

John 6:37

Introduction

These particular words of Jesus puzzle some people, and they chose to ignore them. But instead we need to listen, believe and take heed. **If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching** (John 14:23). Jesus says here, **All that the Father gives me will come to me** (John 6:37). This is a high doctrine and a broad doctrine. God has chosen a people and given them to His Son. They will emphatically come to the Son and be saved. None will be missing. There is a promise here that whoever comes to Him will never be “cast out” (A.V.). Men are warmly and sincerely invited to come, without exception, and when they do, they will find the warmest of welcomes.

Here we have the God-ward and the man-ward sides of salvation. They hold together and we cannot pare them down. It may be hard to fit together, especially in light of the doctrine of election, that God wants all men to be saved. C.H.Spurgeon said, in reference to 1 Timothy 2:4, “I cannot square this with that I don’t know. Things I don’t know are 100 to 1 compared with the things I do know. But I give every passage of Scripture its full weight. I would sooner 100 times over appear to be inconsistent with myself than be inconsistent with the Word of God.”

We need to accept both truths. God’s sovereign grace in salvation, also the widest and sincere invitation to all men, because God is not willing that any should perish. We are not able to solve the problems which arise, but must believe both truths as they come to us on highest authority. Also must draw valuable positive lessons. In both truths there is comfort, strength and assurance. We will rob ourselves if we do not draw these things from them. Do not choke over the fishbone – put it on one side of the plate and carry on enjoying the meal.

Sovereign grace in election

All that the Father gives me. “All”, not just “some” or “most”, but “all” will come to me. In eternity past, long before the world and the universe were created, God chose and gave His people to His Son. In His own time those people came into the world, heard the Gospel, and the promise is they will come. Despite obstacles, opposition of the Devil, discouragement of the world, initial reluctance of own hearts, they will come and will be saved. Not one is missing.

“Will come” – emphatic. No doubt about it. Not “maybe” or “perhaps”. They will be brought to Christ without exception. Spurgeon said, “How I love God’s ‘shall’s and ‘will’s.” The Holy Spirit works in the lives, opens eyes to the truth, and they are drawn to Christ.

There is mystery here. We are free agents, fully responsible. But God takes away the stony heart, He persuades and constrains. We become willing in the day of God’s power (Psalm 110:3). All come unfailingly to Christ and therefore have eternal life. Sooner or later, grace will triumph in their lives. **They shall never perish, no one will snatch them out of my hand** (John 10:28). He will keep and hold them despite

many failures and falls. They will be raised up at the last day, and brought safely into the Father's house.

What surprising people. By nature we are far from God's ideal – corrupt, despicable Zacchaeus, persecuting enemy Paul, reprobate Augustine, notorious evildoer John Newton. Humanly speaking, they had not a chance with their character and background. But, they came. God had not only chosen them, but also had the means to bring them in. Used preaching of the Word, witness of other believers, and earnest prayer of His people.

This is the will of Him who sent me, that I should lose none of all that He has given me, but raise them up at the last day (John 6:39). Is this taught anywhere else? Paul on his first missionary journey in Pisidian Antioch, **All who were appointed for eternal life believed** (Acts 13:48). **For those whom God foreknew he also predestined ... called, ... justified and ... glorified** (Romans 8:29,30). **You are a chosen people** (1 Peter 2:9a). Indeed it is not just – if we want to talk about justice, we would all be utterly lost.

Mysterious truth of election. William Tyndale said, “Here is a mystery too deep for man's capacity. Some people will allow God to have no secret. They are not willing to admit ignorance. Here is great comfort to the preacher and the praying congregation.” [Unclear where this quotation ends].

So many resist, turn away, turn a deaf ear. But God's will and purpose will stand, despite all the opposition of the human heart. God's table will not be empty. All who are given will come.

Spurgeon's letters to his father as a young man, “How I long to see thousands of men saved. But my comfort is that some will, they must and shall be saved because it is written ‘All that the Father gives shall come.’” His comfort was in the fact that the Father has ensured that the Son did not die in vain. Despite all the powers of sin and darkness, heaven would not be one soul less of all that the Father has given to the Son. One of the most fruitful periods of Spurgeon's ministry was when he preached this weekly.

