

All that the Father Gives

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[0:00] From John 6 beginning in verse 22 on through to verse 40. The next day the crowd that had stayed on the opposite shore of the lake realized that only one boat had been there.

! And that Jesus had not entered it with his disciples, but that they had gone away alone. Then some boats from Tiberias landed near the place where the people had eaten the bread after the Lord had given thanks.

Once the crowd realized that neither Jesus nor his disciples were there, they got into the boats and went to Capernaum in search of Jesus. When they found him on the other side of the lake, they asked him, Rabbi, when did you get here?

Jesus answered, I tell you the truth, you are looking for me not because you saw miraculous signs, but because you ate the loaves and had your fill. Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you.

On him, the Father is placed his seal of approval. Then they asked him, what must we do to do the works God requires? Jesus answered, the work of God is this, to believe in the one he has sent.

[1:08] So they asked him, what miraculous sign then will you give that we may see it and believe you? What will you do? Our forefathers ate the manna in the desert. As it is written, he gave them bread from heaven to eat.

Jesus said to them, I tell you the truth, it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.

Sir, they said, from now on, give us this bread. Then 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.

But as I told you, you have seen me, and still you do not believe. All that 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 that 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 him up at the last day.

[2:18] Let me again thank you for your graciousness in extending me an invitation to come and to preach to you and to visit with you.

I think it is a testimony to the grace of God in your hearts as a congregation, particularly to Pastor Heaney, to have ministers come from other churches and to hear what God is doing in other parts of the country and the world.

And your heart goes well beyond Bremen into all the world. And that's the grace of God at work in your hearts and in your congregation.

It's kind of risky, I think, to invite this man from Hicksville that you don't know very well to come fill your pulpit. So I commend you for your courage as well. And I want to say a word of public thanks to the Wesner family, David and Eileen, for their gracious hospitality.

Rachel, in particular, that I've gotten known through email over the years, and to Mary and Daniel and to Jonathan. They've made my stay here so enjoyable. I mentioned being tired while I was in Sunday school, but that has nothing to do with their gracious hospitality.

[3:36] Accommodations are absolutely perfect. A few late nights during the week, that's what does it. But I thank you so much for your warmth and your love in Christ. Now I'd like to preach the word of God to you from John chapter 6, and in particular, verse 37.

I'd like you to take note of that with me. John chapter 6, verse 37. This is the word of God. All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me, I will never drive away.

Blessed words of the Lord Jesus Christ. Here we have a most encouraging text. It is encouraging to believers.

It's encouraging to unbelievers. And we all need encouragement. Life is so full of difficulties, so full of discouragements, so full of disappointments, that we need all the encouragement the Scriptures give us.

It is good for us, then, to grasp hold of every piece of encouragement that is in Scripture. And there's so much, of course. As you know, the Scriptures are so full of promises, so full of certainties, happy truths, delightful realities, glorious doctrines, all for our encouragement.

[4:57] And it's my purpose this morning to examine with you one of these encouraging texts from the lips of our Lord Jesus Christ, where he says, All that the Father gives me will come to me.

Whoever comes to me, I will never drive away. Let's pause and ask the Lord to help us understand his word together this morning. Let's pray. Gracious God, we thank you for this assembly of your people, your dear people whom you love, everyone who is beloved to you.

We thank you for your word which is open before us. The Lord Jesus himself prayed, Sanctify them through thy truth. Thy word is truth. May we be sanctified this morning through the preaching of your word.

May we be drawn to see Jesus even more clearly, to love him. May we see your will for us, your holy ways set before us. May we desire to love our Savior and to live for him.

Blessed in your word to our hearts, we ask in Jesus' name. Amen. I would encourage you then this morning to be encouraged by this text that offers so much encouraging to us.

[6:06] Encouragement. So what is the encouragement that's here? Well, to believers, first of all, there's the encouragement of certainty. The certainty of conversions.

Jesus says, All that the Father has given me will come to me. In other words, there will be conversions. There will be people coming to Jesus.

And then there's the encouragement of a promise, the promise of security. Jesus says, The one who comes to me I will never cast away.

