

“The Father’s Gift to His Son”

December 15, 2013

Text: John 6:36-40

**There are doctrines in Scripture we do not fully understand,
and which, frankly, seem to contradict other doctrines.**

And yet the Bible clearly declares them both true.

Q: How are we as Xns to deal w/ this dilemma?

A: We open our hearts to God’s Word, as little children are open to whatever their trusted fathers teach them.

If that results in a system of thoughts that don’t all logically match up w/ one another, so be it; we simply assume that God’s thoughts are too grand for our finite human brains;

That His mind follows paths that range too far afield beyond our understanding, for us to map them out;

But that whatever He has revealed to us about those things we cannot see, is absolutely true/reliable, because our Father wouldn’t deceive us.

What we don’t do, is try to harmonize 2 seemingly contradictory doctrines, by toning down one to accommodate the other;

Nor to adopt a modified position between the 2 extremes.

We assume the truth is found w/i them, just as they are revealed in Scripture; not in some speculative middle ground between them, that we invent.

It is very dangerous to become either selective/creative w/
God's truth, rather than believing all that He reveals,
simply learning to live w/ what seem to be
contradictions, from our myopic p.o.v.

Today's text contains a prime example of this principle.

John 6:37 (Jesus)=> *"All that the Father **gives** Me will come to Me,
and the one **who comes** to Me I will certainly not cast out."*

Take that 1st clause=> *"All that the Father **gives** Me."*

That is a statement of the fact that God has elected and
foreordained certain people to eternal life.

Eph 1:4 tells us He chose them in eternity past.

They are the ones whom the Father has given to His Son.

Referring to man's salvation, Paul writes (Rom 9:16)=>

*"It does **not** depend on the **man who wills**, or the
man who runs, **but on God** who has mercy."*

Jn 1:13 says=> *"[they] were born, not of blood nor of the
will of the flesh nor of the will of man, **but of God.**"*

You may be uncomfortable w/ God's sovereign election,
but you cannot avoid this doctrine in Scripture
w/o twisting the clear meaning of the Bible's words.

Now look at the 2nd clause in Jn 6:37 where Jesus says=>

*"The one **who comes** to Me [by an act of his own will] I will
certainly not cast out."*

That is an equally clear statement of man's free agency,
by which he comes to Jesus based on a decision he
himself makes, and entrusts his soul to X as his
Savior.

He has chosen to come, & X certainly won't cast him out.
So, is a person saved because he/she is among the elect; or
because that person has decided to believe in Jesus?
The answer is both; but the minute we say that, someone is
going to protest, "It has to be either one or the other."
Our answer=> Scripture declares both, we believe both, but
we cannot explain how the 2 fit together logically.
And we are OK with that.

What we know for sure from God's Word is that people
who come to X & trust in Him are among those given
by the Father to His Son—you cannot deny that is
true & continue to claim you believe Jesus or His
words.

A corollary truth: Those who refuse to come to Jesus have
not been given to X by the Father, & they are among
those Jesus described in Jn 10:26-28 when He said=>
*"You do **not believe** because you are **not of My**
sheep. / My sheep hear My voice, & I know them, &
they follow Me; / and I give eternal life to them."*

Who gave Jesus those sheep?

His Father, who had claimed them for His own
before the beginning of time.

And yet, because man is responsible for his choice to
believe or withhold his faith in X, the blood of those
who don't believe will be upon their own heads,
because of the choice they've made.

We freely admit that the final solutions to such mysteries lie (at present) in God's mind, not ours;

I.e., from the p.o.v. of God's infinite mind, there is no conflict, but from our limited p.o.v., they are mysteries.

** We can, however, at least identify some of the principles that serve as the building blocks of those mysteries we ultimately don't understand.

In today's text we can identify 4 principles, that help us understand a little about the mystery of our salvation...

- * The principle of human freedom: Man has the freedom not to believe in Jesus (we will meet some people who didn't)
- * The principle of divine election: The Father sovereignly gives believers to the Son, and He chooses which ones, on that basis of His own holy discretion, and His own inscrutable purposes.
- * The principle of divine preservation: Believers are sovereignly preserved, and resurrected, by Christ, so they can never lose their salvation.
- * The principle of human faith: Believers receive eternal life, as they behold Jesus, and believe in Him.

