

John 6:35-71

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Justin Beadles

Turn to the sixth chapter of the book of John. It is in the New Testament ... it goes Matthew, Mark, Luke and then John. Four gospels essentially telling different aspects of the same story about the life of Jesus, what he did for us on the cross and the reality of his being raised again from the dead.

I would love for this sermon ... I would like for all sermons ... to be "neat and clean." I would like for them to be easy to listen too. You may want to disagree with me but I actually have that as a goal each time. Today we may not accomplish that fact, because nobody bats one thousand. "They say, "Well Justin you are at about 118, but just do not tell me that and I will be fine. Go ahead and look at your watch, it is fine. Do It!" (laughter) You will still see me at the Methodist, I promise you. (laughter) We have had a lot going on, but there is nothing that we have going on today that we did not plan for. Nothing is out of control here, right?

The things that were essentially going to talk about today, "The big one sentence over you" would be, "What should my response be to really difficult things to grasp in the scripture?" We will be talking in parts today about election and not voting on things, but the fact that God has this all figured out and he had it figured out ahead of time. We will be talking about the reality of human choices, and the fact that they are real life choices, yet how God still had it all figured out ahead of time. Then we will be talking about the idea of eternal security, meaning my relationship as one who has trusted in Christ is safe and how this fits into things. Does anybody have that all figured out? If you do, you can go ahead and leave. A liar, but none the less you can leave. (laughter) What is my response, what should my response be when I encounter these sorts of things? Particularly, the first one, "God has it all figured out". That is a view that I came to kicking and screaming. I did not want to embrace this idea that it is not all me just figuring it out? That God actually has a plan? If you grew up in the same sort of tradition that I grew up in, then you are going to bristle at this, but you will notice that Jesus seemed pretty excited about teaching it, and there were those that left then. That is not my purpose today, to drive you away, but let's look here, beginning in Chapter 6 Verse 35 of John. Remember he has just fed the 5,000 and walked on water. He has begun some introductory teachings about being the bread of life. He says, "³⁵Then Jesus declared, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty." That verse alone introduces us to different aspects of who Christ is and what our moral and spiritual response should be. When he says, I am the bread of life, there is going to be some mistake about the literal bread. They are saying, what, I did not see any bread?

Just like when you are talking to your six year old about something and you think they are understanding it and then all of a sudden they just space out, and you think, “Oh yeah, they did not get any of that.” (laughter) He is saying, I am the bread of life would have this idea of Christ making the bold clamed here and he is the one making it, that he is the source, the sustainer of life. He is that which enables life to exist and to continue to exist. I am the bread of life. He could have said in some sense, I am the gasoline for the engine; I am the source for its ability to operate and function.

He who comes to me; this introduces us to this idea of human choice, does it not? So we have here very much in clear terms that the choice is given to all humans to come to him. It says, He who comes to me, he who responds to me as agreeing with my statements that I am the bread of life. This individual that makes an accurate response to me, he who comes to me and he who believes in me. He says two things about them, “They will never go hungry and they will never go thirsty.” This meaning, they will inherit something that sustains them for now and always. So we have a human choice here, we can all buy into this one pretty easy. It says that this human choice is to believe. Let’s ask our self this question, “What is the condition that is placed upon humans in order for them to never be hungry or thirsty in a spiritual sense again?” It is belief! See it right there, Justin is not tricking you, not trying to get you emotionally wacked out. He is just showing you very clearly here, we can all come to this understanding that it is conditioned solely upon belief. Believing that Jesus in this particular context is the bread of life. As it gets fleshed out more, it is ultimately believing that Jesus died on the cross for your sins and was raised again from the dead.

Verse 36 says, **“³⁶But as I told you, you have seen me and still you do not believe.”** Here the audience to whom Jesus is speaking to, they have come to him in a literal sense, as in they are eyeball to eyeball having a conversation. It would be a sin to you saying, “Well I have been around spiritual things for lots of my life, I have heard stories about Jesus and so you have in some sense the intellectual capacity to be able to pair it back to stories that you have heard. That is different than embracing the truth about who Jesus is. That is the subtlety that he is pressing for right here. But as I have told you, you have seen me and still you do not believe. They would have argued with him, “We have heard you, we came to you, why am I still thirsty and hungry? And he would say, because, seeing me and believing in me are two different things. That is why you hear me and others call upon you when we tell you the true story of Jesus dying on the cross for your sins to believe that, not merely to acknowledge that a story was told or that an event happened, but to place your faith in that.

