

A DIVINE CALL AND A WILLING RESPONSE

JOHN 6:37 • TV176B

A television broadcast sermon delivered
SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 12TH, 1982

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Transcribed, edited and published
FEBRUARY 19TH, 2013

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Zebulon Baptist Church
6088 Zebulon Highway
Pikeville, KY 41501

John 6:37

“All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father’s will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.”

A man stood in my study recently. He was a little older man than I am; I would say in his early 60’s. He came by the office to purchase some tapes of our television messages and he said to me, “I just want to thank you; you have helped me more than you can possibly imagine.”

He said, “I have a foundation now; I was floundered around for years. I have gone to this church and that church; I have listened to this preacher and that preacher.”

“But”, he said, “I started listening to your television broadcast, and now my feet are upon the rock. I have been established in my heart and in my soul. I have someone in whom to believe and someone in whom to trust and to rest and I want to thank you.”

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Now, that makes everything worthwhile; that is what I am trying to do on this television. We are not entertainers, we are not promoters, and we are not politicians. God called us to preach the Gospel.

He said to His disciples; *“you go into all the world and preach the Gospel.”* He didn’t send us to reform this world or to straighten everybody out politically or even to feed the world. He sent us to preach to men the Gospel of his incarnate, crucified, resurrected, ascended, reigning Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

I am determined to do that. If you will stay with me this morning, if God will give you the grace, understanding, and the wisdom to look into his Word and examine yourself, examine your profession, examine your foundation, *“give diligence to make your calling and election sure.”*

I may say some things today that will upset you. I may say some things that trouble you. I may say some things that you have never heard before, but will you weigh it by the Scriptures? *“Will you search the scriptures to see if these things be so?”*

The Bereans were nobler than those in Thessalonica because *“they searched the scriptures daily to see if these things be so.”*

I’m preaching this morning on this subject: **“A DIVINE CALL AND A WILLING RESPONSE.”** My text is **John 6:37, 38, and 39**, a very controversial passage of Scripture.

I am not afraid of controversy. I am not trying to be consistent with a denomination or even with myself. I am trying to be consistent with the Book, the Word of God.

Now listen to **John 6:37**: Christ said, *“All, (each word is weighty and heavy); all that my father giveth me shall, (not might), shall come to me and him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out: For, I came down from heaven, I came down from heaven.”*

He was already in heaven; He was reigning in heaven. He came down from heaven, *“not to do my own will but the will of him that sent me from heaven.”* God sent His Son into the world. *“I came to do the will of him that sent me and this is my father’s will which sent me, that of all which he hath giveth me, I will lose nothing but raise it up again at the last day.”*

“This is the will of him who sent me that everyone, that everyone that seeth the Son, (not with these natural eyes, but with eyes of faith, seeth the Son and believes, seeth the Son in His true character, in His grace and glory), seeth the Son and believes on him may have everlasting life and I will raise him up at the last day.”

My friends, humanly speaking, three things ought to characterize our preaching. I think three things make good preaching, humanly speaking.

First of all: Experience and knowledge

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Paul warns us against ordaining a novice to teach and preach. That is one of the things wrong with our churches right now. There are too many uninformed, inexperienced people are trying to teach the Word of God, who know nothing about the Word of God.

You can't teach what you don't know. You can't tell what you haven't experienced. A man can't preach repentance who has never repented, or faith who has never believed. A man cannot tell you about Christ if he has never met Christ.

We need not to lay hands suddenly on any man. We are turning people loose in the pulpit and the classroom that have no business being there. They have never been students; they become teachers before they ever have become students.

The Bible tells us not to covet to be a teacher because a teacher has the greatest responsibility. He said, "*If any man offends (is one thing, but if he offends and teaches men so), it would be better for him that a millstone was hanged about his neck and he was thrown into the sea.*"

So, we have to have some experience. We have to preach from the Word, but you don't believe what you haven't experienced. You don't believe what you haven't learned; we have to be taught of God before we can teach others.

Secondly: We must characterize our preaching by its simplicity

The apostle did not preach the Gospel "*with wisdom of words (or with enticing words of man's wisdom), lest the cross of Christ be made of none effect.*" If men do not believe what we preach that is one thing; we can't force them to believe it. But, we can at least preach the Word so that men can understand what they don't believe.

