

Sovereignty and Security

John 6:35-40

BI: When Jesus is rejected, trust that God's purposes prevail. When you feel rejected, trust that you are secure in Christ.

Last time we met to discuss this passage I suggested that Jesus' words here offer us hope on two profound levels. First, it offers us hope when it appears that the world is almost unanimously rejecting Christ out of hand. I referred to this as global hope because it helps us grapple with the big picture as it seems the rejection of Christ and His word in this world is intensifying. I also said last week that this passage also offers us personal hope, but let's take a couple minutes to refresh on our global hope first.

I. Global Hope in God's Sovereign Grace:

1. When it seems like the entire world is rejecting Christ, verse 37 is a huge comfort. Jesus says, "All that the Father gives me will come to me..."
2. This is a profound mystery that we in our finite natures will never fully comprehend. The answer to the age-old question, "Who will finally be saved," is "All that the Father gives to the Son will be saved."
3. You see this is why Jesus was not rattled by the fact that a large group of people in John six was rejecting Him. He understood something that the disciples could not have imagined; namely, that even after all the proofs that He was the Son of God, the majority of people would reject Him. Nevertheless, God had promised to give to the Son a great throng of redeemed humanity to the eternal praise of His glory.
4. Notice that Jesus repeats this theme on verse 39, "This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given me I lose nothing, but will raise it up on the last day." Again, Jesus is saying that those who will come to Him in faith are those whom the Father gives Him.
5. Then again in verse 44 Jesus says, "No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent me draws Him; and I will raise him up on the last day." In other words, there is no other way to come to Jesus. No one believes in Him by the sheer force of his own will and determination. No one is born with a capacity to overcome her own bent toward rebellion against God. No one! Therefore, if anyone is to come to Jesus on His terms God has to do something in his heart first. He has to perform the miracle of regeneration. He, by the impulse of His sovereign grace toward sinners, must perform a kind of spiritual heart surgery that removes the old rebellious heart and replaces it with a heart that is alive to God (Ezek. 36). And when that happens, the heart that once hated or was indifferent to Jesus suddenly finds that it loves Him.

6. We see this mystery spoken of again in John chapter ten. Notice what Jesus says (10:26-30),

But you do not believe because you are not of My sheep. ²⁷ My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; ²⁸ and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish; and no one will snatch them out of My hand. ²⁹ My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand. ³⁰ I and the Father are one.

7. Beloved, this is astounding! Jesus is actually teaching us that one way of speaking about unbelief is to speak in terms of a person's spiritual identity. Jesus says to them "You are not My sheep." The reason you don't believe in me is because you don't belong to me. And that begs the question, "How does a person become one of Jesus' sheep? Answer: You become one of Jesus' sheep when the Father, by the impulse of His sovereign grace, gives you to Christ. That must happen first. The Father must give you to the Son.

8. Again, turn to John 17. Verses one and two read, "

v. 1-2

Jesus spoke these things; and lifting up His eyes to heaven, He said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son, that the Son may glorify You, ² even as You gave Him authority over all flesh, that to all whom You have given Him, He may give eternal life.

v. 6

I have manifested Your name to the men whom You gave Me out of the world; they were Yours and You gave them to Me, and they have kept Your word.

v. 9-10

I ask on their behalf; I do not ask on behalf of the world, but of those whom You have given Me; for they are Yours; ¹⁰ and all things that are Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine; and I have been glorified in them.

v. 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, for You loved Me before the foundation of the world.

9. Do you see friends? This is why Jesus was not in the least bit anxious or rattled by the fact that all of these people in John chapter six were rejecting Him. He knew beyond any doubt that His Father was infallibly drawing people to Him; people whom He had set His saving designs upon even before the creation of the world.

10. Let me tell you how this has filled me with hope. Twenty years ago this coming May, when Chris and I came to what would become Calvary Bible Church, the church was small and full of problems. There were unity problems, leadership problems, authority problems, doctrinal problems, and honestly we didn't know whether it was the Lord's will for this church to survive. What we did know, however, is that we had an irrevocable mandate from the Lord. And I will tell you what it is:

2 Timothy 4:1–2, Paul writes: “I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: ² preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction.

11. Beloved, do you know why we get to enjoy a healthy, loving, thriving, church today? It is due in part to the fact that 20 years ago the elders of this church resolved that these are our marching orders. I'm not saying we are better than any other church. It is by the grace of God that we are what we are today. But I know for a fact that many ministries have run aground over the years because when it seemed to them that their efforts were not producing enough professions of faith, baptisms, and numeric growth so they concluded that something was wrong and we need to fix it.

12. This is the root of all church growth theory and practice. This is behind so many of the evangelical fads that sweep through town every few years; whether it be the Prayer of Jabez, or the Purpose-Driven Life, or the Emergent movement, or Vertical Church, or whatever is popular today.

13. Beloved, do you understand why we don't jump on those bandwagons when they come rolling through town? Its because we believe there is NOTHING wrong with God's Message, and there is NOTHING wrong with God Method either. We preach Christ crucified! We reprove, rebuke, encourage, and evangelize in accordance with His word and then we simply trust that God will keep drawing people to Himself to give to Christ just as He has always done. He may not save as many this year as He did last year as a result of our ministry, but frankly, that's none of our business. Our job is simply to be faithful to minister God's sufficient word and watch as He builds His church.

