

Drawn by the Father

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[0 : 00] Let us now turn to the passage that we read together, the Gospel according to John, chapter 6, and we may read again at verse 44.

No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws them, and I will raise them up on the last day.

No one says Jesus can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws them, and I will raise them up on the last day.

In his teaching in this passage, Jesus is stressing the need in the lives of his listeners, and in our lives too.

The need to work for the food, not for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you.

[1 : 06] In other words, Jesus is saying to them and to us, don't be duped into seeking materialistic gain, at the expense of turning from the true sustenance that is provided by the Lord.

Rather seek the bread of life, the food that endures, in other words, Christ himself. And when his listeners heard what he taught and how he taught, rather than accept his teaching, they asked for another sign.

Then what sign do you do that we may see and believe you? What work do you perform? Now, our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, as it is written, he gave them bread from heaven to eat. And by their statement, they are demonstrating that the unbelieving heart never has sufficient reason to believe and accept the teaching of Christ.

And although that is true, Christ reminds them and us that unbelief, respective of how strong it is, cannot thwart the purpose of God in bringing unbelieving men, women, boys and girls to faith in Christ.

[2 : 39] All that the Father gives me, he says, will come to me. And whoever comes to me, I will never cast out. And that is, I believe, a statement of tremendous encouragement.

Irrespective of how unpromising our lives are. How unlikely it is that we come to Christ. This is the reassurance of truth.

All that the Father gives me will come to me. No matter how strong the grip of unbelief is on our hearts and minds and it is.

But where God has purposed to save, they will come. And that is why every person who is in Christ here today has come to Jesus.

Because the Father has given them. And then he gives another reason why they should believe on him. For I have come down from heaven, he says, not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me.

[3 : 52] Now, the teaching left them in a place where they felt unable to challenge the teaching any further.

And instead of challenging the teaching, they decide to have a go at the preacher. And that is often the tactic of unbelief to the present hour. When people are unable to challenge the teaching of the Bible, people will highlight the failings of Christians known to them.

Now, do not misunderstand me. I am not saying that Christians have no failings. They have many. And they ought to be the first to acknowledge it.

But the life of the Christian should reflect the profession that they make. And this is the point. Are the failings of the Christian good reason to reject the revealed word of God?

Now, if you search your Bible, you will not find that as a reason to reject the teaching of the word of God. The Bible does not support such teaching.

[5 : 01] Let us remember that in this particular context, the preacher, unlike every other preacher, was sinless. He was the perfect son of God in human nature.

There was nothing in his personality, in his conduct, in his character that was sinful. Oh yes, many tried to find fault. But remember when he was brought before the jurisdictions of various kinds, the verdict was this, I find no fault in him.

Because none could be found. He was the sinless son of God in our nature. So here they try to belittle him.

For they thought they were sure of his identity. Is not this Jesus, they say, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know. How does he now say, I have come down from heaven?

We know this person. So what he teaches cannot possibly be true. When he says, I have come down from heaven. We know him.

[6 : 11] He was brought up in the community. He was raised in the home of Joseph and Mary. They were so sure that they knew who he was.

And you know, they were so wrong. They were so wrong. And that is why the older I become, the more important I believe it is, that we make a clear distinction between what we think the Bible teaches and what is actually taught in the Bible.

There is a huge distinction. You know, you may think many times that you know what the Bible teaches. And then you go to the Bible and you begin to look up what the Bible teaches.

And you discover that you were horribly wrong. And that you did not appreciate what is contained actually in the Word of God.

Here, these people were so wrong. They thought they knew who Christ was. And they did not.

[7 : 30] And often you will hear, oh, but that is your view. Or the view of the church. Well, it's not my view or the view of the church. But the view of God as expressed in his truth.

Remember how the Bible says, knowing this first of all. Know prophecy of scripture. It's important that we grasp this. No prophecy of scripture came from someone's own interpretation.

For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man. But men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. Yes, many people were used by God in the formation of what we know as the Holy Bible.