Now, that is what we can do; we can preach the Word so clearly, our Lord did. Our Lord never spoke in words more than one, two, or three, syllables. He never used these great, high-sounding phrases that preachers are using today. He just used simple language.

"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No man cometh to the Father but by me. I am the door; by me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved and go in and out in find pasture. I am the water of life. Ho, everyone that thirsteth; come to the water. Out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water; this he spake of the spirit."

These are very clear words. A man cannot call on Him in whom he hasn't believed and he can't believe in Him of whom he hasn't heard and he can't hear unless somebody who has already heard preaches it to him. That is what Paul said in **Romans**.

Thirdly: What characterizes our preaching is sincerity; we have to have that.

Preaching the Gospel of Christ is not a game. We are not in the entertainment business. Most preachers seem to think that we are. They are trying to hold men's attention with music, glamour, glitter, and all of these other things.

We are not in the entertainment business. We are not in the reforming business. We are not trying to straighten out the government. We are not in politics; we are sent to preach the Word of God. That's our commission.

We are not the servants of men; we are the servants of God Almighty. Paul said, *"If I please men I am not the servant of Jesus Christ."* Our message is not "thus saith our denomination; it is *"thus saith the Lord."*

God's servant is a bond-slave of Jesus Christ who has separated to one thing, one goal, and one objective, and that is the Gospel of Jesus Christ. He is sold out to the Gospel, he is dedicated to the Gospel, he is separated unto the Gospel and when he opens his mouth he is going to preach the Gospel, not about it, he is going to preach it.

You know, one old preacher said this years ago; he said, "it's not amazing to me, that the church of the Lord Jesus Christ has continued all these centuries in spite of hatred, persecution, and trial." For he said, "The blood of martyr's is the seed of the church."

"What is amazing to me (he continued), is the fact that the church has survived such bad preaching, so many religious con-artists, and those who claim to be the friends of Christ, but in truth, they are the greatest enemies that the church of Jesus Christ has ever had; they are like the Pharisees of old, but the church has survived."

Why has it survived? How has it survived? I will tell you how and I will tell you why: It has survived because it is His church. He said, *"On this rock I will build my church and the gates of hell (all the subtlety and craftiness of Satan cannot destroy it), cannot prevail against it."* It is His church and that is why it has survived.

Secondly: The church has survived by His grace and by His power. Jude said, *"Now, unto him, who is able to keep us from falling."*

The church has survived because He purchased it with His blood; it belongs to Him. It is God's gift to Him. It is the Father's gift and He purchased it. Paul said to the elders at Ephesus; *"Feed the church of God which he purchased with his own blood."*

Thirdly: Another reason it survived is that in the midst of all the con-artists, in the midst of all the religious entertainers, in the midst of all the covetousness, proud priests and preachers of all the generations; God Almighty has always had, He has always raised up from among men, preachers who have the grace and the courage and the dedication to preach his Word.

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His sheep will hear their voice. They will seek out the sheep and the sheep will seek out them. Somebody said, “A sheep will go a hundred miles for a field of clover” and God’s sheep will go a long way to hear the truth. They won’t listen to one who doesn’t preach the truth and they won’t follow a false shepherd.

They will get out of compromising positions and be not unequally yoked together with them or support them because I will tell you this: *“Evil companions corrupt good manners.”*

Those men whom God raises up, they speak where God speaks, and they are silent where God is silent. They are more concerned about being consistent with the Word, with the Scriptures, than they are being consistent with human logic.

This is one of the problems of the liberal preacher today. He is more concerned with being consistent with what his congregation thinks and more concerned about being consistent with philosophy and human logic than he is with the Word of God.

That’s the reason that men deny the creation. That’s the reason they deny the miracles of the Old Testament. That’s the reason they deny the virgin birth; it is not consistent with human logic, with human philosophy.

Where have you ever seen a virgin born person? We have never seen one. How then can Christ be virgin born? Because God said He was. You see, we are consistent with the Word of God, not with human logic and human philosophy.

These men whom God raises up, their message is Christ, Christ crucified. They don’t talk about the Gospel. I hear so many of these television preachers who are always raising money to preach the Gospel. I never hear them preach the Gospel.

