

All the Father Gives Me

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[0 : 00] All right, so this is the point in our service where we open up the Word of God. This is our opportunity to hear what the Lord Jesus has said. We're going to be looking at His own words. And so I encourage you, if you have a Bible, to open it up to John chapter 6.

This morning we're going to be looking at something that Jesus said that seems a little strange, at least at first. I know that we had said we would look at the response of the crowd to Jesus after He had said that the bread of life was His flesh, and whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life.

We are going to get to that, but we're actually going to look at that next Sunday. It's a pretty wild thing that Jesus said. This morning we're going to look at something else that is strange that Jesus said that came up in this conversation in John chapter 6.

So let's read it together, starting in verse 35. And maybe before I read it, I'll just say, you know, one of the things we're going to focus on a little bit in this is, what is Jesus' relationship to the Father? It's something that we've talked about a little before, but just maybe look into that as we read it, because we've heard these words before, but there's more here. So verse 35, Then Jesus declared, I am the bread of life.

[1 : 25] Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty. But as I told you, you have seen me, and still you do not believe.

All those the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away. For I have come down from heaven not to do my will, but to do the will of him who sent me.

And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all those he has given me, but raise them up at the last day. For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day.

So there's a lot in here, but we're just going to focus on the relationship of Jesus with his Father. We've talked about some of the other things. Last Sunday we talked about eternal life.

The Sunday before that we talked about Jesus' statement, I will raise them up at the last day. We want to focus in on this relationship that Jesus has with the Father.

[2 : 43] And we've heard a little bit about this already in the Gospel of John. We heard about it right at the beginning. In John 1, verse 14, John described Jesus, this man, as the Son who came from the Father.

A little bit later in verse 18, he said, No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God, and is in closest relationship with the Father, has made him known.

So there's this special relationship between Jesus, the Son, and his Father. We only see glimpses of it or mentions of it in the first part of Jesus' story.

We heard Nathaniel make that declaration, Rabbi, you are the Son of God. But did Nathaniel really know what he was affirming?

We saw it... We saw it when Jesus got to the temple in Jerusalem. He was flipping the tables on those who were selling.

[3 : 50] And he said, the temple, he referred to it as, my Father's house. But it doesn't seem that the people really caught on to that. It wasn't until later in chapter 5 that this whole relationship between Jesus and his Father really came to the forefront.

If you remember those messages, Jesus had a lot to say about his relationship with the Father. He... If you caught those messages, we heard him making some very interesting statements like, my Father is always at his work to this very day and I too am working.

This was after he had healed a man on the Sabbath and the religious leaders were going after Jesus for doing that. And Jesus began to explain a little bit about his relationship with the Father.

We're always at work. He referred to himself as doing nothing on his own. I do nothing by myself. I only do what I see my Father doing.

He stated that his Father loves him. That his Father shows him everything he does. Jesus talked about how the Father would show him even greater things than what they'd already seen earlier that day.

[5 : 10] How one day they would see him, the Son, do some of the most amazing works in human history. Raising the dead back to life and the final judgment.

He said, these works have been entrusted to me by my Father on purpose so that people will come to honor the Son, me, as they honor my Father.

And we talked back then about how this relationship between Jesus and his Father is very mysterious. glorious. It's unlike anything that we know. We talked about how there's this oneness and unity between the Father and the Son.

There's a togetherness and a unison in their working. We heard how Jesus describes his Father as sending him into the world and giving him works to do and works to finish.

Testifying about his Son through those works. And then we hear on Jesus' side of the relationship about how his aim and his mission is to do those works that he's been given by his Father to finish that work to not just please himself but to please the Father who sent him.

[6 : 35] And in the midst of all this we saw the religious leaders having a very hard time with the way that Jesus talked about this special relationship that he has with his Father. They understood Jesus is making himself out to be equal with God and they were hearing words of blasphemy.

So here we are again in this conversation in John chapter 6 with the crowd. This is after the feeding of the 5,000 and some of the feeding of the 5,000 crowd are here.

And this topic of Jesus' special relationship with the Father again comes to the forefront. So it starts in verse 35.

Let me just read it again. Then Jesus declared, I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.

And we talked about this a couple weeks ago. Jesus is holding out this incredible promise of eternal life. That the deepest needs that you have can be satisfied, your thirst can be quenched forever.