Never drive him away. The promise then of security. And even to unbelievers. There may be some here this morning. An encouragement to you as well.

The promise of acceptance. You will be accepted by Jesus if you come to him. And there is a gracious invitation implied in this text when Jesus says, Whoever comes to me, I will never drive him away.

[7:08] Let's look at the encouragement then in this text. First of all, the certainty. There will be conversions. All that the Father gives me will come to me.

And of course, the certainty is in that word will. The verb will come is a future of certainty. We can expect then to see conversions.

We can expect that people will come to Jesus. He says, All that the Father has given me will come to me. Now notice, first of all, that this is so in spite of a context of unbelief.

Jesus spoke these words in a context of unbelief. Look, for instance, at verse 26. Jesus said to them, I tell you the truth.

You are looking for me, not because you saw miraculous signs, but because you ate the loaves and had your fill. Here were these perhaps 10,000 people that had gathered to hear the Lord Jesus preach.

[8:09] And they were hungry. It was late afternoon. And he saw to it that they were miraculously fed by a handful of bread and fish. And they were interested in the food.

They were interested in the free meal. And they weren't as interested in the spiritual truth that Jesus was imparting to them. They were not believers.

They did not receive Jesus Christ in faith. They looked upon him as a miracle worker. And that was the extent of it. They were unbelievers.

Look at verse 35 and 36. Jesus declared, And isn't it amazing.

Sometimes unbelief is as amazing to us as faith. Here was the Lord Jesus Christ, the incarnate Son of God, in front of them. God incarnate.

[9:16] He performed this spectacular miracle. He spoke words from heaven. And yet they did not believe in him. And so the context then was one of unbelief.

But in spite of such a context, Jesus says, All that the Father has given me will come to me. They had seen him. They had witnessed his miracles.

But they did not believe. As a matter of fact, these thousands of people who saw the Lord Jesus, who heard him preach, who beheld the miracle, they eventually left him. Look at verse 66. From this time, many of his disciples turned back and no longer followed him. The context then of unbelief.

So what was the attitude of the Lord Jesus Christ in such a context? Was it discouragement? Was there a sense of failure? No, absolutely not.

[10:19] Because he says, All that the Father has given me will come to me. Jesus expected conversions. He expected people to come to him, even in a context of unbelief.

And so there he was then, after his resurrection, on the mountain, about to ascend to his Father. And there were 500 believers who were there to hear him, and to hear his parting words. And then there was Pentecost, and the Lord Jesus himself sent down the Holy Spirit. And there were 3,000 converted. And on and on through history, the millions who have come to Jesus Christ. All that the Father has given me will come to me, he said. He was expectant. He was not discouraged. We're told in the book of Isaiah, he says, this Messiah, I will not be discouraged. And he wasn't. He expected his Father to draw people to him. And so there was then this certainty in the midst of a context of unbelief.

[11:21] And we, too, live in such a context. A context of unbelief. How happy I was to see on some of the license plates here in Indiana, in God we trust, that probably would not be allowed in Massachusetts.

You can be so happy for what you can do here. And yet, how many of such people who have a faith generically in God, how many of them are actually trusting in Jesus?

In our society today, there's a context of unbelief. Many gospel churches are small. Most reformed churches seem to be small. False religions are on the rise.

The cults are at our doorsteps. And Islam is again making its noise in the world. A context of unbelief. What should be our attitude in such a context?

Should we be discouraged? Should there be a sense of failure? Should I have a sense of failure in Hicksville as we go to all of these homes and invite people to church and they don't come?

[12:30] And we tell people the gospel and there are few responses. Should we be discouraged? Should there be a sense of failure? No. Optimism. That should characterize all of us, even in the context of unbelief.

Optimism. Because Jesus says, all that the Father has given me will come to me. So there will be conversions. There will be people brought to Jesus.

Even in the context of unbelief. Even in our day. It's going to happen. But we might ask the question, why this certainty?

Why is Jesus so sure? Here are these people, these thousands in front of him who didn't believe in him, who eventually rejected him. Why is he so sure that there will be these who will come to him? Well, the reason was the activity of God. It is the activity of God that assured him, that gave him this certainty. He says, all that the Father gives me.