Many people with many failings. But the scriptures themselves, as they are set before us, were inspired by God. And given by God. They come directly from God.

They are not the interpretation of someone. They are not something that belong exclusively to a cultural age by God. They are words that are inscripturated by God.

[8 : 44] They are relevant for every age, for every generation, right to the end of time. And so these people were saying, this man grew up among us.

Is he not the son of Joseph, the father and mother? We know his family history. How can he possibly claim to have come from heaven? He is part of the community.

We know who he is. You know, we have a Gaelic phrase. And it's used very often in a derogatory sense. We knew him when he was small.

Or when he was a child. And that's in effect what they were saying here about the Lord. As far as they were concerned. Because they refused to test the evidence.

He was just the son of the carpenter. And could not possibly be the eternal son of God. That was ludicrous. It was totally beyond their understanding and their reasoning.

[9 : 45] And the Bible makes it plain. That the eternal son of God took to himself true human nature. That he came into this world virtually unrecognized.

That he suffered. That he died. And that he rose again. And all of that is a shining example of his immeasurable love for lost sinners like you and me.

And a demonstration of his amazing grace. And so Christ commands them. Do not grumble among yourselves. Rather than grumble about the scripture and its demands.

He is saying to them. They should submit in mind and heart to the revealed will of God. And that brings me to our text today. No one can come to me unless the father who sent me draws him.

And I will raise him up on the last day. Just a few thoughts. First the powerlessness of man. No one can come to me.

[10 : 47] Secondly the power of God. Unless the father who sent me draws him. Thirdly the perfect assurance of the resurrection.

I will raise him up on the last day. And finally the practical application of the teaching. First the powerlessness of man.

Jesus responds to their grumbling with a spiritual assessment. What can account for their obstinate unbelief?

And this is the explanation that Jesus gives. No one can come to me unless the father who sent me draws him. In other words their persistent unbelief results from man's spiritual inability.

Jesus is teaching here. Jesus is teaching here that man in his sinful condition. Not only does not come. Or will not come to Jesus.

[11:58] But that he cannot come. And notice how strongly this is emphasized in the verse. He doesn't say that some may come. Or even one or two may come.

But he says no one can come. Not a single instance of an exception here. No one can come to me unless the father who sent me draws him.

And so Jesus said. Why do you not understand what I am saying to you about me being from heaven? He is asking this question of his original hearers.

And then he is giving the answer. He is saying the reason why you cannot understand what I am saying. Is because no one can come to me. No one can believe in me. No one can accept this teaching unless the father who sent me draws him to me.

There is no circumstance by which we. By our own free will decide to start drawing near to God. No. Our Lord's teaching here has some massive implications for how we look at ourselves.

[13:07] He is saying in the first place. Everyone by nature turns away from God. That is. Everyone born by ordinary generation.

Everyone who is born into the world as fallen. As members of the fallen family of Adam. Everyone runs away from God. And in that sense there is really no seekers after God.

Say that again. There is no seekers after God. If you are seeking God. And that is true of you today. It is because he has first sought you.

No one can get to God by his own reasoning. Or their own resources. And that is difficult for us to hear. We like to think that we are equipped to meet with any problem.

Whatever it might be. Whatever might confront us. We will have the resources to meet it. We will work it out. At a national level.

[14:19] More money. Perhaps. Is thrown at the problem. There is strengthening of the military presence. More sophisticated technology. At a personal level.

We think that our good works. Will commend us. And Jesus is saying here. It doesn't work like that. It doesn't work with you. Or with I.

Working up our best arguments and reasonings. It's not. It's not by using our best resources. And our best arguments. And our best reasons. It only happens.

If the father who sent me. Draws. Now. That demonstrates to us. The kind of will that we possess. You remember in the Shorter Catechism. Those who are familiar with it. There's a question asked. Did our first parents. Continue in the estate. Wherein they were created. And you remember the response.

[15:16] Our first parents. Being left to the freedom. Of their own will. Fell from the estate. Wherein they were created. By sinning against God. They had the freedom. Of their own will.

