man or woman to whom God's truth is proclaimed. It is given that we might believe and it is not a trifling thing. And you may sit under the hearing of the gospel and you may listen to the message of Jesus Christ and you may say, "Well all in good time I can come whenever I want." Don't you believe that. Jesus said, "Nobody comes to Me except the Father...what?...draws him." And you come to Jesus Christ only when God draws you and it is no trifling thing to hear the truth of Jesus Christ and reject that truth, it is not your option. It's a serious responsibility. God told that pre-Flood civilization, "My Spirit will not always strive with man." And so when these Jews did not believe the simple truth of Christ, He began to confound their minds and the more He said, the more bewildered they became and they became blinded and did not understand and finally walked away in a bewildered hostility. And right here in this chapter we see the beginning of this bewildered hostility as they begin to move away from Christ.

I want to show you two fantastic passages, two of the most important passages in all of the Bible will illustrate this...excuse me. John 12:37, I want you to get these because these are basic doctrine, this is doctrine and this is heavy, as the vernacular goes. Verse 37 of John 12, now watch this, "But there He had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on Him." Now watch this, "That the saying of Isaiah the prophet might be fulfilled which he spoke, 'Lord, who had believed our report and to whom at the arm of the Lord been revealed?' Therefore they...what?...could not believe."

What do you mean? They would not, so...what?...they could not. What is that? That is judicial blinding. They hardened their hearts, so God hardened their hearts. You harden your heart against the gospel of Jesus Christ after you have heard it, you are on dangerous ground-dangerous ground. Verse 39, "Therefore they could not believe because Isaiah said, 'He hath blinded their eyes and...what?...hardened their hearts that they should not see with their eyes, or understand with their hearts and be converted and I should hear them.'" God actually prevents them from being saved, that's serious stuff.

You say, "What is this?" This is nothing but the judicial blindness of God against unbelief. You see, you can't build a doctrine out of one passage. Okay, Matthew 13, incidently you can build a doctrine out of one passage. Once God says something once, that settles it. He doesn't have to repeat Himself twice to be verified. Matthew 13:10, now listen to this, here we have it again, different context, Matthew 13:10, "And the disciples came and said unto Him, 'Why speakest Thou unto them in parables?'" Why are You speaking to the Jews in parables? "He answered and said unto them, 'Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, but to them...what?...it is not given.'" They are judicially blinded by God. Now you talk about sovereignty, folks, there's some sovereignty for you. "For whosoever hath, to him shall be given and he shall have more abundance, but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even what he hath. Therefore speak I to them in parables because they seeing see not and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand and in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah which saith, 'Thy hearing you shall hear and shall not understand, and seeing you shall see and not perceive.' For this people's heart has become gross...that's fat...their ears are dull of hearing, their eyes they have closed lest at any time they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears, should understand with their heart and should be converted and I should heal them. But blessed are your eyes for they see, and your ears for they hear." God actually says because of their unbelief I have confirmed them judicially in unbelief.

Now you can go back to John 6. Now that is tremendous...that is tremendous truth to grasp. You say, "Well why would God do that?" Well the heart that hardens against God is confirmed in hardness. In the case of Israel, judicial blindness. Well, did it have a purpose? Is God just doing that? Oh it had a great purpose. The purpose of Israel's judicial blindness is indicated in Romans chapter 11 verses 8 to 11, where God says in blinding Israel salvation came to the Gentiles. By setting Israel in its judicial blindness, God then moved to the Gentiles with the message of Jesus Christ. You say, "Yeah, but that's kind of hard on Israel." Well ultimately the Bible also says that this blinding is not permanent

and it's not total. You know there are some believing Jews right now coming to Jesus Christ. There have been a remnant in every age. It's not total blindness. There are a few who come to Christ, very few. But beyond that, Romans 11:26 says, "Some day, so all Israel shall be...what?...saved." So the blinding of Israel has a purpose, it is to allow the gospel to move to the Gentiles. God came to Israel in the form of Jesus Christ. Israel refused Him. They were judicially blinded and the message went to the world. God's not through with Israel. Some day Israel is going to be redeemed in the Great Tribulation when they look on Him whom they have pierced and mourn for Him as an only Son. But this is serious doctrine...serious doctrine.