[13:35] Now note the phrase, the Father gives me. In other words, God the Father is in the process of giving people to his Son.

And that verb is in the present tense. It's a present participle. All that the Father is giving me. In other words, the Father has been making a gift to his beloved Son.

All of these centuries, all of these thousands of years, he's been making a gift to his beloved Son. All that the Father has given me will come to me.

Out of all the people who ever lived or shall live, the Father is taking some from among them to belong to his Son, to be his special possession.

Now, we who have come to believe in Jesus are in a very special category. We are part of God's gift to his Son. And Jesus himself made much of this.

[14:38] It was very important to him that his Father was making him a gift of people, men and women, boys and girls, whom the Father drew to his Son.

Look what he says in verse 39. This is the will of him who sent me, that I shall lose none of all that he has given me. How conscious he was of this gift that the Father was giving him.

In John chapter 17, he prays to his Father shortly before going to the cross. And this was again on his heart, that there were men and women, there were boys and girls that the Father was giving to him to make up this grand gift for all eternity, those that would be his.

And he says in verse 2 of chapter 17, you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him. And then in verse 6, he says, I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world.

They were yours. You gave them to me and they have obeyed your word. You gave them to me, he says. Verse 9, he says, I pray for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given me, for they are yours.

[15:52] And then in verse 24, he says, Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am to see my glory, those you have given me. We are precious to him then.

We are precious to the Lord Jesus because we are gifts from the Father and how he loves his gift and how he loves you and me because we are a gift to him from his Father.

And so you see the activity of God assures the coming of people to Jesus. He's given them to his Son and we're told later on in the passage that he draws them to his Son ensuring that they will come.

The activity of God assures the coming of people to Jesus. God's purposes cannot fail. God's activities cannot be thwarted. All he has given to the Son will come.

And so this activity of God makes us optimistic. It makes us expectant. We expect to see people coming to Jesus. I actually expect to see Blackie and Red and Nanny someday come to saving faith in Jesus Christ.

[17:08] Why? Because the Father is even now in the process of giving people to his Son. You see, optimism and expectancy very positive emotions and Christians should be very positive in their outlook on life and the world.

We look at our society today and how far it's declined. Immorality, idolatry, false religion, perversions, and yet God is still calling people to his Son.

He's still drawing them. This gift hasn't been finished yet. There are more to come and we expect them to come. Now, sometimes doctrine does not have upon us the effect that it ought to have.

We can look at a text like this and put the emphasis in the wrong place. we sometimes think negatively instead of positively and we put the emphasis on limitation instead of largeness.

We read these words, all that the Father has given me will come to me and we think somehow of the limitation of God's grace when the text is emphasizing the largeness of God's grace.

[18:27] we think only some will come to Jesus. Only a specific number, a definite amount. Only those given to the Son by the Father. Only those, no other.

That's true enough. But that's not the emphasis. The emphasis is the largeness of God's grace. All that the Father gives me. All of them.

Lots of them. Too many to count. Yes. All of them will come. All those the Father has given to the Son. And it is guaranteed.

It is certain. They will definitely come. And there may be some from your family who will come. Some from your neighborhood. Some from your school.

There may be some of the most unlikely people who will come. A Christ hater like Saul of Tarsus. An atheist like my friend Ron Bridge who is now a Baptist pastor having been an atheist for most of his life.

[19:26] A Muslim. A Mormon. Any unbeliever. Oh we're so surprised when God saves them and changes them. Now do not misunderstand me.

The Bible teaches the sovereignty of grace and in that sense a limitation. We have the doctrine of unconditional election taught in scripture. We have the doctrine of limited atonement taught in scripture.

scripture. That's plain even from this passage where Jesus says in verse 44, no one can come to me unless the father who sent me draws him. Jesus puts an emphasis on it.

Jesus speaks of sovereignty. Jesus speaks of election even to unbelievers. And he says in verse 65, he says, no one can come to me unless the father has enabled him.

So the truth is there. The truth of unconditional election. The truth of limited atonement. And yet the Bible also teaches a gracious sovereignty.