In the state of innocence. In the garden of Eden. But the moment. That they yielded to sin. Their wills. Were no longer free.

They were enslaved. And that is true. Of every succeeding generation. Our wills. Are enslaved to something. If we're in Christ.

Our will is enslaved to Christ. If we're out of Christ. Our wills are enslaved. To whatever idol we choose. Pleasure. Money. Fame. Power. Whatever.

Or a combination of them all. Our wills are not unfettered. And free. We do what we do. Because we love. What we love.

[16:15] And you may say to me. Oh but minister. I make choices. I'm sure you do. But I say that every choice. That you make. Is never free. From the influence. On the power of sin.

You see the Bible doesn't teach that we are weak or sick. But that we are under the power of sin. We are dead. And you were dead says the apostle Paul.

Writing to the Ephesians. Describing their life before. They were empowered. By grace. You were dead he says. And the trespasses and sins.

And he goes on to expand. On his theme. By describing the kind of life. That they lived. In which you once walked. Following the course of this world. Following the press.

The prince of the power of the air. The spirit that is now at work. And the sons of disobedience.

Writing to the Romans. The mind that is set on the flesh.

[17:13] Is hostile to God. For it does not submit to God's law. Indeed it cannot. Those who are in the flesh cannot please God. The apostle John. Truly truly I say to you.

Everyone who practices sin. Is a slave to sin. So you see. From all of these examples. We are reminded. Of how the will of man.

Is enslaved. By the power of sin. How powerless we are. One of the early church fathers. Augustine used to say. That free will without grace.

Has the power to do nothing. But sin. The will. Is enslaved to sin. The powerlessness of man. And that brings me to the second.

Point of the text. The power of God. No one can come to me. Unless the father who sent me. Draws him. Now. If you. If the text had finished.

[18:11] At this. No one can come to me. You'd be saying. What's the point. Of anything. But here you have. This qualification. Unless the father who sent. Me draws him.

And the word that is. Translated to your drawing. Is worth pursuing. It is used. In. In. In different context. In chapter 21. Of this gospel.

For example. It is used. Of drawing fish. To show. An eight. Simon Peter. Went aboard the boat. And hauled. It's translated there.

It's the same word. Draw. Hold the net ashore. Full of large fish. A hundred and fifty three of them. The same word is used. In the. In the acts of the apostles. Chapter 16.

You know. When Paul and Silas. Were brought before the majestates. And when her owners saw. That their hope of gain. Was gone. They seized. Paul and Silas. And dragged them.

[19:06] It is translated there. Hold. Dragged. It's the same word. To draw. Into the marketplace. Before the rulers. Or the magistrates. The same word is used of Peter.

When he drew a sword. And struck the high priest servant. In all of these examples. There is the use. Of force. Implied.

The implication. Of resistance. Overcome. By. Superior. Force. You know.

In drawing. A net full of fish. The fish don't voluntarily. Come to shore. They rigor. And struggle. With all the means.

At their disposal. To resist. The inexorable pull of the net. As it is drawing them. Towards the shore. The splashing of the water.

[20:02] An indication. The foaming of the water. How they are resisting. The pull of the net. Those who are dragged. Into the.

They were. Dragged. By those. Who. Captured them. Or who seized them. And they were forcibly. Taken. Before the magistrate. Peter.

Drawing his sword. Using his own strength. So you see. The implication. Is of resistance.

Overcome. By superior force. By nature.

We resist God. We are opposed to God. Unless we are overcome. By a power. That is. Mightier. And stronger. From within.

Then we cannot come. And will not come. To Christ. That proves to us. If we need proof. That the quickening.

[20:56] Of a spiritually. Dead. Person. To life. Is the sole action. Of the free grace. Of God. No one can come to me.

Unless the father. Has sent me. Draws. Let me illustrate. From the bible. You remember when. Just to illustrate. How impossible. It is.

From one side. And only God. Can make it possible. When Elijah. Was on the top. Of Mount Carmel. He was determined.

To demonstrate. To the nation. Of Israel. Who the true. And living God. Was. And you remember. He was taunting. The prophets of Baal.