[7 : 50] All you need to do to receive this is two things. He says, whoever comes to me, he says, whoever believes in me.

So the invitation is on the table. He's just put it out there in front of the crowd. Come to me. Believe in me. But then the conversation takes this turn all of a sudden.

And we read it in verse 36. Jesus says this next, but as I told you, you have seen me and still you do not believe.

So it's like they're seeing Jesus do these works of God among them and yet they're not believing in him. And then this conversation starts to get a little strange all of a sudden.

Jesus says this next. He says, all those the Father gives me will come to me. And whoever comes to me, I will never drive away.

[8 : 53] So we're still talking about people coming to Jesus, but now Jesus brings this whole talk about coming to him into a bigger discussion of what's going on between him and his Father.

He makes this statement, all those the Father gives me will come to me. I don't know about you, but to me that seems a little bit unexpected of a thing to say, a little bit strange.

Let's stop and think about it for a minute. We notice that the Father is giving something to the Son. What is he giving to him?

People. It's kind of weird. This is something we can't relate to. We don't give people to other people. But here Jesus says that God the Father is giving people to him.

The second thing that's strange is how this seems to be an explanation of why they don't believe. And maybe it's helpful at this point to think of the disciples who are here listening to this.

[10 : 11] Jesus has just put the invitation on the table. I am the bread of life. Come to me and believe in me. And it's like the crowd you can almost imagine in that moment is silent.

As we just read Jesus says you do not believe. Nobody's coming forward. Nobody's moving. You can just almost imagine maybe the disciples just off to the side like you heard Jesus.

He just put out the altar call. He just gave the invitation. Who's coming first? Come to him. And then all of a sudden the moment drags on and maybe there's a bit of awkwardness like is nobody going to come?

You can almost imagine them like glancing over at Jesus like why is nobody coming? Why is nobody responding? You gave the invitation.

What's happening here? Jesus' statement in verse 37 seems to be an answer to that question. It's almost as if Jesus is saying don't worry if nobody is coming at this moment.

[11:26] All those the father gives me will come to me. We remember what Jesus said earlier that his father is always at work.

Even now my father who is unseen is at work. He is doing this work of giving people to me. And whoever he is intentionally at work in will come to me.

Maybe not at this instant. Maybe later today. Maybe tomorrow. But they will come to me. Perhaps another way to say it might be like this.

Nobody that the father has determined to give to his son will miss the boat. And as soon as I say that I know that I have said something that doesn't sit well with some people.

Maybe some of you here this morning. Hold on a second here. Are you saying that God has decided to give some to his son but not others?

[12:36] Or that God gives some to his son whether they want to come or not? Are you saying that some people are saved because God has decided to save them and others because he has not decided to save them?

Are you saying that the people in this crowd who don't believe in Jesus don't believe because God has not decided to give them to the son?

And if those are your questions those are good questions. They're good questions that I'm not going to try to answer fully this morning. There's a whole debate over this very verse this very thing that Jesus said but I will say a few things.

Is there a chance that Jesus messed up his words or misspoke when he said this? All those the father gives me will come to me.

Because you know there's something inside all of us that for some reason we want to flip that statement around or change the words in it. We want to say Jesus you must have misspoken what you meant to say was something like this.

[13:54] All those who first come to me will then be given to me by my father. Because I got to make that decision first right? But that's not what Jesus said.

Or we might change it all together and make Jesus say this. All those who give themselves to me will come to me. But Jesus didn't say that either.

He said all those the father gives me will come to me. And let's remember who Jesus is. He is the son of God who speaks only what he hears from his father.

He doesn't misspeak. He said it this way and this is how he intended to say it. So the big question here of course is how does the father's giving of people relate to their coming to Jesus?

Which comes first? Is one dependent on the other? And we may get to a little bit of an answer to that in the weeks ahead but for this morning I want us to focus on this relationship between father and son here.

[15:04] Let me point your attention to one word in the statement. That word gives. All those the father gives to me will come to me.

There's something wonderful about that word. There's something bigger than just the crowd and Jesus and the disciples and what they can see going on here.

Those who the father gives to me will come to me. I want you to think about yourself. If you are a person who would say I have come to Jesus, what does this statement say about you here this morning?

Do you know that you are a part of a larger story? Christmas is coming not too long from now. Starting to feel it a little more now that the snow has come.