* **The Principle of Human Freedom**

Again, this refers to the fact that man has the freedom not to believe in Jesus, disregarding all the evidence to the contrary, if he so chooses.

[John 6:36] (Jesus to a crowd)=> “*But I said to you that you have seen Me, and yet do not believe.*”

Jesus had demonstrated His divine power to these people, but they had chosen not to be convinced by the evidence He had given them, and not to believe in Him.

One might argue that they viewed Him merely as a prophet who worked miracles (like Elijah in the OT), but that they hadn't seen enough yet, to regard Him as the Son of God. But even if that were the case, they could have come to Him, & asked open-mindedly who He was.

They didn't, because the only thought on their minds was, “How can we get Him to do more miracles for us?”

People like this can be shown astounding miracles, & it will only serve to stiffen their unbelief.

God has given you enough freedom over your own mind so that, if you are determined to disbelieve/disobey His revealed Word, even knowing that your unbelief will someday land you in hell, forever, you can choose to do so.

That is your God-given prerogative.

Jesus told the Galilean crowd, “*You have seen Me,*” & He used a word that refers to seeing with perception/discernment.

These people’s unbelief was not due to ignorance.

They had enough visual evidence/experience of Jesus and His miracles, so that they should have perceived something of His divine nature.

But His miraculous actions had not led them to discern that

He was the Son of God, because that’s not what they were looking for—it’s not what they wanted to see.

As Heb 4 (vs 2) says, what they heard/saw of Jesus didn’t profit them, because it was not united w/ faith.

That hadn’t been the case w/ Jesus’ own disciples as He walked out to them on the Sea of Galilee, & rescued them/their-boat from deadly winds.

When He had abruptly stopped the wind that was about to capsize their boat, the disciples prostrated themselves before Him, in worship.

But this Galilean crowd, seeing Him heal people & watching Him create bread/fish, just came back for more of the same the next day.

Human nature shamefully uses man’s God-given freedom in refusing to believe, even when it’s logical to believe.

Left to himself, no one would believe, apart from God’s miraculous intervention, drawing a person to Jesus by faith.

So X says later in this chapter (vs 44)=> *“No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him.”*

Man has received enough freedom to reject Jesus X, and no matter how strong the evidence may be to the contrary, he can/constantly-does so.

*** The Principle of Divine Election**

[Verse 37] (Jesus)=> *“All that the Father **gives** Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out.”*

The Father sovereignly chooses certain people to be among those He has given as a gift to His Son.

Being well aware of this, Jesus prays to the Father Jn 17:2=>

*“You gave Him [X] authority over all flesh, that to all whom **You have given Him**, He may give eternal life.”*

Verse 24=> *“Father, I desire that they also, whom **You have given Me**, be with Me where I am, so that they may see My glory which You have given Me.”*

John’s Gospel clearly indicates God the Father has given some people (not all people) to His Son, as a gift.

In the past these people had once used their human freedom to reject Jesus, but now they have come to believe in Him.

That is only true because they are included in God’s gift to His Son, so the Spirit has intervened to change their will.

* He has granted them repentance from their sins.

E.g. Acts 11:18=> *“God has **granted** to the Gentiles also the **repentance** that leads to life.”*

Why? So they would come to Jesus.

* In addition, He has granted them the faith to believe in X.

Eph 2:8=> *“By grace you have been saved thru **faith**;
& that not of yourselves, it is the **gift** of God.”*

If they had not been among those the Father has given to X, they never would have come to Jesus, or believed in Him.

But because God had chosen them before time began, for the great/gracious privilege of salvation, He had targeted them for this special gift of His grace/love.

As a result, they have come to believe in X.

The refusal of some people to believe in Jesus does not frustrate God’s eternal purposes whatsoever.

His divine sovereignty wouldn’t allow human freedom to do that.

Nor did He choose others because He knew they’d later believe.

He chose them according to His own sovereign/inscrutable purposes.

But men’s refusal to believe undoubtedly created sadness in X’s heart, knowing the eternal destruction they would face because of it.