He was. Taunting them. Cry out louder. Maybe your God. Is asleep. And so on. And then. Do you remember. What he asked for. Fill. He says. Four jars.

[21:51] With water. Pour it. On the burnt offering. On the altar. That he had built. And on the wood. Do it a second time. And they did it a second time.

And he said. Do it a third time. And they did it a third time. And the water. Run around the altar. Filled the trench. Also with water. Everything was. Absolutely. Saturated. With water. And the conclusion. That you would come to. Was this. No fire. Can ever burn there. It's impossible. But do you remember. What the Bible says. When the fire. From heaven. Came down. We read it. Consumed the burnt offering. And the wood. And the stones. And the dust. Licked up the water. That was in the trench. And when all the people. Sought. They fell. On their faces. And said. The Lord. He is God. The Lord. He is God. Now. [22 : 49] I'd like to think. That that is an illustration. Of how God. God glorifies himself. By drawing up people too.

Who were drowning in sin. Saturated. In sin. And he brings them to trust. In the Lord Jesus Christ. From one point of view.

You would say. It's impossible. They're dead. They're saturated in sin. They are incapable. Of quickening themselves. But when the power. Of divine grace. Infuses their lives. Then. They are drawn to Christ. Now you may say. Ah. Ah. You might be saying. Oh. But I thought minister. That God makes a willing people. In a day of his power. Yes. The Bible says that. Well. Every example you've given us. [23 : 45] Is of drugging names. Or persons. As it were against their will. Does that mean that God uses. Violent means. At his disposal. To break.

The will of the sinner. And to bring them to submission. Is he. Is he placing them in handcuffs. And hauling them off. To a special jail. Well that's not what I understand. What I understand to mean. By the word here. To draw. Is that he constrains. By the power of his grace. In such a way. That the person. Is brought to view. The beauty. Of Christ. As attractive. Undecirable.

You see. There is implied. In this word. Drawing. The wooing. Of a lover. And when a lover. Goes to woo. [24 : 43] They are not seeking. To constrain. The person. Or the object. Of their affection. Against their will. You see.

The word that is used here. Is to draw. It's not the word. To drive. It's a word. That sets before us. Something of the marvelous. Power. Of a new affection. At work. The power of love. Where the call. Of the gospel. Becomes effectual. In the life. Of a man. Or a woman. Or a boy. Or a girl. Remember how the reformers. Put it. What is effectual calling? It's a work of God's spirit. Whereby. Convincing us of our sin and misery. Enlighten our minds. The knowledge of Christ. Renewing our wills. He doth persuade. Enable us. To embrace Jesus Christ. Freely offered to us. [25 : 42] In the gospel. When that happens. Your heart. Is opened. Your will. Is won. The power. Of the Holy Spirit. Overcomes.

Your sinful. Self-righteous nature. Convincing you. Of your sin and misery. Your proud nature. Is broken. So that you come to Christ. As an empty handed. Impoverished beggar. Seeking to be fed. By the bread of life. For he has. A work in your soul. A hunger. For this once despised. Source of food. Bread of life. I'm not interested in that. I have no appetite for it. Ah. But. When you are drawn. By the Father. When you experience. The worry. That comes from above.

[26 : 37] When you experience. This expulsive power. Of a new affection. That overcomes. Every prejudice. And every animosity. And every hostility. In your heart and mind.

Then. Yes. You have an appetite. For the bread. Of life. There is no other way. Of coming to know God.

But. Through Christ. He reveals. The Father to us. The power of God. The power of God. The power of God. Floods. Into minds and hearts. Everyone who has heard. And learned from the Father. Comes to me. The power of God. In drawing. The sinner. Irresistibly. To himself. The powerlessness.

[27 : 38] The powerlessness of man. The perfect assurance. Of the resurrection. No one can come to me. He says. Unless the Father who sent me. Draws him. And I will raise him up.

On the last day. Why does he connect. These two. In this context. The drawing.