I hear them raise money to preach. I hear them raise money to send somebody somewhere to preach, but I never hear any of them preaching the Gospel. They are talking about religious things, but they are never really preach Christ. Paul said, *“We preach Christ and him crucified;”* These men (the apostles) and their business is to proclaim the Gospel, not to explain away the Gospel.

Now, there are some of the things that I want to set forth for you this morning that are consistent with the Word of God. I want you to think about them. I want you to consider them; I want you to regard them prayerfully and carefully. I want you to measure them by what God said, not by what you think, not by what you have always heard, but by what the Word of God says; will you do that?

First of all: Search the Scriptures; *“Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God.”*

God says, *“There’s a way that seems right to you but the end thereof is death (destruction).”* He says, *“My ways are not your ways and my thoughts are not your thoughts.”* If a man

repents and returns to God, he is going to turn from his ways to God's way. He is going to be under new management.

Now; I want you to listen to some of these things. I am going to give them to you with sincerity and simplicity, and I trust, from experience:

First of all: God is absolutely, unchangeably, infinitely, sovereign in salvation

"Salvation is of the Lord." That's what I am saying, from the beginning to the end; it is of the Lord. Our Master said; (do you remember the text I read when I started this program); *"all that my father giveth me shall come to me."*

That is what I am saying; God is absolutely sovereign in creation, we know that. With whom did He take counsel when He made the rivers, the deserts, and the mountains and the trees and when He made man and the animals and the birds and the fish? With whom did He take counsel? Who was in the counsels of eternity? With whom did He take counsel and from whom did He seek advice?

Well, you say; "He made it like he wanted to." *"He breathed the breath of life; man became a living soul."* God did it all; God said, *"Let us make man."*

He is sovereign in creation. The desert is hot because He made it that way. The Arctic's cold because He made it that way. The mountain's high; He made it that way. The valley's deep; He made it that way. The oceans deep; He made it that way. Do you believe that? I sure do!

Fourthly: God is sovereign in providence.

"He worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." Do you believe that? Who has control of the sun, the stars, the moon, the oxygen, the carbon dioxide, and the plants? Who makes the flowers to grow and the trees to grow and shed their leaves?

"Have you entered into the treasures of the snow?" They tell me that not any two snowflakes are alike. Who designs them? God asked Job that. He spoke to Job out of the whirlwind. He said, *"Who taught the birds to fly south in the winter? Who taught the birds to give birth to their young and to build their nest and to feed their young?"*

Who teaches animals these things? You might say, "Instinct;" it is God's power and God's might. He is sovereign in providence. *"He worketh all things in heaven and in earth according to his will."*

Fifthly: He is sovereign in salvation too!

Jonah said, *"Salvation is of the Lord; it is of the Lord in its planning, in its purpose, in its execution, in its application, in its sustaining power, and in its ultimate perfection. He is the author and finisher of our faith."*

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Paul said in **Romans 9**; *“So then, it is not of him that willeth nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy.”* **Psalm 115** says, *“Our God is in the heavens; he hath done whatsoever he pleased. Whatsoever the Lord pleased that did he in heaven, earth, and the seas, and in all deep places.”*

Ephesians 1:11, Paul says; *“He worketh all things, (all things in creation, providence, and salvation, in death and resurrection, in eternity) according to the council of his own will.”*

Daniel wrote this in **Daniel 4** when Nebuchadnezzar came to his senses; he said *“My understanding (my mind) returned to me and I praised the most high God who ruleth in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of this earth and giveth it to whomsoever he pleaseth.”* God is sovereign in salvation.

At the same time; now you listen to me; at the same time, our Lord Jesus said; *“All that my father giveth me shall come to me.”* That is a fact; that is a truth; that is an undeniable fact and our Lord stated it. He said, *“him that cometh; I will in no wise cast out.”*

What are you saying preacher? I am saying that at the same time every son of Adam listening to me is a responsible, accountable, creature who is accountable to God for his sins. *“Every man shall give an account of himself to God.”*

He is accountable for his sins; he is responsible for his rebellion; he’s responsible for his condition, and he is responsible to walk in the light that God gives him; that is so!

There is no reason to deny either one. There is no reason to over emphasize one at the expense of the other or against the other. If a man is convicted, if he is converted, if he is changed by the grace of God into the image of Christ, he will forever praise God for giving him the gift of life. He will forever praise God for redeeming his soul. He will forever give God all the glory for the redemption of his soul.