Verse 37 says, **“³⁷All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away.”** Now we get into this idea of election, this idea of God having a sovereign plan that he worked out to include particulars ahead of time. This meaning that he did not just have a plan out there that I am going to save people. It sort of worked out in his particulars and leaves it up to the people. No, he says to include particulars; all that the father gives me will come to me. This is incredible truth. Now, what we are going to get to is, “What do I do with it?” I will give you the answer ahead of time, and that

is, “Do not run from it, just embrace it and the more you are able to embrace it, the more you will be strengthened in your walk with Christ. You will never get your mind all the way around it. But none the less, you will be strengthened as you walk with Christ in the midst of embracing the fullness of this truth of the message of salvation. All that the father gives me will come to me. “THAT IS AWESOME!” Think about it, if you have a person in Nacogdoches, TX, Timpson or Chireno, Saccal, Trawyick, Sierra leon, Uganda, Shrilonka, Moly, Boly and all the other E’s around the world; if God has sovereignly ordained for them to come to him, you can guarantee yourself they will. “THAT IS AWESOME!” How does it all work into our plan? Our plan is about cooperating with him. Do we want to be the ones used by him to be able to proclaim that message, to benefit from that source? They still have to hear it. They are not going to come to him apart from either reading the scripture or hearing human words telling them about what Jesus has done for them. It does not nullify our responsibility to go and teach, but it shows us that he is going to win. All that the father has given him will come to him and to whoever comes to me, I will never drive away. It is eternal security, the safety that one has in their relationship with Christ.

If you are one who has genuinely trusted in Christ, you have placed your faith in him, then you can put your name right here that says, “And as one who has come to Jesus, I will never drive away.” Meaning, I cannot foul things up bad enough where Jesus says, you are done. I will “Never” be driven away. How many can be honest and say that we live with this daily sense of guilt thinking that this time for sure, he is going to be done with me. Some of us brought that over from our families that we were raised in, because we were maybe driven away by them or some of us just have an inappropriate understanding of scripture. To get our minds around this idea that says, I am one who has trusted in Christ and am safe. That is the only relationship that you have or can have that truly is safe. “But Justin, my wife would never leave me. No, she will probably never leave you, although you never know. My husband and parents would not do this. Today, they probably would not. Every one of you knows you are about eight dumb decisions away from doing that. Maybe seven.” This is the only relationship that we have that we know is absolutely safe.

Verse 38, he says, ³⁸For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me. ³⁹And this is the will of him who sent me that I shall lose none of all that he has given me, but raise them up at the last day. This meaning, Jesus will accomplish his saving purposes and those who have been saved are safe, but I will raise them up at the last day. Meaning, they will be physically resurrected from the dead or raised up if Christ returns while we are still living. Verse 40, ⁴⁰For my Father's will is that everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day." So whose job is it? Now it is back to ours, he is very comfortable in speaking about two sides of a coin. Yes, God the Father has it figured out. Yes, it is your choice and that is a real genuine choice. I do not have it all figured out, but as best as I can understand it, it is pretty clear right there. He says, I will raise him up on the last day. The people there who have not embraced Jesus begin to grumble, Why? Because, he says, “I am the bread that came down from Heaven.” They have a problem with this; they said, is this not Jesus, the son of Joseph who’s father and mother we know? How can he say I came down from Heaven? It would be equally hard for you and me if Jesus were living today because his parents would be chicken farmers on the outskirts of town. You would have known them, you would have known for generations, you would have realized that his cousin was just in the Heritage Festival and the other one lost. It would have all been sort of tied up in this community. So we would have had an equally difficult time getting past the humanness of Jesus to see that indeed he is the son of God. That is their frustration. “What are you kidding me?” I just saw his dad at the lumberyard yesterday.

And now you are telling me that he came down from Heaven. He is pulling them back to deal with the truth, not to get away from it. Verse 43, he says, **“Stop grumbling among yourselves,” Jesus answered.**” Notice when he pulls them back too. His sovereignty, He says in verse 44, **“No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up at the last day.”** They are making the argument saying, “Well we cannot figure all this out? Who is he and...?” And he says, Whoa, Whoa, Whoa, and Slow down. None of you are going to come to me unless the father draws you to me. This is incredibly huge and fun to think about and try to get your mind around.

My goal today is to get you to simply embrace. The goal is not for you to walk away with absolute clarity of understanding. I do not think that is possible, but to see that I made a real life choice when I trusted in Christ, but behind that choice was a loving Father who moved my heart such that I could trust in Christ. You should not see that as a frustration, but look at it as a vast comfort that I could never in my state of spiritual deadness have conjured up enough to figure this out. It should take away any sense of superiority that you are feeling in your heart or that I feel in my heart about these morons that are not trusting in Christ. You were not smart enough to figure it out; you are one that God has lavished his grace upon. And he has called upon us to share that news with everyone and all are told to repent and believe that that is a genuine choice that they are given and must make. Do you see how it frees you up now to simply share the message, and you do not have to feel like you are better than they are. You really have not figured out God gave you the gift of being able to understand. You share it, then you do not walk away from there saying, maybe I did not get it right, maybe I messed it up or maybe their eternal destinies are hanging in the balance now, because I have some prepositions out of place in the sentence when I was going through the little book with them. Was I faithful to Jesus in sharing this message as accurately as I can understanding that the results are up to him? Is this not something that you can buy into? Is this not something that is freeing to you to realize my job is to cooperate with the father that I share the message? His job is to save them; his job is to change their hearts. Will that not change the way you share the gospel? It is far less of a sales presentation now, right? You are far less interested, because now I got to get this person pinned up in a corner and close the deal because they may die. Well they may die, but you do not have any control over that either, but what I want to do is faithfully share this message and then faithfully acknowledge that the response is in the hands of the Lord. And so they never reject me. If they reject, they reject the Lord.