And these Jews in this passage, as they exhibit this unbelief at the simplest statement of Christ, what could be more simpler than saying to someone, "You need spiritual food and I'm that food?" That's so simple, a child can understand it. But they were confounded by their unbelief and their wretchedness and so they were confirmed in their confusion. And so they begin to murmur in unbelief and they were activating judicial blindness and God was sending this. And so the words of Jesus from this time on to those Galileans became more bewildering and more bewildering all the time.

Verse 42, they didn't like the fact that He came from heaven so listen to what they say. Terrific reasoning, they said, "Is not this Jesus the son of Joseph...who by now is dead...whose father and mother we know, how is it then that He saith I came down from heaven? Who's He kidding? I know Him. Why, I know His father, Joseph, he lives over there in Nazareth. Down form heaven...who could confuse Nazareth with heaven?" One other time they said, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" I don't know what was wrong with Nazareth, but evidently it wasn't the glamorous spot of Israel. What does He mean "come down from heaven?" He came right out of Nazareth.

You know what He was doing to them? Isn't it amazing how great incomprehensible, infinite truth can be presented and people don't even know what's going on? Jesus had just told them that He came from God. He had just told them in essence the implied meaning of the virgin birth, and they were saying, "I don't understand, Nazareth over there..." You see, that's what happens to the unbelieving mind. When Jesus says this morning to you, "I came down from heaven," what does that say to you? That says He came from God, doesn't it? That says John 1:1, "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word...what?...was God." John 1:14, "And the Word became..." That's what that says to me, does that say that to you? Same thing? You know what it says to the unbeliever? "Oh, Nazareth...it doesn't make sense." Unbelief blinds the mind. And somebody doesn't understand and says, "He can't be from heaven He comes from Nazareth. I know His own father Joseph." Another mistake, His father wasn't Joseph, His Father was God. His earthly father was Joseph, He was begotten of God. But they thought they knew everything.

There is an interesting insight here. Do you know they understood the claims of Christ, didn't they? They didn't miss that at all. They knew He claimed to come right from heaven. In fact, you remember earlier where the Jews said, "He claims to make Himself equal with God." They understood that. It's

amazing how many cults today don't understand that. Even the blinded, judicially blinded Jews understood the claims of Christ. He didn't claim to be a god, one of many gods, or a sub-god. He claimed to be equal with God, proceed from God and even they knew that. That's exactly who He is, too. Incidently, they were right in their ignorance. He was revealing the glory of His *gennesis*, becoming man and they were scratching their heads. He often received that. It's amazing how many times. When He went to Nazareth over in Matthew chapter 13 verse 55, don't look it up, I'll just read it to you. Matthew 13:55, here He is in a tremendous opportunity to share the truth of who He is with His people, it says, "Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not His mother called Mary? And his brothers, James, Joseph, Simon and Judas, and His sisters, are they not all with us? From where then hath this man all these things and they were offended at Him." It says in verse 58, "He did not many might works there because of their...what?...unbelief." And then He says, "A prophet is not without honor except in his own house." And so they always mistook Jesus Christ. There was scorn in their mouths, "Who does He think He's kidding? He's Jesus from Nazareth, the son of Joseph. What does He think we are, stupid?" I'm not going to answer that. But it's amazing...but it's amazing how know-it-alls always know nothing. Have you ever noticed that about them? People who know it all don't know anything. Of course, ignorance is bliss.

And you know something? That same claim of Jesus Christ is the same claim today that people are stumbling all over. Do you know that? It's that claim that Jesus makes to have come from God and be the only soul-satisfier in the universe. That's the claim that people still stumble on. That's the stumbling block and the rock of offense of unbelief. People can tolerate everything about Christ but His definitive claims. Boy, people say, "Oh, Jesus, oh He did a wonderful thing, He was a great man."

