

- I. Jesus speaks truth to the crowd about themselves and about Himself
 - A. We are beginning our study today in John 6:37. But before reading vs 37-51, I want to make two introductory remarks.
 1. First, from John 6:37-65, Jesus uses language that appears to mix predestination and free-will as if there is no contradiction between them, that is, as if they logically and seamlessly work together.
 - a. We saw these same two realities treated as if they are one in our study of Romans, and we find this in other Bible books as well.
 - b. I am pointing this out because in spite of the fact that many in the Christian world line up on one side or the other, and in so doing separate themselves into two distinct theological camps, God's word presents God's sovereignty and man's free will as a unified whole which works as one to accomplish the will of God in our world.
 - c. Therefore, we will understand God's word and God's ways best if we also see them and speak of them as a unified whole.
 2. My second introductory remark has to do with reminding you that the verse leading into John 6:37 is John 6:36, where Jesus said, "But I said to you that you have seen Me, and yet do not believe."
 - a. He was talking to fellow Jews, and His assessment of their spiritual condition as unbelief was foretold by John in John 1:10-11, "He (*Jesus*) was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. [11] He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him."
 - b. Most of us here today have received Jesus, so we may think these words do not apply to us.
 - (1) Yet we are wise to test ourselves, now and again, to see how much of God and His word we believe in, and how much of Jesus' teaching we want to obey.
 - (2) It is one thing to whole-heartedly believe that the concept or ideal is true, and another thing to believe so as to whole-heartedly live – or at least make an honest effort to live according to the truths revealed by the concept and ideal.
 - c. Therefore, examine yourself to see if you believe in all of Jesus and all of His teachings, or only those parts that seem to serve you best while looking to the world for the rest of what you want?

B. John 6:37-51 . . . "All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out. [38] For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. [39] This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day. [40] For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day." [41] Therefore the Jews were grumbling about Him, because He said, "I am the bread that came down out of heaven." [42] They were saying, "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How does He now say, 'I have come down out of heaven'?" [43] Jesus answered and said to them, "Do not grumble among yourselves. [44] No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day. [45] It is written in the prophets, 'And they shall all be taught of God.' Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father, comes to Me. [46] Not that anyone has seen the Father, except the One who is from God; He has seen the Father. [47] Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes has eternal life. [48] I am the bread of life. [49] Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. [50] This is the bread which comes down out of heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. [51] I am the living bread that came down out of heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread also which I will give for the life of the world is My flesh."

C. Pray

II. Jesus explains who does what in regard to eternal life

A. John 6:37-38 . . .

1. In vs 35, Jesus says "I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst." Then in vs 37 He says, "All that the Father gives Me will come to Me."
 - a. There are several points to be made from this statement. First, it seems the size of the crowd who does not believe is always larger than the size of the crowd who believes. And in relation to evangelism, this can be discouraging.
 - (1) However, I want to encourage you refuse discouragement and resist the temptation to give up on evangelizing the lost.
 - (2) Ours is not to decide if evangelism is worth it, but to sow the seeds of the gospel wherever we can, and to live a life that gives unbelievers a reason to glorify God. If we do, we may even have the opportunity to reap what we or others have

sown. However, what happens after sowing is up to God and the one in whom the seed was sown.

- b. Second, with these words, Jesus is clearly saying that God is directly, significantly, and intricately involved in the process of unbelievers coming to repentance and believing in Jesus.
 - (1) Therefore, I want to remind you of some of the ways that God has acted first in relation to our eternal salvation. For example, it is God who created us and made us in His image.
 - (a) Even when we are not seeking Him, God who reveals Himself to us – through creation, through an inbuilt knowledge of Him, and through our conscience.
 - (b) It is God who has given us the Bible and the Holy Spirit, so that we will experience being convicted of sin, righteousness, and a coming judgment.
 - (c) It is God who draws unbelievers to Jesus, and to repentance and faith in Jesus.
 - (d) It is God who gave His only Son as the only acceptable sacrifice for sin.
 - (e) And it is God who offers us rebirth and reconciliation in spite of our rebellion, pride, selfishness, and sin.
 - (2) Truly, God has acted first, while we act in response to God and what He has done to encourage that response.
2. Jesus goes on to say [37b] “and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out. [38] For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.”
- a. The first truth here is that Jesus will accept and save whomever God gives Him – including the religious leaders who had Him crucified, Pilate – who was complicit in the unjust travesty of putting an innocent man to death on a cross, Paul – who while he was Saul was an aggressive persecutor of Christians, and me – who was raised right and knew better yet chose to go the way of the world, my flesh, and the devil in order to enjoy the pleasures and rewards of sin.
 - b. The second truth here is the reason Jesus will accept and save whomever God gives Him, and the reason is both simple and profound – Jesus came to do God’s will, not His own.
 - (1) And as we see from vs 39, Jesus goes on to say that God does not want Him to lose anyone, but to raise all of them up on the last day.

- (2) Imagine being Jesus and having suffered as much as He suffered to save sinners from their sin. And as Jesus, imagine how badly people have treated you and how badly they have treated those you love. And imagine that on their deathbed, in the last hours or moments of their life, they repent and believe in you for eternal life – just as the thief on the cross.
- (3) What would you do? Jesus says He will accept and preserve whomever God gives Him.

c. And then, to drive this truth home, Jesus goes on to say . . .

B. John 6:39-40 . . . This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day. [40] For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day.

