

April 17th, 2016

NO ONE CAN COME TO ME UNLESS THE FATHER DRAWS HIM

John 6:41-46

Charles Spurgeon, the great prince of preachers, who turned England upside down in the latter part of the 19th century once said this:

“...I have my own private opinion, that there is no such thing as preaching Christ and him crucified, unless you preach what now-a-days is called Calvinism. I have my own ideas, and those I always state boldly. It is a nickname to call it Calvinism. Calvinism is the gospel, and nothing else. I do not believe we can preach the gospel, if we do not preach justification by faith without works, nor unless we preach the sovereignty of God in his dispensation of grace; nor unless we exalt the electing, unchangeable, eternal, immutable, conquering love of Jehovah; nor, I think, can we preach the gospel, unless we base it upon the peculiar redemption which Christ made for his elect and chosen people; nor can I comprehend a gospel which lets saints fall away after they are called, and suffers the children of God to be burned in the fires of damnation, after having believed. Such a gospel I abhor. The gospel of the Bible is not such a gospel as that. We preach Christ and him crucified in a different fashion, and to all gainsayers we reply, “We have not so learned Christ.”¹

This is a risky quote. *Calvinism* is a risky word. But what is infinitely more risky is preaching a partial gospel. Spurgeon refused to preach a partial gospel, *because* His Master Jesus Christ refused to preach a partial gospel. What is Jesus doing in John chapter six? Isn't He preaching the gospel? **John 6:27** “Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you. For on him God the Father has set his seal.” **John 6:29** “This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he

¹ Charles Spurgeon, *Spurgeon's Sermons, Vol. 1-2*, (Peabody, MA,: Hendrickson Publishers, 2011), pg. 88-89

has sent.” **John 6:35** “I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst.”

Are we to suppose now, that in v.37, and v.44 that Jesus is starting to speak about something other than the gospel?² Dear congregation, the word gospel means “good news” (εὐαγγέλιον euaggelion). In order for the gospel to remain good news, it must be effectual.³ In our text this morning, Jesus is telling us that the gospel is not effectual unless the Father draws us to Christ. Which means, there is no good news (gospel) if the Father doesn’t draw people to His Son. Which means that Christ died in vain, if Father doesn’t draw people to His Son.

Doctrine

Nobody will savingly come to Christ unless the Father draws them, and if this doesn’t happen there is no gospel.

☆ Man’s Sin Discovered In Not Coming To Christ (v.41-42)

☆ God’s Grace Discovered In Coming To Christ (v.43-46)

I. Man’s Sin Discovered In Not Coming To Christ (v.41-42)

1. The context

The day before these events, Jesus miraculously turned five loaves of bread and two fish into enough food to feed five thousand people, not counting women and children. The Jews interpreted this sign wrongly, and they intended

² Jesus’ entire ministry was one of gospel preaching! Luke 4:18-19 “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news [the gospel] to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.”

³ successful in producing a desired or intended result; effective.

to take Jesus and make him king by force and end Roman occupation. Jesus immediately left not giving them that opportunity. Jesus didn't come to *merely* give physical bread, He came as our bread from heaven, to feed us eternal life.

When he met up with the Jews on the opposite side of the shore, that is what he told them. **John 6:33** "For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." But this caused the Jews present to quarrel amongst themselves about what Jesus said.

2. The grumbling of unbelief

[41] So the Jews grumbled about him, because he said, "I am the bread that came down from heaven."

These Jews *grumbled* about Jesus. There is an escalation of hostility towards Jesus in this chapter. The more that Jesus reveals about Himself, the greater the hostility. The clearer Jesus is, the greater the opposition against Him becomes. Unbelievers are fine with Jesus being a good man, or a good teacher, or perhaps even a miracle worker, but the moment He starts speaking about how the eternal destiny of every human being rests upon whether they will believe in Him or not, a violent and bitter grumbling begins.⁴

3. The sin of unbelief

[42] They said, "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? **How** does he now say, 'I have come down from heaven'?"