God, in His sovereignty, does not choose to include every man/woman in that special relationship w/ its special treatment by which He changes sinners’ hearts, so that they willingly come to X.

Those who would accuse God of unfairness, for leaving some out, forget why God’s plan of redemption was even necessary in the first place.

They forget that it all began w/ man's rebellion against his Creator in the Garden, & that if our 1st forefather had not sinned, none of us would need to be redeemed/forgiven.

But Adam did sin, and as a result, we were all born in sin, & it is our inherited nature to rebel against God.

Nobody deserves from God the special grace of salvation. The Lord could have let the whole human race go, & end up in hell, w/ no remedy & no recourse by which any could be saved from sin.

It would have been perfectly just for Him to do that, because our sin had been our own choice.

But at great sacrifice to Himself, He sent His only begotten Son to become an atoning offering for human sin, to save us from it.

When unbelievers, w/ their God-hating nature, disdain that sacrifice, God is under no obligation to save them, by some other means.

Instead of shifting the blame for their wickedness onto God, people should praise Him for the promise X has given us=>
*"The one who **comes** to Me I will certainly **not** cast out."*

"Coming to Jesus" is more than believing the doctrinal facts about Him in the Bible—that He is both God/man, & that He died/rose-again as man's Substitute to pay sin's penalty.

That is indeed necessary to know, but “coming” to X makes all that very personal.

It is a movement of the heart, that looks-to, trusts-in, & rests-on Jesus, as the Sacrifice for one’s own sin.

It moves us away from the sins we’ve loved; to be made holy.

Jesus’ offer here is wide enough for anyone who will accept it.

- * Anyone who chooses to come to Jesus is heartily welcome.
- * Anyone who will reach out to Him by faith, seeking forgiveness of his sin, & for His gracious gift of new life, is guaranteed that His prayer will be answered.
- * Anyone who, being sick/tired of his sin, hungers for righteousness, & comes to Jesus seeking it, as an unmerited/gracious gift from Him, will receive it.
- * Anyone who comes to Jesus finds that X willingly receives, pardons, justifies him, & will someday glorify him.

There is no possible disqualification for you or anyone else, other than an unwillingness to come to Jesus.

- * Those who view themselves as so unimportant that the God of this universe wouldn’t bother w/ them, may come, and they will joyfully discover that Jesus won’t cast them out.
- * Those who are odd/eccentric are welcome to come to X.

* Those who have committed great sins—adulterers, thieves, prostitutes, even murderers—are welcome, if they will only come to Jesus.

That has to be the case, because Jesus has said nothing here about one's character—only his coming.

* Those who have resisted the H.S., covering up a troubled conscience for years, Jesus still welcomes to come.

* Those who fear they are apostates because they once professed to believe in X, but walked away & went back to the world. God says to them in Jer 3:22=> *“Return, O faithless sons, I will heal your backslidings.”*

* If hearing Jesus' words puts a lump in their throats & a desire to really have the relationship w/ Him they once claimed to have;

* And if they come to Him, sincerely seeking forgiveness of their unfaithfulness, they aren't really apostates, after all, because X's promise holds true for them too=> *“The one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out.”*

* Those who fear they aren't repentant enough, can still come.

Peter=> *“He [X] is the one whom God exalted to His right hand as a Prince & a Savior, to **grant repentance** to Israel, & forgiveness of sins” (Ac 5:31).*

It is not for us to bring our repentance to Jesus, but rather to come to Him for our repentance.

Don't let Satan use that to confuse you, & keep you from coming to X.

But having come to Jesus, under any/all of these circumstances, look back to God, & praise Him in Jesus' name, knowing you could never have done so, if He hadn't enabled you to. Praise His name that, in spite of all the wrong you've ever done, in His view you are part of a precious gift that He has given to His beloved Son—amazing, but true.

*** The Principle of Divine Preservation**

The principle=> Jesus sovereignly protects/preserves a believer's salvation, & will faithfully perfect/resurrect him in the end.

[Vss 38-39]-- "*For I [X] have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. / [And] this is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing [of it], but raise it up on the last day.*"

Jesus would never cast out anyone who came to Him, not only because He loves the person, but even more to the point of our text, the Father loves him, & it's the Father's will that Jesus save him—not lose him.