If a man refuses to hear the Gospel and perishes in his sin and unbelief, he will forever curse himself and blame himself for not listening, believing, and responding to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Our Lord said, *“Father; I will, that those thou hast given me be with me where I am that they may behold my glory.”* He turned right around and said to the people: *“You will not come to me that you may have life;”* you will not. *“O Jerusalem, how oft would I have gathered you unto myself as a hen doth gather her brew, but you would not.”*

If you are saved it will be God’s fault. If you are damned, it will be your fault. That’s just so! I am not trying to be consistent with the Baptists, Catholics, Presbyterians, Jews, or anybody else; I am trying to be consistent with the Word.

My Lord said as plain as a man can make it and in words that are understandable; *“all that my father giveth me will come to me and him that comes to me; I will in no wise cast out.”* Will you come? Will you receive Christ, will you lay hold upon Christ?

Secondly: I want you to hear that God did elect a people.

There is no argument there; there is no room for argument. He elected a people to salvation *“out of every tribe, kindred, nation and tongue, under heaven.”* That is what the Bible says. God gave them to Christ. He made Christ their Surety.

Christ came down here and redeemed them. There is no room for argument, it is scriptural. He elected men, not angels. He said, *“He took not on him the nature of angels; he took on him the seed of Abraham.”* There is no argument there; that is what God’s Word says.

The angels fell first and then man fell. The angels fell before man was ever created. Then, the leading angel Lucifer, who led the rebellion, tempted man, deceived the woman and they fell. God purposed to save, not the angels, but men. That was God’s choice.

Then, in the Old Testament, God chose Israel. He passed by the Egyptians and passed by the Babylonians. He passed by the Hittites and the Amorites and all the rest of the “ites.” He gave the tabernacle to Israel, the prophets to Israel, the Word to Israel and the atonement to Israel. There is no argument about that is a fact; it is the Word of God.

Israel was God’s chosen people. Even so, today, the Scripture says, *“there is a remnant according to the election of grace. You have not chosen me, I chose you,* Christ said.”

Ephesians 1:3 and 4 says; *“Blessed be the God and father of our Lord Jesus Christ who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in the heavenly places in Christ according as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world that we should be holy without blame before him in love. He predestinated us to the adoption of children.”*

In **2nd Thessalonians 2:13** Paul says, *“We are bound to give thanks to God for you brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth.”*

For Paul said, *“Whom he foreknew, he predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son that he might be the first born among many brethren: In whom he predestinated, he called, and whom he called, he justified, and whom he justified, he glorified. What shall we say to these things; for we say, if God be for us, who can be against us?”*

Let me ask you three questions; will you answer them truthfully, scripturally, biblically?

First of all: Did you choose God or did He choose you?

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Well, you say; “He chose me.” That is what the Bible says. When did God choose you? *“He chose you before the foundation of the world.”*

Why did God choose you, why? Are you better than anyone else? Are you smarter than other people? Are you less sinful? You are not a son of Adam? You are not identified with the human race? Who are you?

Why did he choose you? He chose you *“according to the good pleasure of his own will. Even so father, it seemed good in thy sight.”*

My friend; there is no argument with that. There is an election of grace; it is not based on the foreknowledge of human merit. It’s not based on God foreseeing what a man would do. Left to ourselves we won’t do, and we won’t come. Christ said; *“You will not come.”* Left to ourselves we won’t seek God. *“Here is love, not that we loved God; he loved us.”*

At the same time, it is true that all who repent and all who believe and all who receive Christ will be saved. It is still true that if any man desires to be saved God says, *“come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden; I will give you rest.”*

He says, *“Ho everyone that thirsteth; come to the water; come without money, without price. Buy wine and milk without money and without price. The Spirit of the bride say come. Let him that heareth, say come. Let him that is athirst, come. Whosoever will; then take the water of life.”*

How can you preach both of those brother Mahan? I do it because they are both in the Word of God. As I said to you in the beginning I am not trying to be consistent with myself I am trying to tell you what the Book says.

In what we are trying to do in this day is to make God’s Word fit our understanding. We better bring our understanding in conformity with God’s Word. God elected a people. If He hadn’t nobody would ever come.