⁴ Dear congregation, our witness of Jesus Christ to our unbelieving friends and family must go beyond general platitudes of Christ. If our witness of the gospel doesn't result in our unbelieving listeners to *grumble*, **then I dare say we are not being faithful in our gospel sharing**. Jesus made absolute claims on every human soul. **John 3:36** "Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life; whoever does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains on him." I'm not saying that our *conduct* should make unbelievers *grumble*, we should be blameless in our behavior before them. Jesus was blameless in His conduct, and yet people became violently angry at His words. We should expect grumbling. We should expect people to hate us if we are proclaiming Christ faithfully. The preaching of Christ is a stumbling block to unbelievers. "...as it is written, "Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense; and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame." **Romans 9:33** (cf. 2 Cor. 2:15-16)

The key word here is *how*. “*How* does he now say...” Something is happening in the souls of these unbelievers. What is it? Because we won’t understand Jesus’ response to them, if we don’t understand what is happening in their souls. So what’s going on? They ask *how*? ‘*How* can Jesus be who He says He is, the glory of God come down from heaven, when we know who his parents are?’ They didn’t get it. **They were leaning on their human reasoning alone.** And their human reasoning failed in understanding heavenly things. That’s the first thing that was happening in their souls. They beheld Christ with carnal eyes only, and their carnal reasoning couldn’t make sense of the glory that was coming from His lips.

The second thing that was happening in their souls, was that because they were leaning on their human reasoning, they judged Jesus’ words to be complete foolishness. Their not understanding Jesus did not come from a heart that said ‘...hmmm, I don’t understand that, can you teach me?’ Rather their hearts said, ‘Jesus, what you’re saying is **stupid**. We know your father and mother, there’s nothing special about you.’⁵

It is here where we see the evil in not coming to Christ. The unbeliever judges the words of the Son of God to be stupid. **1 Corinthians 2:14** “The natural person does not accept the things of the Spirit of God, *for they are folly to him*, and he is not able to understand them because they are spiritually discerned.” Notice two important parts of that verse. The natural person, meaning the person not indwelt by the Spirit of God, does not believe the message of Jesus *because* he cannot understand spiritual things. He doesn’t have the necessary equipment, i.e. the Holy Spirit, in order to understand. However, the natural man is guilty nonetheless, because what he hears he considers to be stupid. These Jews refused to come to Christ because what they heard was utter foolishness. This is the attitude of every unbeliever. They don’t hear good news when the gospel is preached, they hear foolishness. **1 Corinthians 1:18**

⁵ They beheld Christ with carnal eyes only. “...seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear...” **Matthew 13:13** They could *physically* see Jesus, but they could not *spiritually* see His glory. They did not see anything lovely in Christ. As the prophet says “...he had no form or majesty that we should look at him, and no beauty that we should desire him.” Isaiah 53:2 Experimental: If you don’t see Jesus Christ as beautiful and glorious and the food for your soul, it is because you are an unbeliever.

“For the word of the cross is **folly** to those who are perishing...” How does Jesus respond to their private grumbling about him?

II. God’s Grace Discovered In Coming To Christ (v.43-46)

1. ‘Stop grumbling— You are helpless to believe on Me in your own strength’

[43] Jesus answered them, “Do not grumble among yourselves.”⁶

At this point Jesus could have cleared up the misunderstanding. Joseph was in fact not his real father. Jesus was miraculously conceived by the Holy Spirit, through the virgin Mary. But Jesus doesn’t even bother telling them this, because that would not caused them to believe.⁷ Human reasoning cannot produce saving belief in Jesus Christ. Human beings do not have it in themselves to enter the kingdom of God. If v.44 doesn’t happen, nobody will be saved.

2. The controversy explained and answered

[44] No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day.