Or the pulling. The gracious. Compulsion. Of bringing. Sinners to him. Why does he go right. From there. To the resurrection. Well he is telling us.

That if the Father draws. The son will raise up. It's the assurance. Of salvation. If no one can come. Unless the Father draws.

The first question. That many of us. Are going to have is this. How can I know. That I've been drawn. Christ has given this. This.

[28 : 36] This promise. This perfect assurance. I will raise. Everyone up. On the last day. If the Father brings them to me. I will raise them up.

You know. Perhaps some. Might be asking. What about all my sins? What about those sins. I keep returning to. That I don't seem to shake off.

Won't God. Eventually. Give up on me. Would you eventually. Have had enough. Of all my struggles. And my shame. And what Jesus in effect.

Is saying here. It's not what you do. That either brings you to me. Or keeps you with me. It's all of grace. And that grace.

Terminates. Culminates. Has its apex. Reaches. As sineth. In the resurrection. From the dead. At the last day. When Jesus.

[29 : 35] Will raise them up. Why can Jesus say this. With such confidence. I will raise them up. You see that. Underneath.

This whole discourse. In which Jesus engages. If you read it through. Notice how Jesus has this. Self awareness. That he is not simply. A mere man. He is God and man. Because mere men. Don't say.

I have the power. To raise up people. From the dead. And even if they do say it. They don't have the power. When the person comes.

By God's grace. And God's grace alone. I will raise them up. Why can he say that? Because the one. Who promises. This resurrection. Will first of all.

[30 : 34] Be crucified. In their place. And then he'll rise. With power. From the dead. And that brings you.

Right bound. To the. To the center. Of the. New Testament. Theology of resurrection. Jesus is going to say. A few chapters from now. I am the resurrection.

And the life. And he's going to prove that. When he. When he. Walks out of the grave. On that glorious day. Of good news.

When there's an empty grave. And the grave clothes. Are left behind. This. Doctrine of the resurrection.

It's at the very heart. Of Paul's. New Testament. Theology. And here. Christ is underlining.

[31 : 33] His power. Over death. When Jesus came. Out of the tomb. More than 2,000 years ago. It wasn't just.

An isolated event. That happened. A long time ago. But when he rose. He was the first fruits. From the dead.

It's the beginning. You see. Of resurrection life. Sweeping into creation. And if you're a Christian today. You're a Christian.

Because you've been drawn. By God. And you've experienced. A spiritual resurrection. So that when Christ.

Rose from the dead. It's as if God were said. To be continued. And in between. His resurrection. And the resurrection.

[32 : 35] On the last day. Is the power. That he promised. Resurrection power. That sweeps over. Dead lives. And begins to change.

And to conform. Into the image of Christ. And to prepare you. For that last. And great day. Because. The teaching of the New Testament. Is this. Because Jesus. Has been raised. From the dead. Our resurrection.

In Christ. Is certain. And if your resurrection. Is certain. Your salvation. Is certain. And if your salvation. Is certain. Then your hope. Will not be disappointed.

The power. The power of the grave. And the power of. Sin. And the power. Of temptation. And even the power. Of the devil. You'll be released. From them all.

[33 : 41] And you notice. What he says. On the last day. You know. Did you notice. How many times. That was said. In the context. At least.

Three times. It's said. In the context. I will raise him up. On the last day. Many people. Don't believe. That there's going to be.

A last day. People have persuaded. Themselves. That the world. Will go on. It'll just. Roll on. Ad finitum. Jesus doesn't. Share that. Persuasion. And remember. Who Jesus is. Jesus. Jesus believes. There's going to be. A last day. I hope you do too. We don't know. When it is. But there will be.

[34 : 37] A last day. A day of accountability. A day. When everyone. Without exception. Will be presented. Before God.

God. Oh. Oh. Think of the conversation. Between the. When the glorified soul. Meets the. The resurrected body. And the glorified soul. Says to the body. I. I've been in glory. I've been in perfect. Fellowship with the Lamb.

God. But oh. In a state of perfection. How I missed you there. I was not complete. I didn't have. The house. Not made with hands. And the body.