But then when you say to them, "Do you know that He said that He is the only way to God?"

"Well, I mean, that's going a little far." I hear that all the time. Well they can take Jesus' personality and all of the little things that He did and the deeds that He did but you just start making definitive claims and people back off.

And so we see their reaction to Jesus' words, they don't believe Him. Now notice the rebuke in Jesus' words in verse 43 and following, to 47, He rebukes them. We'll look at this quickly. "Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, 'Murmur not among yourselves.'" Stop murmuring, stop that sullen undertone whispering, stop it.

What kind of reaction is that? They have just received dynamic testimonies. They have seen Jesus Christ the whole day on the northwest corner of the Galilee Sea healing people. They have seen Him feed from His hands, creating bread and fish. And there they are standing there mumbling. And Jesus says...Stop it. As if I have given you no miracles, as if there's an excuse for this ridicule and scorn. My, at least if it wasn't clear they could in humble faith have said, "Jesus, Your power we understand, what is Your purpose?" And in humility Jesus Christ would have explained it to them. Remember

Nicodemus? He came to Jesus and he said, listen, he said, "Master, nobody can do what You do except God be with Him." And he opened himself to hear the message and he got it. Instead of mumumumumum, just murmur, mumble, grumble. Jesus says stop.

Verse 43, "Murmur not among yourselves." It's a good insight into why people sometimes don't understand the things of God. They never get any further than talking to each other. There's no resources among any of them. But Jesus makes no point to answer their argument. They had been complaining about He came from Nazareth. He doesn't say, "Well let Me explain this, how this works, guys. I really didn't come from Nazareth, I went there as a little boy, but first I was over there in Egypt for a while because the angel told us to go there. Around here while here they were killing the children. But that's not really where it began because before that I was born in Bethlehem and I have to explain that, it was all by a virgin and it all...." No, He doesn't even do that. Now that's all true but He doesn't go into it. He doesn't give them a great big explanation of all the details. You say why? I think Paul hit it right on the nose. Paul said this in 1 Corinthians 2:5, he said this, "That your faith...watch it...should not stand in the wisdom of men but in the...what?...the power of God." In essence, what Jesus is doing here is saying this, "If you guys can't see who I am by My power, My logic won't take you to first base. If you don't see who I am when I feed the multitude, if you don't see who I am when I raise the sick, if you can't see Me in My power, all the words in the world aren't going to tell you who I am." You deny the power and the logic means nothing. So Jesus doesn't argue, He just keeps on confounding them with more spiritual mystery.

In verse 44 you get into a really deep profound doctrine. "No man can come to Me except the Father who hath sent Me draw him. And I will raise him up at the last day." There's a lot of things in this verse and I want to summarize cause we could spend six months on that verse. But I want you to see several things here that are very important. What does verse 44 have to do with verse 43? What's the context here?

Just this, He is seeing their unbelief and seeing their unbelief He says, "Stop murmuring." Then He explains their situation and why they don't believe. Look at it in verse 44, "No man can come to Me except the Father who hath sent Me...what?...draw him...draw him." Those are solemn words and they make clear the depth of unbelief. He is looking at them and saying, "You unbelievers, I understand why you don't believe, I understand the depth of your unbelief and I also understand that only God can change it." You know, it's almost like what He did in verse 36 and 37 where He said, "You've seen Me and believe not." And then He kind of stops almost like a soliloquy and says, "But I know that all that the Father gives Me shall come to Me." In other words, He's almost qualifying their unbelief by explaining how it is and saying, "I know they're not believing and their only hope is if God draws them. Oh, that's tremendous truth.

Do you know that the gospel is beyond the human mind? It's beyond the human will. You know the gospel is too humbling for the proud. The gospel is too demanding for the rebellious. The gospel is

too lofty for the darkened mind. The gospel is too holy for the earthbound corruption of the human heart.