The Son's will is always in perfect harmony w/ the Father's will.

Jesus told His disciples (4:34)=> "*My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me and to accomplish His work.*"

Jesus sacrificed the glories/joy of heaven, & came to earth that He might save to uttermost-perfection, each one of God's elect, whom the Father had given to Him—not losing even one.

The job won't be done until X resurrects us all in
regenerated, glorified bodies, filled w/ new life like
X's life;
And He matches those bodies up w/ our
sanctified/perfected souls.

**What was the Father's will, which Jesus came to do? The
preserving of our faith, & the resurrection of our
bodies.**

Not only does Jesus welcome all of God's elect, who come to
Him to be saved from their sin;
Once He has saved them, He keeps them saved.
This is the great doctrine of the perseverance (or the
preservation) of the saints.

You sometimes hear it referred to as our "eternal security."

Someone: "But what if a Xn just walks away from the faith?"

A: If he's truly one of those the Father has given to His
Son, he will come back to the faith, before he dies.

God won't let go of him, or let him enter eternity unsaved.

We know that, because of Jesus' words in Jn 10=> "*My Father,
who has **given** them to Me [again, the elect are God's gift to
the Son], is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch
them out of the Father's hand.*"

Couldn't someone snatch himself out of God's hand?

Only if his hand were bigger/stronger than God's hand.

I love the way Wm Hendriksen put it=>

"Scripture teaches a counsel that cannot be changed, a calling that cannot

be revoked, an inheritance that cannot be defiled, a foundation that cannot be shaken, a seal that cannot be broken, and a life that cannot perish.”

I grew up thinking not only that I could lose my salvation, but believing that I was actually doing so every week.

I can tell you from personal experience, that is an absolutely miserable/frightening way to live.

To this day I bless the name of the preacher who taught me from Scripture these blessed truths, that Jesus X will never lose those, God has given to Him, and the Father will never loosen His grip on their souls.

Paul wrote to the Philippians=> *“I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will **perfect** it until the day of Christ Jesus”* (Phil 1:6).

He explained it to the Romans like this=> *“We know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose [that’s the elect]. / For those whom He foreknew, He also **predestined** to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren; / and these whom He predestined, He also **called**; and these whom He called, He also **justified**; and these whom He justified, He also **glorified**”*(Rom 8:28-30).

There are no weak links in this chain, & X will never lose a single believer, from His foreknowing us in eternity past, to our glorification in eternity future.

When it’s all said/done, we’ll look back & say “Praise God, He really did work all things together for good.”

Charles Spurgeon said of certain preachers, that they seem to be

“busy trying to shut sinners out of the Kingdom of God... afraid that more people should get saved than ought to be... afraid lest there should be in the Heavenly fold one that is not the Lord Jesus Christ’s sheep.”

But when Jesus’ people get to heaven, they will find that

everyone who should be there, will be there, because

X hasn’t lost a one, & they’ve all been perfected.

That’s why Jude 24 extolled the glory of “*Him who is able*

to keep you from stumbling, & to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy.”

* The Principle of Human Faith

The principle=> Beholding/believing into Jesus Christ is the means by which believers receive eternal life.

Again, Jesus frames this as the Father’s will for us=>

[Verse 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.*”

By the word “*behold*,” Jesus means to look at Him carefully.

To gaze at Him, to examine His words/deeds/life, and to contemplate the meaning of what we see/hear in Him.

If we do so w/ faith, we will discover that X is God’s Son.

It takes more than a passing glance—it’s a continual beholding for the purpose of understanding.

Yet by the same token, it’s a simple looking, just as the Israelites who had been bitten by snakes in Num 21:9 simply looked at the bronze serpent on a pole, & were healed.

“*Believing,*” as we have seen before, is taking all that we have discovered while beholding Jesus, & personalizing it, weaving it into a personal relationship w/ Him.

It’s more than “believing in” Jesus intellectually, since the wording is literally “believing into” Him, forming an identification w/ Him, and a relationship of trust w/ Him, by which we rely on Him (& Him alone) to forgive/save/regenerate us.