Yes, we do love God but he loved us first. Yes, we do call on God but He called us first. We are the called of Christ Jesus. Yes, we do seek God but He sought us first. *“There is none that doeth good; there is none that understandeth there is none that seeketh after God.”*

“He looked down from heaven to see if there were any good.” He said, *“They are all gone aside, every imagination of man’s heart is evil continually.”* Jeremiah said, *“Can the black man change his skin? Can the leopard change his spots? Neither can you do good that are accustomed to doing evil.”*

Yes, we do, we do learn from God but He teaches. Yes, we do confess His name but He confessed ours first. He said, *“I know my sheep, and they know me.”*

Who knew whom first? Well, who was first? He knew me before I knew him. *“My sheep hear my voice; I give them eternal life.”* He won’t leave us and we won’t leave him.

Now, you get this; election is not salvation, it is unto salvation. *“God’s people are made willing in the day of God’s power.”*

I will close with this: In **John 6:39** he says; *“This is my father’s will which has sent me that of all which he hath given me and all who see the Son and believe on him, I will lose nothing but I will raise him up at the last day.”*

Now, the Scriptures teach a two-fold security. I have heard so many arguments on what they call “once saved always saved,” eternal security for the believer and that entire sort of stuff. I have heard so many arguments that I don’t even want to stand still and listen anymore.

I’m going to tell you what the Bible teaches:

First of all: It teaches the preservation of believers

Do you know what it means to preserve something? Has your momma put up preserves in a bottle or a jar? It is to keep them; it is to preserve them so they won’t spoil.

The Bible teaches the preservation of the saints. I know there is a lot of men who abuse this doctrine and misuse it, confuse it, and everything else. Christ said, *“My sheep hear my voice; they follow me. I give them eternal life and they shall never perish.”*

That is what he said, *“Neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father which gave them me is greater than all. No man can pluck them out of my father’s hand.”* That is the Bible.

In **Philippians 1:6**, it says; *“He that hath begun a good work in you will complete it in the day of Jesus Christ.”* God never starts anything that He doesn’t finish. When God does a thing, it can’t be added to nor anything taken away from it.

Jude 1:24 says, *“unto him that is able to keep you from falling and present us faultless before his presence of his glory with exceeding joy.”*

So, God will preserve us, God will keep us and we shall never fall. “If one sheep of Christ could fall away I would fall a thousand times a day.” But God keeps us, *“we are kept by the power of God through faith.”*

Secondly: The word of God also teaches the perseverance of the saints

They will continue in Christ; He will continue His mercies on them and they will continue to repent and continue to believe. He says, “I won’t forsake them but they won’t forsake me either.”

In **Colossians 1:21-23** *And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouvable in his sight: If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel.*”

God has no unwilling children, no unwilling disciples.

**“The soul that on Jesus
Has leaned for repose
I will not, I will not, desert to its foes.**

**That soul though all hell
Should endeavor to shake
I’ll never, no never, no never, forsake.”**

He will never forsake us either; we are united and joined together. He is the True Vine and we are the branch. He is the head and we are the body. He is the shepherd and we are the fold, the flock.

The believer’s life is a paradox; he is a mystery to others and he is a mystery to himself. He makes no boast of his love for Christ and yet he says, “Lord; you know that I love you.”

He mourns over his sins and infirmities, yet he knows that they are forgiven and he is free from sin.

He knows that he is not under the law but under grace but he still loves God’s law and longs to be holy.

He wrestles with sin yet he rejoices in a complete pardon. Can you explain that? You who have experienced it can explain it.

He weeps over his dullness of spirit and yet praises God for sweet fellowship.

He mourns over trials. He weeps in trials but he thanks God for every one of them knowing that they are working together for his good. David said; *“it is good that I have been afflicted.”* “I wasn’t happy during the affliction but it was good for me and I accept it.”

He is the most happy, miserable person, the most empty, full, person, the poorest, richest, person. John Newton said, “I’m not what I ought to be; I’m not what I want to be; I’m not what I’m going to be, but thank God I’m not what I use to be.”

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“O the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God. How unsearchable are his judgment, his ways past finding out.” Learn them; learn them! You won’t learn them from your literature or from your imagination or from your philosopher, you will learn them in His Book, the Bible. Submit your mind to the Word of God!