You say, "Well how in the world do you ever get to God? How do you get to God?" Somebody says, "You must seek God." Uh-huh...no way. You don't seek God, nobody seeks God. Paul says, "No man seeks after God." Nobody seeks God. The Old Testament psalmist said, "Nobody seeks God."

You say, "Well how do you get to God? If your will is so depraved, if you don't seek God, how does it happen?" Very simple. Jesus said, "For the Son of Man is come to...what?...to seek." Who's lost, folks? Not God. We don't seek God. You don't read in your Bible about the lost sheep looking for the shepherd. The shepherd went after the sheep. You can't find God. God's not lost. You can't even seek God. You know why? Your world doesn't seek... You say, "Oh now wait a minute, there are lots of people in the world who go...who worship and go to church and they're seeking God." Oh no they're not. Paul says in Corinthians chapter 10, he says, "They that offer sacrifices offer them to demons." That's right. You see, no man with an unchanged heart and mind ever wants God. It's abnormal. Why? Because men love darkness rather than light. And, you see, it's a moral inability. It's a nature incapacity. Man can't do right, he can't choose God. For example, Jesus said, "How then can you being evil speak good things?" No way...John chapter...or Matthew chapter 12 verse 34. I'll tell you another one. John 14:17, Jesus said this, "The Spirit of truth is coming...watch this...whom the world cannot receive." It's immoral incapacity for a man to choose the truth...can't happen. Water can't flow up hill and neither can the natural man...neither can the natural man act contrary to his nature. An evil tree can't bring forth good fruit, and it's impossible for a heart that loves darkness to fall in love with light. Can't happen.

So, Jesus reflects on their unbelief by inferring the incapability of their depravity. He says you can't come, you can't come on your own, apart from God's drawing nobody can come. Boy, that's really depravity. The depravity of man. You say, "Why do men reject Jesus Christ?" Because they're fallen, sinful and they love sin so much that they can't possibly see good. That's the human side of rejection. That's the cause for unbelief. You know, it's amazing because all my life in my study of the Word of God and in past years, and even before that, I've heard people talk about free will and you can choose Jesus Christ by your own free will. That's not true. Man has no free will. You can't find the term "free will" in terms of the nature of man anywhere in the Bible. The word "free will" always in the Bible has another word immediately following it, look it up. Every time with the exception of one time, the word "free will" has another word after it and that word is offering. It has only to do with part of the sacrificial offerings of the Old Testament, has nothing to do with the nature of man. There is one other use and that's the time when Israel went back to Jerusalem in the book of Ezra and it says they went on a free will journey. It...the word "free will" can't apply to a man, he's not free. Listen, Paul says in Romans, you are either a slave to Jesus Christ, or you're a slave to sin. You're not free, no man is free. Never used of man's nature. Man's nature is anything but free, bound by sin, he's in the blackness and darkness of death, that's not free. And to say that man has the ability to exert his free

will and choose God independent of anything outside of him is ridiculous. To choose Christ on his own would be to ignore Scripture and the depraved state of his will. No, it's not that man's will can't come to Christ. Some people say, "Well, your will can't come to Christ." I don't believe that, I believe it can, I believe the will of man can come to Christ, and I'll explain what I mean, hang on to this, I believe the will of man can come to Christ but I don't believe it wants to.

You say, "What do you mean?" Well it's kind of a distinction but let me say this, your will can come to Christ, I came to Christ one day. You know why? Because I wanted Him. Did you? I willed to come, didn't I? But I really didn't know it at the time but you know why I willed it? Because the Father was drawing me, see. The question of my will is just this, if God draws my will it can come. The problem is, apart from the drawing of God, I don't want to come to God. My will won't come. No man seeks God. Then the Bible says, "Whosoever will may come." But the only ones who will come are the ones who want to come and the only ones who want to come are the ones drawn by the Father cause the natural man seeks the other direction. The only ones who will ever come to God is those whose will has been changed by God Himself. Because, you see, Paul said in Romans 8:7, "The carnal mind or the will is enmity against God. And Jeremiah 13:23 says, "Can the Ethiopian change his skin? Can the leopard change his spots? Then may you also do good who are accustom to doing evil?" And the answer is no...no. To say that a man has the power within himself to either reject or receive Christ is to repudiate the biblical fact, he does not have that power. And to say there is one good thing in the flesh is to make a lie out of the Bible which says there is no good thing in the flesh.