Do you think when Jesus said this, He knew that this would cause 2,000 years of controversy within the church? Of course He did. So why would He say it? Why would Jesus make a statement here that He could have completely avoided, knowing that it would create such a controversy? Because, **whoever gets the credit gets the glory.**

⁶ The grumbling that the Jews do here is ironical. They are complaining when the true bread from heaven is standing right in front of them, just like their fathers complained in the wilderness when they received the manna from heaven. 1 Cor. 10:10

⁷ “Although this greatly offended them, that He was born from a mean and common father, still He revealed not to them the truth, lest in removing one cause of offense He should create another.” Chrysostom, *Homilies on the Gospel of St. John, Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, First Series, Vol. 14*, Ed. Phillip Schaff, (Peabody, MA,: Hendrickson Publishers, 5th Printing 2012), pg. 164

Two pre-dominant camps have been seen this verse in two different ways. The first camp, nick-named **Arminianism**, understands this verse to mean that no one can come to the Christ unless the Father draws him, *but* the Father draws everybody. So the Father's drawing makes coming to Christ *possible*, but the person's belief in Christ is the *ultimate decisive cause* in them coming.

The second camp, nick-named **Calvinism**, understands this verse to say that no one can come to Christ unless the Father draws him, and all those the Father draws do come, *because* the drawing *produces* the coming. This would mean that God doesn't draw everybody, and we see this because not everyone is saved. It is the Father who is the *ultimate decisive cause* of people coming to Christ, and not man.⁸

Which one is right? Let's let the Bible decide. Let's look at v.44 "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me *draws* him." The key word is *draw*. ἔλκω *he'l-kō* in the Greek. It means to drag, or (metaphorically) to compel by an inward power.

John uses this word later in **John 18:10** "Then Simon Peter, having a sword, **drew** it (ἔλκω) and struck the high priest's servant and cut off his right ear." Did Peter *suggest* that his sword come out of his sheath or did he effectually remove it from the sheath? He effectively pulled it from the sheath. If it did not come out, he did not draw it. Likewise John 21:11 "So Simon Peter went aboard and **hauled** (ἔλκω) the net ashore, full of large fish, 153 of them." Did Peter suggest that the net of fish come to shore, or did he effectively drag it to his desired location?⁹ He effectively, and powerfully, drug it out of the water. If he failed to take it out of the water, John couldn't have said he drew it (hauled). The word draw never means a mere suggestion, it always carries with it the effective power of causing an effect.

Arminianism will respond with the idea of prevenient grace. This is the idea that God draws all men (invincibly) *in the sense* that whereas once they were hostile to God, now because of prevenient grace, or this general drawing in v.44,

⁸ <http://www.desiringgod.org/messages/skeptical-grumbling-and-sovereign-grace>

⁹ cf. Acts 16:19 and 21:30

they can come to Christ unhindered by their own free will. The ultimate decisive factor still being their own choice and not God's grace. The problem with this view is v.44 itself. v.44 says that all that the Father draws, *Christ will raise up on the last day*. Meaning, the drawn ones will **necessarily** believe in Christ, and as a result be raised to resurrection unto life on the last day. **Acts 13:48** "And when the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord, and as many as were appointed to eternal life believed."

Likewise the whole context of chapter six will not allow this interpretation. **John 6:37** "All that the Father gives me *will* come to me," The Father giving in v.37 is the same as the Father drawing in v.44. Those whom He gives, or draws will invincibly come to Christ. **John 6:63** "It is the Spirit who gives life; *athe* flesh is no help at all." The Spirit doesn't give a nudging towards Christ, He gives life in Christ. The flesh, your mind, your affections, your will provides no help at all. **John 6:65** "This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless it is *granted* him by the Father" At the end of this very conversation just a few verses from here, many of his disciples will leave from following Him. And the reason Jesus gives for their leaving is because the Father did not *grant* them the ability to come to Jesus. That is, the Father did not draw them.

3. Two more objections

Objection: God is holding out people who *want* to come to heaven. Some have taken v.44 to mean that God is holding the door of heaven shut to people who *want* to come. So they understand "No one *can* come to me" as if God is preventing them *against their wills*.