[20:35] The Bible teaches such gracious sovereignty that our expectation can be large, as large as the world. God so loved the world, Jesus says, that he gave his only begotten son, that whoever believes in him would not perish, but have everlasting life.

And then that largeness, that gracious sovereignty is as large as that multitude that will surround the throne, of which we read in Revelation chapter 7 and verse 9.

After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count from every tribe, every nation, every people, every language, standing before the throne, in front of the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands, and they cried out in a loud voice, salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne and to the Lamb. A large multitude, impossible to count them, there are so many, and I think that should be our vision. Remember, grace is sovereign, God, but sovereignty of God is gracious. Let us be encouraged by the largeness, the largeness of God's gift to his Son.

[21 : 56] All of them will come, and they will be too many to count. So that's the first encouragement, the encouragement of certainty.

There will be people coming to Jesus. There will be conversions. expect them in your families, and in your neighborhoods, and in your schools, and in your workplaces, in this great land of ours.

There will be people coming to Jesus. There's another encouragement, and it is the promise of security. Look what Jesus says in the second part of the text.

Whoever comes to me, I will never drive away. That is security. security. Jesus teaches that once we've come to Jesus, once the Father has drawn us to him, we are secure in him.

And notice the assurance he gives of that security. He says, I will never drive them away. And that word never gives us security.

[23 : 01] Driving you away from him is something that he can never do, something that can never happen. He will never do it. He cannot do it. never, never, never, with reference to circumstance.

You cannot ever do anything that will cause him to drive you away. No sin will ever make him do it. No failure will ever make him do it.

No coldness of heart will ever make him do it. And sometimes we forget that the sovereignty of God is gracious. and sometimes we forget that his love is so gracious and we forget that we are part of a gift from the father to the son.

And we think, oh, my heart has grown cold. Maybe he won't want me any longer. I've had days of prayerlessness. Maybe he won't want me any longer. I've sinned.

Maybe I'll be cut off and driven away. No, don't ever think that way. it's by grace that you are brought in and it's by grace that you stay in. You can never, ever do anything that will cause him to drive you away.

[24 : 13] No sin, no failure, no coldness of heart. He says, whoever comes to me, I will never drive away. And then the word never is in reference to time.

Never in your whole life. Nothing in the present, nothing in the future will ever happen to drive you away from him. And you do not have to worry that something in the future will change his attitude toward you.

Never with reference to time. And there's never with reference to eternity. Nothing in eternity will ever drive you away.

You can't imagine anything that could happen in eternity that would cause the Lord Jesus to drive you away. Heaven will not be a place where we will wonder, how long will this kindness last?

How long will he keep up this reception of me? And there we are in heaven for millions of years, shall we say, putting it in our terminology. We'll never have to wonder, well, will this last indefinitely because it's for eternity?

[25 : 20] And with reference to eternity, he says, I will never drive you away. What's the reason then for this security? Why does Jesus assure us this way?

I will never drive away him who comes to me. Well, the reason for the security, again, is the father's gift. If the father has given men and women and boys and girls to his son, then certainly Jesus will receive them forever.

He'll never drive them away. If the father has given you to his son, and you know that he has given you to his son because you have come to him, then certainly Jesus has received you and he has received you forever.

He will never turn away his father's gift. You have come to him. He has received you forever. It is impossible for the son of God to reject the father's gift of you.

If you're a gift of the father to the son, Jesus will never turn away his father's gift. gift. And I mean each one of you as an individual.

[26:30] Note the term that Jesus uses. He says whoever, literally the one, the one who comes to me. And he's speaking about every single person who comes to him.

Every one of you this morning, every man, every woman, every boy and girl, everyone who comes to Jesus. Notice how even in this passage he puts such an emphasis on the individual. He says in verse 40, 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 at the last day. Him, a single person, an individual. In verse 44, he says this, no one can come to me unless the father who sent me draws him.

And I will raise him at the last day. There it is again, the emphasis on the individual. Verse 54, this is what he says there. Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life.

And I will raise him at the last day. Jesus thinks of every one of us as individuals. And how comforting and assuring that is. I think of the words of the apostle Paul in Galatians 2.20.