Listen, man is hopeless and the only way man can ever come to God is when God reaches down in his heart and turns him around and draws him. And then and only then will he will to come to Christ. And thus did Jesus say, "No man can come to Me...nobody no time except the Father draws him." You don't have the resources, nor the desire to come to God unless God pulls you. And incidently, if you do have the desire to come to God, guess what? God's drawing you. Praise the Lord.

You see, this is what God does. He draws out of people for His name. You say, "But when He draws them do they come?" Yes they do come. When He draws them they come. You can see it in verse 37, "All that the Father gives to Me shall...what?...come." Not only do they come but once they get there they stay. Look at verse 39, "This is the Father's will who has sent Me that of all that He has given Me I should lose...what?...nothing." He draws, they come, they stay. Tremendous truth...tremendous truth. "No man comes to Me except the Father who has sent Me draw him." And listen to this, the last part of that verse is that great truth, "And I will raise him up at the last day." Does Christ lose any that the Father gives Him? No. You know that phrase "I will raise him up at the last day" is? Same phrase in verse 39, that's the guarantee of eternal salvation. That's the security of the believer. Everyone who comes to God will be raised at the last day. You know what that is? That's a promise of resurrection. And He loses none. Remember we saw the illustration of that last Sunday night when we saw the hundred and forty-four thousand sealed at the beginning of the Tribulation,

and standing on Mount Zion at the end intact. God said I'm going to keep them through that time and He kept them. I believe what Paul said was true that God begins a work, He'll perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. I believe that. And so, He gives that keeping promise, the guarantee of resurrection. So, the Bible teaches the drawing power of God, God's elective power in salvation.

You say, "Well that puts a lot on God's part." You're right, salvation is totally of God. You can't come unless He draws. When He draws, men come. But what about human responsibility? What about...aren't I responsible? Yes, from the human standpoint you're responsible to believe and receive Christ. You say, "Well I don't understand the difference?" Don't worry about it. I don't either. The Bible teaches that God is totally responsible for salvation because of man's incapacity. You know what else the Bible teaches? Man is totally responsible for his own sin and guilt and unbelief. That's hard to understand. But that's not the only thing that's hard to understand, that's just one of the mysteries, one of the paradoxes of the Word of God, that all of salvation is done by God and yet we're responsible for not believing.

You say, "Well how can God...I didn't even choose to be born. I came into this world and I'm automatically a sinner. I mean, I can't help Adam...if I would have been there I would have told him not to do it. How can God hold me responsible for what Adam did? How...my mother and father happened to be sinners, so what choice have I got? How can I be responsible for this?"

I don't really know the answer to that. The Bible doesn't give it. You ask me a question the Bible gives the answer, I'll share it with you. You ask me the question the Bible doesn't give the answer, I can't give it. You say, "Why doesn't...why doesn't the Bible tell us?" Well, very likely because God didn't want us to know. You see, there are some things that belong in the mysterious council of God and were we to know them there would not be good for us, so God keeps them from us. You know, it's...God is so much more vast and we always stand here with our little pea brain saying, "Now, God, I think it works like this...." God is so vast and incomprehensible that trying to reduce the simplest terms to us must be a tremendous task with our finite heads. Just because you don't understand the paradox of the mystery of God's sovereignty in terms of human responsibility is no problem. I just worry about it from this standpoint. I know that Jesus Christ called me, that the Father drew me, that I was chosen in Him before the foundation of the world as Paul said, that I was predestinated and according to Romans chapter 8 to be justified, to be set apart unto Him. I know all of that and at the same time I know that I came to Jesus Christ in my heart one day because I just wanted Him. Now how those two go together I don't know, the Bible doesn't tell me and I just say, "Praise the Lord." Because if I knew everything I'd be God and like I told you before, if I was God you'd all be in serious trouble. There are many mysteries in the Bible. Some people ask me this...this question I get asked all the time, "How come God let evil get started? If He had never let evil get started, nobody would be in hell." I don't know the answer to that. The Bible doesn't say...the Bible doesn't say. You say, "Well if God can stop Satan, why does he let him go on?" I don't know. That's in the councils of God. I don't know all the mysteries of God.