1. These two verses present us with two of the classic religious mysteries or theological conundrums that have troubled and even divided the church for five to six hundred years. The two mysteries these verses present are the differing divisions of responsibility between God and Jesus, and between God and man. Let me explain.
 - a. The differing division of responsibility between God and Jesus looks like this: Though John begins his gospel telling us that Jesus is God (John 1:1), and Jesus confirms that He and God are one (John 10:30), yet here in vs 37-51, it says that God has the responsibility of giving believers to Jesus, and Jesus has the responsibility of keeping them until He raises them to eternal life.
 - b. The differing division of responsibility between God and man looks like this: God has done and continues to do all the up-front work of bringing sinners to repentance and faith in Jesus for eternal life. However, God has given us the responsibility to pay attention to, seriously consider, and act on whatever amount of truth we have been given about God, about His son Jesus, about believing in Jesus unto eternal life, and about obeying Jesus as a verification that we believe in Him.
2. These two verses also present us with the fact that Jesus has been given the responsibility of not losing any believer given to Him by God, but will keep each believer so that they can be raised on the last day. With this truth in mind, I want to remind you of four other scriptures that speak about God's gracious work of keeping you.

- a. Isaiah 26:3 . . . The steadfast of mind You (*God*) will keep in perfect peace, because he (*you*) trusts in You (*Him*).
 - b. Philippians 4:6-7 . . . Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. [7] And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.
 - c. 1 Corinthians 10:13 . . . No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it.
 - d. Jude 1:24 . . . Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy.
3. The fact that Jesus keeps us is further proof that He and God are focused on what truly matters, what truly makes life worth living, what truly brings joy, what truly fills our hearts with peace in spite of the circumstances, what truly makes us secure in spite of what may be threatening us, and what truly lasts forever.
 4. And the reason we need Jesus to keep us is because we too easily can get bogged down in focusing on what pleases us – but doesn't perpetually satisfy us, what makes us feel safe – but doesn't keep us secure, what makes us happy – but only temporarily, what gives us a sense of purpose and accomplishment – but only in this world and during this life, and what may last a year, twenty years, or even a life-time, but is gone and lost forever when we die.
 5. We are prone to trade life for death, the eternal for what is temporary, true heavenly joy for earthly pleasures, and the supremacy of God for the supremacy of self. Such was the case of the Jews Jesus was talking with. They had a focus, but it was earthly, temporal, self-interested, and exceedingly shallow by comparison to the focus Jesus had. And this brings us to vs 41.
- C. John 6:41-42 . . . Therefore the Jews were grumbling about Him, because He said, "I am the bread that came down out of heaven." [42] They were saying, "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How does He now say, 'I have come down out of heaven'?"
1. Once again, this crowd of people, who had heard about, seen, and personally experienced at least one or more of Jesus' miracles

completely missed the spiritual truths in the miracles Jesus performed and the words He spoke because their focus was earthly, temporal, and selfish. The good of God, the glory of God, the pleasure of God, the will of God – such things were not very high on their list of priorities.

2. But this just what the devil and the world want for us. They want us to be earthly and self-focused rather than heavenly and God focused. They want us to pursue and live on the food that perishes rather than on the food that endures to eternal life. They want us to die in our sin rather than live for eternity with God.
3. So beware. These Jews believed in God. They were serious about their religion. They were at least somewhat educated in the OT scriptures. And they were knowledgeable about current events – for they knew Jesus was Joseph’s son. And yet, for all the good they had, their focus kept them from seeing and believing that Jesus was sent by God, and that His words were words by which to live.

D. John 6:43-45 . . . Jesus answered and said to them, "Do not grumble among yourselves. [44] No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up on the last day. [45] It is written in the prophets, 'And they shall all be taught of God' (Isaiah 54:13). Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father, comes to Me.

1. The essence of Jesus’ message here is that He is not a threat to them, because He is not the important one, God is. And they were claiming to believe in God and serve God.
2. However, Jesus is saying that if we believe in God and listen to God and live according to what God says, then God will teach us what we need to know in order to recognize who Jesus is and believe in Him.
3. If we think we believe in God and think we are living according to what God says, yet we aren’t, then we are not being taught by God and we will neither recognize who Jesus is nor believe in Him.
4. This is all summed up in vs 45, where Jesus says “Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father, comes to Me.”

E. John 6:46 . . . Not that anyone has seen the Father, except the One who is from God; He has seen the Father.

1. This is a statement of clarification just in case someone is thinking that God must come to us directly and visibly in order to teach us. However, the fact that we cannot see God does not change the fact

that God speaks to us in various forms and at various times. And some of the more common ways God speaks is through creation, His word, the promptings of the Holy Spirit, our conscience, our ability to think and reason, and through other believers.

2. Continuing on with vs 46, we see that Jesus does not stop with His clarification, He adds that He has seen the Father – just to confirm once again that even though He has been sent by God, He is different from the prophets who were sent by God in that He is the Son of God, and Immanuel – which means He is both human and divine.

F. John 6:47-51 . . . Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes has eternal life. [48] I am the bread of life. [49] Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. [50] This is (*I am*) the bread which comes down out of heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. [51] I am the living bread that came down out of heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread also which I will give for the life of the world is My flesh."

1. In vs 35, Jesus said, "I am the bread of life." In vs 41, He said, "I am the bread that came down out of heaven." In vs 48, Jesus said, "I am the bread of life." And here in vs 51, He says "I am the living bread that came down out of heaven."
2. Why would Jesus repeat this truth? Because just as food (*manna*) meant life and the absence of food (*manna*) meant death when the Israelites were passing through the wilderness, so food (*Jesus*) means life and the absence of food (*Jesus*) means death in relation to life in this world and in the world hereafter.
3. And though the manna came from heaven, those who ate it still died, but if we will eat Jesus, we will live forever.

III. Conclusion

- A. Jesus ends this section with these words, "the bread also which I will give for the life of the world is My flesh." The most I will say about these words at this time is that they form a transition from what Jesus has been saying to what He goes on to say.