[27:42] I am crucified with Christ. Nevertheless, I live, yet not I, but Christ lives in me. And the life that I now live in the flesh, I live by faith of the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me.

And how conscious the apostle was of a personal love that the Lord Jesus had for him and of the personal love that the Lord Jesus has for every one of his people.

And I firmly believe that when Jesus was on the cross, according to Galatians 2.20, Jesus was thinking of every one of us as individuals because Paul said about the dying of the Lord Jesus, he loved me, he gave himself for me.

Not just a mass of humanity, but me. There's a contrast here. When speaking of his father's activity, he says, all that the father gives me.

But when speaking of his own reception of them, he says, whoever comes to me, the one who comes to me. You matter to Jesus as an individual.

[28:48] You're not just a mass of believing humanity. You're a mass of individuals that he knows in a very personal way, and he loves each one of you in a very individual way.

Jesus does not receive a nameless mass of humanity as a gift from the father. He receives individuals. He receives his gift from the father, person by person.

So you matter to him. You are of concern to him. You, as an individual, he knows you. He will never drive you away.

What blessed assurance that is. So there's the second encouragement for us, the encouragement of security. You are secure in Jesus. The father, having drawn you, he'll never drive you away.

And then, there's also encouragement for every unbeliever. it's possible that here this morning, maybe among the young people or even among some of the older folk, there are some who have not yet come to Jesus.

[29:58] And you know something of the gospel, but maybe it hasn't gripped your heart. You're in a Christian home, perhaps, and you're in this wonderful church, and you hear the gospel.

But somehow, it hasn't been made very personal to you. Well, there's an encouragement to every unbeliever. It's an encouragement to come.

The word whoever, or that one, is anonymous. And it's anonymous enough to include anyone who wants to come. Whoever, Jesus knows each one who comes to him in a special way.

But for you, it's an anonymous word, and it's anonymous enough to include anyone who wants to come. Not only does it refer to every individual believer who does come, but it implies that anyone may come who wants to.

And maybe you wonder this morning, am I among the all? Jesus says, all that the Father gives me will come to me. Am I among the all whom the Father has given to the Son?

[31:06] Am I among the elect? Well, you do not need to be concerned about the all. You need to be encouraged about the whoever.

And Jesus really means it. You can come to him if you want to. If you really want to come, that desire itself has been put there by the Father.

If you desire to come to Jesus, how did that desire come into your heart? Jesus says, the Father draws them to me. That desire in your heart to come to Jesus has been put there by the Father himself.

So come and do not hesitate because you're not sure if it means you. It does mean you. And you can come.

Everyone is invited. And on that basis, you can come because you are a whoever. And if you're not yet convinced that it means you, then I want you to listen to the very closing invitation of Scripture, Revelation chapter 22.

[32:21] One of the very last words from God. And it's an invitation. Revelation 22 and verse 17. The spirit and the bride say, come.

And let him who hears say, come. Whoever is thirsty, let him come. Whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life.

Notice that phrase. Whoever wishes. Do you wish to come to Jesus, but you're afraid he won't have you? Are you afraid? Maybe you're not among the elect.

Silly fears. Whoever wishes. If you wish to come, you can come. There's the promise. He says, whoever is thirsty, let him come.

Whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life. Do you wish to come then? Come. Come to Jesus. This text is speaking to you. This invitation is extended to you.

[33:28] May there be those, even in this congregation, who will yet come to Jesus. May God do blessed things among you for his great glory. Amen. Let us pray.

gracious God, how thankful we are for the graciousness of your sovereignty. How we thank you for a savior who invites men and women and boys and girls to come to him.

How thankful we are that you draw people to Jesus. And once they come, you will not turn them away. Oh, we pray that this assurance will be given to every one of your people this morning, that we know that we have been drawn by the Father, and we know that we are kept by the Son.

And may we know that the Holy Spirit is doing a work in our hearts for your glory. And those who haven't yet come, we pray that you will still draw them to Jesus.

May there be great rejoicing in heaven over sinners who repent and come to Jesus. great rejoicing in this congregation. Bless your word to us, we pray. Give us encouragement, the encouragement that we all need.

[34:43] And we pray you'll bless your people in Jesus' name. Amen.