You know what it all revolves around, folks? You've got to come back to two things. Number one, realize how really inadequate and stupid we are. Just realize you can't grasp divine truth. You're lucky, and so am I, to get a little pinch of it and then when we've got that we think we've got it by the tail. You can't understand the vastness of God. The second thing after you've realized how small you are is to just believe...just trust God...just trust Him. Ole Habakkuk, one of our beloved friends we studied earlier in the ministry here, in chapter 3 verse 17, see he can't figure out because he says Israel is bad, Lord, but since...since when are You going to let those Chaldeans come over here and judge Israel? They're crummier than we are, see. And he doesn't understand how God can use a worse thing to punish a better thing. He doesn't understand that. Why the Chaldeans? They're wretched. You're going to use them to punish Israel. And then he just says he doesn't understand the answer at all. So finally in verse 17 he says, "Well if the fig trees don't blossom and the fruit isn't in the vines, and the labor of the olives fail and the fields yield no food and the flocks be cut off from the folds and there be no herd in the stalls, yet I'll rejoice in the Lord," see. I mean, if all of nature collapses, I don't understand it but I'll trust. Remember old Job, what did he say? "Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him," see. It's not for us to know all the answers of the mysteries of God, it's just to trust Him completely. Somebody else says, "Well if God chooses and draws, the Father draws, why do I witness? I mean, if God's going to draw, who needs me?" That's not your question. Your question is does the Bible say to witness? The answer is yes. Don't try to resolve the mystery, just obey, see, just obey. Interestingly enough, God not only has chosen those to be redeemed but He has also chosen the method and we are the method. And our question is not to resolve the mysteries of God, our question is to obey. That's where the joy is.

Well, so Jesus illustrates this tremendous truth. Then in order to kind of really tie in to them tightly, He pushes it further in verse 45 by telling them that this is nothing new, this is something their prophets even knew. Verse 45, "It's written in your prophets, as if to say, and they shall all be taught of God." Listen...listen, the only people who ever know anything or taught of God, why is it so strange for me to tell you that you can only come to Me if God draws you. All the drawing, all the teaching is from God. Your prophets told you this. You know it, and He's quoting directly really, kind of, from Isaiah 54, but He's inferring statements that are found all over the place, Jeremiah, Joel, Malachi, Micah, Zephaniah, all taught that all teaching comes from God, all true teaching. They also taught that in the messianic age all teaching would be direct from God. Those...there are passages in all those books that in the messianic age all teaching would come direct from God. And so He's saying even your prophets told you in the messianic age you'd be taught of God, why so strange for Me to say to you, you have to be drawn by God? And to be drawn by God, folks, listen, means the same as being taught by Him. Same thing. Why is it so strange for Me to say this, your prophets told you this was the way it would be when Messiah came? That you would know the truth only as God drew you and taught you.

Then He adds this. "Every man...notice the singularness there...therefore that hath heard and hath learned of the Father cometh unto Me." Oh man is there a wealth of stuff in that verse. Every man that God draws comes to Christ. Did you get that? And the other side of it is this, if you come to Me in faith and repentance, it is simply and only because you have been drawn, you have learned and been taught by God. Ah, I can just see their minds, you know, they're saying, "Oh, what is He inferring, that we have never been taught by God?" Exactly that. He's saying to them, "If you were taught by God, you'd come to Me."