Jesus said that everyone who beholds/believes-into Him “*has eternal life*”—it reads as a future tense, but it’s actually a present tense verb.

The moment anyone/everyone believes, he has eternal life.

In vs 27 of this chapter, Jesus had told the crowd to seek the food “*which endures to eternal life*”—the bread of life (Jesus Himself) who gives man abundant life.

Jesus gives life, preserves life, & will raise it up on the last day.

Then/there eternal life will be consummated in us, as our humanness is restored/glorified to all God intended for us, when He originally created us in His image.

All that is required of man in order to attain such wonderful, abundant life is that he behold/believe-into Jesus.

But this is where man’s will comes in, because the person himself must do so, as an act of his will.

As Jesus put it verse 29 of this passage=> “*This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent.*”

Some people fear they cannot be saved because God may not have included them in His gift to His Son.

But right here Jesus has given us the answer=> *“Everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have [has] eternal life.”*

So behold/believe, and receive eternal life—that proves you have been included, & are 1 of Jesus’ sheep.

If you weren’t included, you couldn’t have beheld/believed. The thief on the cross didn’t stop to ask Jesus, “Am I one of those who were chosen by God?” He just said, *“Jesus, remember me.”*

A hungry man doesn’t wonder if it’s God purpose that he eat, nor a tired man if it’s God purpose that he sleep. They just eat/sleep, & feel grateful to God for these blessings.

So you too, just look to Jesus, place your faith in Him, and then gratefully worship Him, for what He has done for you=> washed/cleansed/clothed you, & fed you the bread of life. Jesus is worthy of your trust/worship, for He is indeed the obedient Son of God.

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Text: John 6:36-40

1. There are doctrines in Scripture which seem to contradict other doctrines; yet the Bible clearly declares them both [10 true].

Jn 6:37; Eph 1:4; Rom 9:16; Jn 1:13; 6:37

2. Is a person saved because he or she is among the elect, or because that person has decided to believe in Jesus? [10 Both].

Jn 10:26-28

3. The final solutions to such mysteries lie in God’s mind, [8 not] ours.

In today’s text we can identify four principles that help us understand a little about the mystery of our salvation...

*** The Principle of Human Freedom**

[John 6:36]

4. Jesus had demonstrated His divine power to these people, but they had chosen not to be convinced by the evidence He had given them and not to [16 believe] in Him.

Heb 4:2

5. Human nature shamefully uses man’s God-given freedom in refusing to believe even when it is [16 logical] to believe.

Jn 6:44

*** The Principle of Divine Election**

[Verse 37]

6. The Father sovereignly chooses certain people to be among those He has given as a [10 gift] to His Son.

Jn 17:2, 24; Acts 11:18; Eph 2:8

7. The refusal of some people to believe in Jesus does not frustrate [12 God’s] eternal purposes whatsoever.

8. Coming to Christ is a movement of the heart that looks to, trusts in, and rests in Jesus, as the Sacrifice for one’s [8 own] sin.

9. Anyone who comes to Jesus finds that Christ willingly receives, pardons, and justifies him; there is no possible disqualification for anyone, other than an unwillingness to [10 come] to Jesus.

Acts 5:31

* **The Principle of Preservation**

10. Jesus sovereignly protects and preserves a believer's salvation, and will faithfully perfect and [20 resurrect] him in the end.

[Verses 38-39]

Jn 4:34

11. What if a Christian walks away from the faith? If he is truly one of those the Father has given to His Son, he will come [10 back] to the faith.

Jn 10:29; Phil 1:6; Rom 8:28-30

12. Christ will never lose a single believer, from His foreknowing us in eternity past, to our glorification in eternity [14 future].

Jude 1:24

* **The Principle of Human Faith**

13. Beholding and believing into Jesus Christ is the means by which believers receive [16 eternal] life.

[Verse 40]

Num 21:9

14. "*Believing*" is taking all that we have discovered while beholding Jesus and personalizing it, weaving it into a [18 personal] relationship with Him.

Jn 6:27, 29

15. Look to Jesus, place your faith in Him, and then gratefully [16 worship] Him for what He has done for you.