[35 : 34] Responding. I've been sleeping. In the grave. I've been awoken. And now I have. No longer. A perishable body. But an imperishable. No longer. A body of. Of.

Of. Of. Dishonor. But one of glory. No longer. A body of weakness. But one of power. No longer. A natural body. But a spiritual body. Perishable.

As put on. Imperishable. The mortal. As put on. Immortality. Because death. Is swallowed up. In victory. In other words. When.

It is raised. On the last day. There will never be. Again. The tearing apart. Of body from soul. Eternally. United. And so. Christ here. Is directing. And focusing. Our attention. On the utter.

[36 : 30] Uncomplete. Fulfillment. Of your very being. As a creature. Made in the image. Of God. For those in Christ.

You will see. God. The son. In his glory. And be elevated. By him. Into a share.

Of his inheritance. And you might be asking. Oh. But how can I be sure? Well my friend. If you are glorying in him now. You will glory in him then. The perfect assurance. Of the resurrection.

The power of God. The powerlessness of man. Finally. The practical application. If no one can come. Without being drawn. You might be asking the question.

[37 : 24] What then is the point. Of preaching the gospel? What's the point. Of gospel proclamation? If man is so powerless.

As you state. And if the power rests solely. With God. Surely we ought to go on. Without proclaiming the good news.

Well let's take our example. From the Bible. In the prophecy. Of Ezekiel. God promises. A new heart. I will give you.

He says a new heart. And a new spirit. I will put within you. And the next chapter. Chapter 37. Shows how that happens.

The prophet is taken. To a valley. That is full of. Of. Of. Dry bones. Full of bones. Very many.

[38 : 18] And they were very dry. Bleached by the sun. Wasn't a pleasant sight. And God does a strange thing. He commands. He commands the prophet.

To preach. To these bones. These bleached bones. Prophecy over these bones.

As the command. That is given to the prophet. Say to them. Oh dry bones. Hear the word of the Lord. How could bones hear? Impossible. Did he seek.

Gil disobey. Did he say. Oh. There is no point. Did he fold his arms. And say. There is no point in that. They are just bones. They cannot heal.

He said. He said. He believed. In the power. Of almighty God. And he began to preach. And there was a sound.

[39 : 12] The bible says. And behold. A rattling on the bones. Came to Gil. Bone to his bone. And I looked. And behold. There were. Seals on them. And flesh had come upon them. And skin had covered them. And as he continued.

Preaching. The breath. Came into them. And they lived. And stood up. On their feet. And exceeding. Great army. What. Amazing evidence. Of the power of God. Through the word. And it is an illustration. I believe. Of the way. God operates. To the present hour. God doesn't promise. To use. Anything else. But those means. Which Paul calls. In his writings.

The foolishness. Of preaching. He uses the testimony. And preaching. Of the word of God. Yes. For the word. To be effective.

[40 : 09] We require the unction. And the power. Of the Holy Spirit. You cannot reason. People into the kingdom. Of God. And we are duty bound. As believers. To set the message.

Before our fellow men. By living a life. That draws. And points to Christ. And Christ. Makes the promise.

Truly. Truly. I say to you. Whoever believes. Has eternal life. Oh my friend. You may. Think of yourself.

Today. As a dry bone. Utterly. Lifeless. Dead. Ugly. Unwanted. And. Unsuit. For anything. God. And God. Can make you live. That's the wonder of grace. Oh.

[41 : 03] Will you not look to him today. To ask him to fill your life. With his drawing power. So that you too.

If you are a stranger today. May come to experience. The perfect assurance. That he gives here. Of being raised up with him. On the last day. Because the alternative. Is too horrible to visualize. I don't want to.

Consider even. The conversation. That might take place. Between the lost soul. And the resurrected body. Yes.

In and of yourself. You cannot come. But he has the means. And the creative power. To quicken you.

[42 : 10] And make you alive. And you know friend. You'll never be so alive. As when Christ. Quickens. And brings to life. Let us pray. Amen.