What did they pride themselves on? The fact that they were the students of God's Word, the fact that God had given them all the information, that they had all the knowledge of God. And He says, "Well, if God had really taught you, you'd come to Me because all that God teaches come to Me." What a blast. Ouch! So He has really rebuked them by their own prophets.

Then in verse 46, "Not that any man hath seen the Father, except He who is of God, He has seen the Father." In other words, I'm not talking about some face-to-face verbal confrontation with God, but God speaks through Me. I'm the one who has seen Him. This is to kind of correct any kind of error where someone would say you have to have a vision. I talked to a kid the other day who said...I said, "Do you know Jesus Christ?"

He said, "Oh yes, I met Him about two years ago."

I said, "Hey, that's great." I said, "Where did you meet Him?"

He said, "Well, I saw Him and I talked to Him for a long time."

People have visions, I don't know. I remember a lady in our neighborhood who saw Jesus in the incinerator one time. I really have my doubts about visions like that. And this is what Jesus is correcting. He says, "No I don't mean you've got to hear God, you know, thundering out of heaven in a verbal sound, I'm the one who's seen Him and I'm relaying the message." That's what He's saying.

Then in verse 47 He adds this most glorious truth. "Verily, verily I say unto you, he that believeth on Me hath everlasting life." I'm the One, I'm the representation of God here, just believe on Me. Notice the present tense, "hath." When do you get everlasting life? In the future? I've got it right now, do you know that? I've got everlasting life right now. I'm going to live forever, so are you if you know Christ, present tense, "hath," present tense.

Well...you say, "How do I know? How do I really know whether I'm being drawn? I mean, how do I know whether the Father's drawing Me?" Well I'll tell you how you can settle that real easy, listen. Have you ever come to Jesus? If you have, do you think it was your depraved will that loves darkness that brought you? Have you ever had a desire to come to Christ? Is there somewhere in your heart,

some small desire to come to Jesus Christ? Do you think that's the desire of your corrupt will? You know what that is? That's the drawing of the Father. Does your heart hunger for the bread of life? Do you desire God's power? That's not your depravity, sir, that's Jesus Christ and the Father drawing you. Believe Jesus is God Son? Do you believe He's the soul satisfier? That faith, however small, is the drawing power of God. And your part is come...just come and believe and believe.

And so the rebuke. Then just to read it to you. Notice how Christ restates His original theme. Having answered them and rebuked them, He goes right back to what He was saying, verse 48, "I am that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness and are dead." Listen, that manna that you think was so great, that couldn't keep them alive. Not only did they die physically there, but, boy, they were in sad shape spiritually too. You know why they died physically? Because they were spiritually disqualified from going into the land. That manna didn't help them spiritually or physically.

Verse 50, "But this is the bread that cometh down from heaven that a man may eat of it and...what?...not die." Jesus said, "I am come that you might have...what?...life." O Christ is that bread that gives life, that bread that satisfies. I say to you this morning, if in your heart you sense God drawing, make this the day when you come, when you receive Him. It's no trifling matter, hear me, it's not trifling matter to disbelieve the clear presentation of God, lest you be blinded.

Our Father, we thank You this morning for Your Word. Important message, Lord, oh so many important truths. Father, we do not attempt to untangle all Your mysteries. God, we just feel like such a inept, helpless teacher because we just can't fit these things into our little brains. But, God, we pray, we beg You that Your Spirit will teach us. God, the mysteries can't be resolved but faith is still there and we trust You. O God, mostly we pray this morning for those to whom Your Spirit speaks, those who are being drawn by the Father, may they come. May we realize it's not trifling matter to do despite to Thy grace. God, if some heart here is being drawn, may this be the day that they in faith say, "Christ, I come, I want You, take my life, forgive my sin." May this be that day. This we pray in Christ's name. Amen.

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