But we ask, “Was I given by the Father to the Son?” The answer is, do you long to be saved? If so, then you are given. And therefore you will be saved and raised up at the last day. You say, “That's not fair”. Do you want to be saved and belong to the Lord? If your answer is no, I prefer to stay as I am, then why are you complaining, clearly you don't want to be given by the Father to the Son.

To believers, be filled with gratitude, joy and confidence and courage. Let this spur you on with confidence. No wonder all but a few outstanding evangelists and missionaries have believed and held onto this truth. It has made them able to persist and put up with all sorts of sufferings and inconveniences. They are sure they are not wasting their time. This thought has put iron in their soul, and is one of the reasons for the endurance and achievements of the Protestant Reformers. They were held by this truth.

Wide, sincere and warmest invitation and promise to all men

Whoever comes to me, I will never drive away or cast out or refuse or spurn. Constantly the Lord and the Apostles preach to every man and woman, repent and believe. “Whoever” παν ο διδωσιν , also used in John 3:16, **whoever believes in Him.** Personal invitation. Addressed to every individual. Come to Him. Turn away from everything else and every other confidence, e.g. self, neighbourliness, church going. Do not turn to doctrine, sacraments, church, but turn to Christ. No hope apart from Him. No one else is the Son of God, has borne sins, and is mediator. Make Him your confidence, then rest in Him and stay with Him.

The promise is that He will never cast us out. A double negative is used here, ου μη, absolutely, definitely, assuredly, could not be more emphatic. No matter what your condition, circumstances, time or place, you have an unreserved welcome. “Never” is a hammer to smash all our fears to pieces.

Here is an invitation to everyone, 7 or 70, of moral character or sunk in gross sin, rich or poor, no matter what you have said or done, even if you have been resisting Him for years, even if you think you have committed an unpardonable sin, even if you have back-sliden and are deeply ashamed. None are excluded. There is no small print, like on an insurance document, which might actually exclude you. Come with your weak faith, feeble prayers, little knowledge, doubts, fears, emptiness, inability and despair. Drop into His arms; rest your whole weight on Him.

Are you still feeling unworthy, that it would be a waste of time? It will never be that. No repentance and faith? Come to Him and ask Him for these.

*“Let not conscience make you linger,
Nor of fitness fondly dream.
All the fitness He requireth
Is to feel your need of Him”*

He will accept, wash, forgive, feed and clothe, give new heart and tender conscience. He will keep you to the end in life and death, and bring you where He is. Tie all your hopes and fears and needs into one bundle and put that bundle at His feet.

This is an urgent matter. You are in imminent danger. If you do not come, you will perish forever without hope. There is only a step between you and death. If you refuse, whatever your excuse, your blood will be on your own head. **You refuse to come to me to have life** (John 5:40). If you are saying you will not come, because the Father has not given you to the Son, you cannot hide behind that. The reason is that you refuse to come. You have excluded yourself. There is no one in hell who has ever wanted to be saved and has been refused. The only people in hell are those who chose and wanted to go there.

J.C.Ryle said, “Election should never be stated in such a way that people are not reminded of Christ’s infinite willingness to receive and save all if they will only come.”

All praise to God in Salvation. All blame to man in damnation. It is all of grace from first to last. If lost, it is your own fault.

Conclusion

The Gospel is that there is only one way of Salvation. It is in the eternal Son, the sin-bearer. He is able to save to the uttermost. We must step out of self and into Christ. Trust Him for the first time, or reaffirm your confidence. Learn to depend on Him for all.

There was a goods ship that had spent a long time at sea. The captain had lost his reckoning, and let the ship drift into the mouth of the River Amazon. They were drifting a long time without realizing they were actually in a river with fresh water. They thought they were still at sea, surrounded by salt water, and the water supplies on board were getting low. They signalled to another vessel that they were dying for water. They were astonished at the response: "Dip it up. Dip it up. You are in a river and it is all around you." They soon flung their buckets overboard and had as much water as they wanted.

The water of life is all around in the person of God's Son. In danger of perishing eternally? "Dip it up". Throw over the bucket and drink to the full. The result is you will be eternally satisfied.