Answer. Unbelievers don't want heaven. Heaven is the place where the angels cry out day and night "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!" (Isaiah 6:3) Heaven is that glorious city that "...has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God gives it light, and its lamp is the Lamb." (Rev. 21:23) Heaven is the place where Jesus Christ the Lamb of God is adored and treasured intimately, passionately, desperately, longingly, by every

saint to the glory of God the Father.¹⁰ Heaven is not a place of self-indulgence, it's a place of Christ indulgence. Unbelievers hate that. Jesus said the world hates Him (John 15:18). When v.44 says "No one can come to me" it's to be understood ultimately as "...no one *will* come to me..." Unwillingness leads to inability. Paul says in Romans 8:7 "For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it **does not** submit to God's law; indeed, it **cannot**."

Objection: God draws everybody—John 12:32 says "And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will **draw** all people to myself."

Answer: The word "draw" here is the same word as in v.44. So this drawing is an invincible drawing. If the "all people" in this verse means every single person on planet earth, then everybody without exception will be saved. So it can't mean that because of all the passages that we know where God speaks of hell. The "all people" in this verse means "all people without exception" meaning not just Jews (who was John's primary audience¹¹), but Gentiles as well.¹² All of God's elect, both Jews and Gentiles will invincibly be drawn to Jesus Christ.

4. What is at stake in this verse

v.44 is Jesus' explanation to what was going on in the souls of these Jews. Remember the Jews were reasoning amongst themselves that what Jesus was saying was utter foolishness. And Jesus' answer in v.43-44 is essentially 'Stop grumbling—because you can't discover the truth of what I am saying on your own. No one can. Unless the Father, who sent me, reveals to you that I AM the living bread that your soul needs, you will never come to Me. It's not within your own power. If you come to Me, the Father will get the glory, not you.' Dear congregation, v.44 is about worship. Woe to the preacher that does not preach these doctrines. Jesus is putting Father on display. 'It's my Father who will bring you to Me. And if that doesn't happen, you're not coming.'

¹⁰ cf. John 17:3

¹¹ cf. Galatians 2:9

¹² cf. Joel 2:28

It was Father that called Abraham out of Babylon. He was a moon worshipper (Joshua 24:2), serving other gods. But Father drew him to Himself. It was Father that called the boy Samuel to himself, while he left Eli's wicked sons to their own devices (1 Sam. 3:4). It was Father who opened Lydia's heart to hear the things that Paul was saying (Acts 16:14).¹³ Why does the Scripture record these things? So that we would lift our voices to Father and praise Him for His grace. God wants to be adored and treasured for the lavish grace that He pours out on people.

v.44 is a monument to Jesus' love and loyalty to the Father to make sure that He gets all the credit for us coming to Him. Jesus is concerned that we will not take the smallest crumb of credit for our salvation. Jesus did not come to earth to exalt the human condition. He came to exalt the grace of His Father in sending Him, and in drawing men and women and children to Himself. It is all grace.¹⁴

5. How does the Father draw people to His Son?

In other words, how does v.44 work? How does the Father draw His people to the Son? Jesus anticipates this question and gives us the answer in the following two verses.

[45] It is written in the Prophets, 'And they will all be taught by God.' Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me — [46] not that anyone has seen the Father except he who is from God; he has seen the Father.

¹³ It was Father who loved and appointed Jeremiah before he was ever born "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you; I pointed you a prophet to the nations." Jeremiah 1:5

¹⁴ How do you understand that word—grace? v.44 is Jesus' understanding of it. In other places of the Bible it is called election or predestination. God displays these things purposefully that we might praise Him! Ephesians 1:3-6 "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved." Notice in these verses that the very thing Paul is praising is God's electing, predestinating love, namely "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." And notice the reason why God elects and predestinates is for the same purpose, namely "...to the praise of his glorious grace."

Father draws us to His Son, by **teaching** us—‘And they will all be **taught** of God.’ And just like the drawing in v.44, this **teaching** cannot fail. It is impossible to be taught by God and not come to Christ—“Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father **comes** to me.” Whatever Almighty God sets His hand to, He cannot fail. If you a believer in Jesus Christ, it is because Father taught you, and you were overcome by His teaching.