It's a time that we celebrate God's gift of his son to us. But what Jesus seems to be saying here is something different. He seems to be saying that we who have come to Jesus and those who will yet come are actually God's gift to his son.

[16:27] God's God's gift. Do you see that in these words? Another way to ask it would be like this. Who is the giver in this statement?

statement? And then who is the recipient of the gift in this statement? And finally, what is the gift? gift? Think about this for a moment. Jesus is not talking about a gift that gives itself. He's talking about a gift given by someone, the father, to someone, the son.

In this case, those who come to Jesus are the gift. Those who have yet to come to Jesus are part of those who will be given by God to his son.

And so maybe it's helpful to think in terms like we often do at Christmas. Those of us who have come to Jesus or will yet come to Jesus are like we're like the ones wrapped up inside the box being given.

[17 : 41] But we should not think that God is a thoughtless gift giver or that he didn't know what to give to his son. We all know what it's like to feel the stress of Christmas gift giving.

Maybe some of you are already starting to feel that right now. There's often times an expectation. And it's probably happened to all of us I'm sure that you know Christmas has snuck up on us and we ran out of time to get a carefully well thought out gift for someone that we love.

God doesn't give like that. God is the most intentional thoughtful God is the most intentional thoughtful God doesn't give like that.

God is the most intentional thoughtful and considerate giver in the universe who always finds nothing less than the perfect way to express his love.

The perfect gift to give. God is the God. So we who come to Jesus are we're not like a gift from the father that just one day showed up on the father's doorstep and said here I am Lord send me and then he looked at us and said ah yes the perfect gift for my son.

[19 : 19] No rather all those who have come to Jesus and all those who have yet to come to Jesus are a gift that the father has been planning and preparing to give to his son since before the creation of the world.

And there are numerous passages we could go to to demonstrate that. I think most of you have read your Bibles know those passages that I'm talking about. But I think we have trouble with this truth because our view of reality is warped by sin.

Sin causes us to see ourselves as at the center of the grand story. Yet Jesus speaks here as if there is a greater story going on.

He speaks of this dynamic love relationship between a father and a son. A story in which we are neither the giver nor the recipient.

Instead we're the one wrapped up in the box. we're the gift being given from one to the other. And not because we're supremely valuable.

[20 : 35] Not because God went and found us and sought out this rare treasure. Truthfully, God did not find us beautiful and worthy and fit to be given to his son.

Rather he has chosen to radically transform us and to make us worthy and fit to be given to his son. As they often say, the best gifts are handmade and can't be bought in the store.

And so Jesus is not worried in this moment that nobody is coming forward to him. He's put the invitation on the table but he's not worried. He's here to speak and to do what God has given him to speak and to do.

And whether someone comes to him is his father's gift to give. I don't know about you but I find it humbling to hear of myself being spoken of in the third person by Jesus as the gift and not the giver or the recipient.

To me, it says that my coming to Jesus and my believing in him is not just something I did on my own. It says to me that God was in my coming to Jesus.

[21 : 55] He was working in it unseen with intentional purpose and love right from the start. It's also humbling to me because it means that my coming to Jesus and being saved from God's wrath is not just for me.

It's not just for my sake. it means I'm also being made into a present, a gift for the Son, for his sake, for his pleasure and honor.

And this greater story that we hear Jesus refer to here seems to be more about the Son than it is about me. Now we might still wonder about those questions that I posed earlier.

We might wonder, well what if God hasn't chosen to give me to his Son? Does that mean that I can't come to Jesus? And again, I'm not going to try to answer that hypothetical question because there's mystery here.

There's biblical truth that we see here in the scriptures, but where those truths meet, it's not easy to understand. We've got God's work and we've got our responsibility and those two realities and truths kind of collide.

[23 : 19] And just what the result is, I don't know exactly how they relate to one another, except for the clear anchoring truths that we have in scripture. But one thing that we can be certain of is what Jesus says to give assurance to anyone who would be worried about being left out.

He says, all those the Father gives me will come to me. Nobody who God gives to his Son will tragically misinterpret the signs or make the mistake of thinking that Jesus isn't the one.

The second assurance we have is what Jesus says right after this. All those the Father gives me will come to me and whoever comes to me, I will never drive away.

Exactly how the Father does his giving work behind the scenes, we may not know. But on the whole, this is clear. The invitation to have Jesus as the bread for your life, to have this gift of eternal life, never be hungry again, never be thirsty again.