They continue to grumble, he says, “Nobody is going to do this.” Verse 45 says, **“It is written in the Prophets: 'They will all be taught by God.'**^[a] **Everyone who listens to the Father and learns from him comes to me.**” This meaning, those persons who engage, they will get put on this projector of learning and end up coming to Christ. Verse 46 says, **“No one has seen the Father except the one who is from God; only he has seen the Father.”** This is Jesus making claims to Deodoty. **“I tell you the truth, he who believes has everlasting life.”** It’s not belief plus anything. Are we seeing that again and again, and again and again? Yes, the salvation condition solely upon belief and they have everlasting life. Have this present tense meaning they began it as a possession at the moment of belief and that that possession of eternal life continues on forever. Security, **“I am the bread of life. Your forefathers ate the manna in the desert, yet they died.”** Meaning, they ate and they partook of provisions from God in the physical sense, but he is saying, I am a spiritual provision for you that will last forever. Not something that you must continue to renew. **“But here is the bread that comes down from heaven, which a man may eat and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.”** Not in a literal sense, he is

saying that he is pushing them towards trusting in me. This bread, this fullness of life is wrapped up in the person of Jesus, which I will give for the life of the world. Then the Jews begin to argue, "How can this man give us his flesh to each?" They are taking it hyper literally. There were Christians that were persecuted for taking the Lord's Supper, because the Romans and others thought that they were actually being cannibals, because they talk about eating the body of Jesus. In a metaphorical sense, when you see the hyper literal idea, we cannot have that going on here in good ole' Rome. They say, "Wait, how is this going to work, how does this fit together? They cannot get their minds around these vast truths. Their response is going to be wrong. The wrong response is walking away, the right response would be to continue to hang in there and wrestle with it.

Jesus says, ⁵³Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you." Another way of saying this, is unless you trust in Christ as your only God and Savior, you have zero, nil, no hope what so ever for this life or the life to come. He says, ⁵⁴Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. ⁵⁵For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink. ⁵⁶Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in him. ⁵⁷Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so the one who feeds on me will live because of me." Meaning, I will become to them their source of life.

⁵⁸This is the bread that came down from heaven. Your forefathers ate manna and died, but he who feeds on this bread will live forever." ⁵⁹He said this while teaching in the synagogue in Capernaum. ⁶⁰On hearing it, many of his disciples said, "This is a hard teaching. Who can accept it?" Does anybody here agree, I Do! I mean I have read lots of times and you think, Hmmm. Who can accept this? What is the response that Jesus pushes them too upon hearing these difficult truths? ⁶¹Aware that his disciples were grumbling about this, Jesus said to them, "Does this offend you? ⁶²What if you see the Son of Man ascend to where he was before! ⁶³The Spirit gives life; the flesh counts for nothing. The words I have spoken to you are spirit^[b] and they are life." This meaning, you have heard this truth, yet there are some of you who do not believe and he pulls them back to sovereignty. He is not frustrated with it, because he says, Jesus had known from the beginning and that this beginning is like the real beginning. Which one of them would not believe in the one that would betray him? And he was comfortable with that.

⁶⁵He went on to say, "This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless the Father has enabled him. ⁶⁶From this time many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him. ⁶⁷"You do not want to leave too, do you?" Jesus asked the Twelve." This is the great temptation for us, as ones who have trusted in Christ. As you begin to learn about what it means to walk in Christ likeness, what it means to dine on the body of Christ. What it means to lay down your life for others. What it means to embrace the idea of a sovereign God who has figured everything out to the very details, yet calls upon us to pray and that is genuine prayer? Yet, he asks us to make decisions and those are real life decisions. The tendency is to simply check it out because it overloads us. He says to them, "No, continue to wrestle with it, to have Peter's answer. When he looks at Peter and he says, ⁶⁷"You do not want to leave too, do you?" Jesus asked the Twelve." Notice he is saying, you do not want to, as an encouragement to him or do not leave me, hang in there. ⁶⁸Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. ⁶⁹We believe and know that you are the Holy One of God." I never have and I do not now pretend to have this all figured out. There are many spiritual things that I simply cannot get my mind around, but I do know this, "There is no other place to where I can go for legitimate

answers in life.” I am asking you to do the same thing that I am asking myself to do and that is to simply embrace Christ for who he is, in the fullness of all of those truths, to settle in for that ride and let’s see what happens.

Let’s Pray.

Heavenly Father, if I had my wishes this message would be much cleaner with more salient points, but either my own humanly limitations or something that does not seem to work that way. I do know that your words are never spoken about in a manner that leaves people unaffected. I would ask that you would affect our people deeply now.

In Christ name I pray.

Amen.