Jesus appeals to Scriptures that these Jews should have known. He says “It is written in the Prophets.” Two places in particular that Jesus is referring to. **Jeremiah 31:33-34** “For this is the covenant that I will make...declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, **and I** will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And no longer shall each one teach his neighbor and each his brother, saying, ‘Know the LORD,’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them to the greatest, declares the LORD.”¹⁵ Isaiah 54:13 speaks of the future from Isaiah’s perspective, when God would restore the people of God (the church) from her captivity. “All your children shall be **taught** by the LORD, and great shall be the peace of your children.”¹⁶

The unbeliever can hear the words of the gospel of Jesus Christ all day long, from the Scriptures themselves, and yet not believe. An inner illumination must happen. Our minds must be opened to those truths, our affections must be warmed by those truths, our wills must be humbled by those truths. We can’t do this ourselves. God must do it. Jesus is so consistent on this point. When He asked his disciples in **Matthew 16:15-17** “But who do you say that I am?” Simon Peter replied, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” That is a confession of true belief. What was Jesus’ first response to Peter? “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my

¹⁵ I left out “with the house of Israel in those day” in v.33, in order for it not to be a stumbling block for listeners. Israel is the OT church. But this is difficult to show in one or two sentences. In the NT, the author of Hebrews applies these same verses to the New Covenant people of God in Hebrews 8. It is clear to this author that “Israel” is to be understood as both a ethnic people, but also the elect of God. Romans 9:6 For not all who are descended from Israel belong to Israel,”

¹⁶ This does not mean that people under the Old Covenant were not taught by God. It is clear that they were (cf. Deut. 30:6). However the New Covenant is more extensive (more people-Acts 1:8) and intensive (deeper out pouring of the Spirit-Joel 2:28) than was the Old Covenant.

Father who is in heaven.” Happy are you Peter, because you have been taught by God! Peter believed in Christ, not by flesh and blood, meaning not on the strength of his own will, but on the omnipotent strength of the Father revealing to His heart the glory of the Son.

Paul teaches this same truth in **2 Corinthians 4:3-6**. In v.3, he says that unbelievers are blind to the light of the glory of Christ. They can't see it, with their spiritual eyes. "...seeing they do not see, and hearing they do not hear, nor do they understand." (Matthew 13:13) Something must happen if they are ever going to believe. The gospel is right in front of them, but they see it as foolishness. How is it they believe? The miracle of v.6 "For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in **our hearts** to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

When this inner teaching happens, we willingly come to Christ.¹⁷ No violence is done to the will.¹⁸ Our once cold and dead hearts are instantly flooded with light of Jesus Christ, and in a moment we see Him as infinitely beautiful. This is a miracle. This inner illumination of the Father turns Sauls who were violent persecutors of Christians, into Pauls that lay down their life for the gospel of Jesus Christ. This is a miracle. This is not a work of the flesh, but a work of the Father.

¹⁷ What of the agency of human teachers? Paul answers this 1 Cor. 3:5-7 "What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, as the Lord assigned to each. I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth."

¹⁸ **Psalm 110:3** says "Your people will offer themselves **freely** on the day of your power, in holy garments;"

Application

Our Doctrine: Nobody will savingly come to Christ unless the Father draws them, and if this doesn't happen there is no gospel.¹⁹

Jesus is concerned that we see the work of His Father. So much so that He makes the absolute claim, that “No one can come to Me, unless the Father who sent me draws him.” The gospel is not effective if the Father doesn't work. Christ died for nought if the Father doesn't work. This is why Spurgeon said “I do not believe we can preach the gospel, if we do not...preach the sovereignty of God in his dispensation of grace; nor unless we exalt the electing, unchangeable, eternal, immutable, conquering love of Jehovah.”