This invitation is on the table for whoever, for the world, for you. And Jesus wants you to know that.

[24 : 41] If you sincerely come to him and believe in him, you will never find yourself in that place where Jesus says, get out.

You don't belong. Depart from me. Go away. In other words, if you're worried that you're not chosen, or that you are somehow in spiritual danger of being left behind or left out, there is a solution that always works.

And it's simply this. Come to Jesus and believe in him. And if you sincerely do that, you will never come to that moment where you find out that you're rejected because you weren't originally intended to be part of the gift from the father to the son.

Whoever comes to me, I will never drive away. That's a promise. That's an anchor for us.

Let's go on to verse 38. Jesus continues on. He says, for I have come down from heaven not to do my will, but to do the will of him who sent me.

[25 : 56] So the first part that we just looked at was all about God giving people to his son. Now we're on the son side of this relationship again.

And it's all about what he has come to do for his father. God is giving people to his son. But now Jesus says, I am here among you not to do my will.

Not to do what I want, but to do the will of my father. To do what he wants. It's this incredible statement of humble submission.

And it's hard enough for us to understand just what Jesus wills or wants for himself. That's maybe sometimes in conflict with what the father wants. We get glimpses of it here and there.

Probably the most clear picture we see of it is in the garden on the night of Jesus' arrest where Jesus prays to his father, take this cup from me.

[27 : 03] Yet not my will, but yours be done. And that tension was probably sprinkled throughout Jesus' life.

Where submission to the father's will was not always easy. But as in the garden and in all of these times, there was always this heartbeat of love that we see.

We see it here. Perfect love for his father. He has this unbreakable resolve and commitment to love his father by doing what the father wills.

By doing what the father has given him to do or sent him to do, even to the point of death. love. It's glorious. It's beautiful.

Where have you seen that kind of love and loyalty and commitment in our world? Verse 39.

[28 : 06] And this is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all those he has given me, but raise them up at the last day.

So here it is again. Those of us who come to Jesus are being spoken of as those who are given by the father to the son.

It's the father's work to give people to his son. And it's the son's responsibility or work not to lose a single one of those who have been given to him.

The picture of a shepherd fits well here. My father's will is that I do not lose a single one of the sheep that he has given to my care.

The picture of a king also fits. God's will is that I do not lose a single citizen in the kingdom to the threats of the enemy. Jesus talks about being lost, that I shall lose none of all those he has given me.

[29 : 20] What's the danger? What's the threat? Why might we be lost? I think Jesus gives us the answer in verse 39 here.

That I shall lose none of all those he has given me, but raise them up at the last day. So the thing that prevents us from being lost is the action of Jesus, which raises us up at the last day. And so being lost, it seems, refers to that real danger that we all face. Death. The consequence for our sins against God.

It is the great enemy that threatens us all. How can we be the gift of the Father to the Son if we are on death row, awaiting our final sentence for breaking God's holy law?

God's will, we see it in here. This is the will of him who sent me. God's will is that we not perish and be lost. And so he has given Jesus important work that must be done to keep us, to prevent us from being lost.

[30 : 44] Jesus will go on to say this later in the gospel. I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. First, Jesus must clear our legal debt with God and secure our just pardon with his own death.

And then he will do that great work of undoing death itself and raise us up at the last day. verse 40. For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life and I will raise them up at the last day.

So what do we take from all this? there's a much greater story going on here than just a man named Jesus talking to a crowd. There's a loving father and his son.

There's a father who wills and a son who humbly does what his father wills, even when it's difficult. There's a giver and there's a recipient.

[32 : 00] And caught up in the middle of all this, there's a gift that's being prepared and made and given. A gift that's in real danger of being lost unless the Son who has been sent carries out the mission that's been given to him by his Father.

And in the midst of all this comes this invitation from Jesus to come to him and believe in him to receive eternal life.

And I will raise those who come to me and believe in me up from the grave at the last day. So my simple question to leave us all with this morning is do you hear that invitation?

Have you accepted that invitation? Have you come to Jesus and sincerely believed in him?

For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life. And I will raise them up at the last day.

[33 : 12] Let's pray. Father in heaven thank you for sending your Son.

Lord Jesus thank you for speaking these words. They are strange to us and yet they are words of life. They are words of love.

help us to know you more. Reveal yourself to us as we continue to look and gaze on the story of your Son and the things that he said.

We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.