14. The fact that God the Father is actively giving people to His Son is the foundation of our global hope. So when we watch the news this week and see the utterly perplexing unbelief in family members, coworkers, and neighbors, and begin to wonder if its possible for the gospel to make progress and for Jesus to fulfill His promise to build His church, take heart! All that the Father gives to the Son will infallibly come to Him! This is a great mystery. But it is also our great hope and expectation because God Himself has promised.

14. This is our global hope. But there is also personal hope in God's sovereign grace.

II. Personal Hope in God's Sovereign Grace:

1. To this point we have only considered the mysterious, invisible, theological side of what Jesus teaches about our salvation. On the other hand, I know that there are those listening to my voice right now who really struggle at a profoundly personal level. You know your sin. Perhaps there have been significant people in your life who have rejected you because of the guilt of real sin. You have sinned against God and others in a manner that in your mind can scarcely be pardoned. But I am here to tell you today that such thinking is simply not true. God's sovereign grace is always a forgiving grace, and it is infinitely greater than all your sin. Look with me at John chapter six again.

3. Verse 37 says, "All that the Father gives to me will come to me, and the one who comes to me I will certainly not cast out." Do you detect the absence of rejection here?

4. The people in Jesus' day lived in fear that the religious leaders would cast them out of the synagogue. They could be thrown out of the fellowship. They could be treated like lepers for their disobedience to the laws and traditions of men. But this is NOT how Jesus treats those whom the Father gives to Him.

5. Beloved, this is the essence of Sovereign Grace! The only people God ever saves are sinful people! The fact is, there isn't any other kind! And think of the history of some whom He has saved?

- Zaccheus was a thieving tax collector who admitted that he had stolen money from people to make himself rich (Luk. 19).
- The man in Gadara whom Jesus saved was possessed by a legion of demons and had done much harm to the community around him (Lk. 8).
- A woman who was known for her reputation of immorality came to anointed Jesus feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. Jesus not only accepted her, He defended her actions the Pharisees (Lk. 7).
- And think of Saul of Tarsus. He was a well-known religious hypocrite, who did his dead-level best to destroy the church and who was even complicitous in the murder of Stephen. Nevertheless, the resurrected Christ chose Him and sought Him out to be His apostle (Acts 9).

6. You see, God loves to save sinners... even the worst of them! Moreover, the Father is especially partial toward calling people who are nobodies in the eyes of men. Do you remember what Paul said in Paul 1 Cor. 1:26-27? "For consider your calling, brethren, that there were not many wise [skillful] according to the flesh, not many mighty [competent/important], not many noble [high social status];²⁷ but God has chosen the foolish [worthless, stupid, and non-sensical] things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the [weak helpless] things of the world to shame the things which are strong, and the base [inferior] things of the world and the despised [contemptible/rejected] God has chosen, the things that are not [don't exist], so that He may nullify the things that are,²⁹ so that no man may boast before God."

7. You see, these are the kinds of people God loves to save. In fact, the first of Jesus' beatitudes is "Blessed are the poor in spirit." In other words, "Blessed are the spiritually bankrupt." These are people who know they have nothing to offer God but their sin. God loves to save such people. And Jesus says here (6:37) "When this kind of person comes to me, I will certainly not cast them out." It can't be any more emphatic than that.

8. And you may ask, "Well how do I know if I am one whom the Father has chosen?" All I can tell you is that the elect are manifest by their faith. The question you must wrestle with is NOT "Has God chosen me?," but "Do I believe?"

9. This is the whole point of this passage. Jesus is offering himself as the bread of life. He says (6:35) "I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst."

10. Oh my friend, do not miss His promise (6:40) "For this is the will of Him who sent Me, 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." Now there's a promise!

10. Where does personal hope come from? It comes from the very promise of Jesus that every sinner who believes in Jesus for whom He has revealed Himself to be will NOT be rejected (though he/she be the worst of sinners) but in fact be given eternal life. Why? Because in Paul's words, God loves to "Justify the ungodly" (Rom. 4:5). He is greatly glorified in the act of saving sinners, adopting them into His family, and bringing them into His eternal kingdom to glorify His Son forever.

11. Charles Spurgeon once wrote,

It lies not in man's right nor man's power truly to justify the guilty. This is a miracle reserved for the Lord alone. God, the infinitely just sovereign, knows that there is not a just man upon earth that does good and sinneth not, and therefore, in the infinite sovereignty of His divine nature and in the splendor of His ineffable love, He undertakes the task, not so much of justifying the just as of justifying the ungodly ... He can treat the guilty as if he had been all his life free of offenses, yea, can treat him as if he were wholly free from sin. He justifies the ungodly.

What is it to believe in Him? It is not merely to say, 'He is God and the Savior,' but to trust Him wholly and entirely, and take Him for all your salvation from this time forth and forever – your Lord, your Master, your all. If you will have Jesus, He has you already.¹

12. So what will you do with Jesus? Will you reject Him as did the people at the synagogue of Capernaum? Or will you place all your hope in His promise to justify the ungodly; to give you eternal life, and to raise you up again on the last day?

¹ C.H. Spurgeon, from *The Works of Charles Haddon Spurgeon: All of Grace*. (Kindel Edition Loc. 1543).

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