Why is this doctrine resisted? Many preachers today will not preach this to their people. Why? They reason because their are unbelievers present, and this is an in-house debate. This won't work. Because Jesus preached this to unbelievers. Are we more loving than Jesus? Are we wiser? Jesus openly declared the sovereign and gracious work of His Father because He wanted to glorify His work in redemption. Will we hide that?

The reason why this doctrine is resisted is because it is devastating to human pride. You and I are not the ultimate decisive cause in our salvation. God is. And this should put the fear of God into our hearts, and praise Him for showing us mercy. When that happens, God is glorified most. And that is what God is

¹⁹ Why doesn't God draw everybody? The answer to this is chiefly found in Romans 9:22-24 “What if God, desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, in order to make known the riches of his glory for vessels of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand for glory—even us whom he has called, not from the Jews only but also from the Gentiles?” The main way that God loves us is by showing us His glory. Notice Paul says “in order to make known the riches of his glory.” We are loved by God most, when He shows us the most of Himself. But what is it to see the most of God, but to see His glorious attributes. We would see less of the glory of God, namely His holy wrath towards sin, and His just punishment of sin, if He never punished sinners and the angels who fell. Nor would we see as much of His mercy in saving us, unless there were sinners who He didn't save who justly deserved His punishment, just like we justly deserved His punishment. So ultimately God doesn't draw everybody, because He wanted to display His highest love to us by making known to us all of His attributes.

after mainly. Whoever gets the credit, gets the glory. If we resist the doctrines of grace in our preaching, we are resisting the glory of God.

Unbeliever: Don't reason to yourself: "God won't draw me, because I have been a wicked sinner" Do you realize that God has drawn many men and women Christians who are worse than the heathen? Listen to the Scripture "...do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. **And such were some of you.**" (1 Cor. 6:9-11) Some of the worst people on earth will be the greatest saints in heaven. Your sin doesn't disqualify you from being drawn to Father. If He's drawing you now, don't resist. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

Our Duty: Consider your calling—think on the Father's drawing

There is a very practical thing that happens in the heart of believers when we love and adore the sovereignty of God. It heals us. When we see that the sovereignty of God is the decisive factor in our salvation, it heals broken people. The church in Corinth was a broken people. They had seven major problems ranging from intense divisiveness, sexual immorality, and elitism. If you were Paul how would you open your letter to this troubled church? Do you know how Paul opened his letter. By speaking of the electing, drawing love of God the Father. **1 Corinthians 1:26-31** "...consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became

to us wisdom from God, righteousness and sanctification and redemption, so that, as it is written, “Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord.”

I know that many of you feel troubled in the season we have been in. There have been divisions and factions. My word to you is the same that Paul gave to the Corinthians. “Consider your calling brothers..” Father drew you, though you were foolish, and weak, and low and despised. Boast in that. Boast in the LORD. Re-discover the doctrines of grace fresh for your heart. That is first answer that Paul gave to his troubled church.

Our Delight: Our hearts are strengthened by grace

Not only does the Sovereign electing love of the Father, glorify Him, but it strengthens our hearts. **Hebrews 13:9** “Do not be led away by diverse and strange teachings, for it is good for the heart to be **strengthened** by grace...” Do you know what strengthens the heart? Grace. The knowledge that God does it all. You will fail. **You failed in coming to Christ.** The Father had to draw you “No one can come to me, unless the Father...draws him” (John 6:44). **You fail every day in loving Christ.** The Father has to work in you “...both to will and to work for his good pleasure” Phil. 2:13). **And you will fail in persevering in Christ, if left to yourself.** But that is the glory at the end of v.44. Jesus tells us that all who the Father draws to Himself “I will raise him up on the last day.”

What does that knowledge do? It gives strength! Grace strengthens the heart. Grace fills the heart with joy. Grace holds on to us, because we can’t hold on to it.²⁰ This is what God does!

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for

²⁰ As one pastor said “I rejoice in the sovereignty of God because he wields it in all things to preserve himself as my greatest treasure.” <http://www.desiringgod.org/messages/the-path-to-full-and-lasting-pleasure>

adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.” (Ephesians 1:3-6)