



## SESSION 30 | JOHN 6:44-58

### JOHN 6:37-47 | JESUS WILL LOSE NOTHING

- Verses 37-43 – see session 29
- Verses 44-
  - Here (as in the end of v. 37) the Lord undoubtedly speaks of the individual. Does this prove the Calvinistic concept of total depravity and the rest of the system which follows?
  - Jesus has taught that only those **to whomsoever the Son will reveal** the Father are able to know the Father (Mt. 11:27). This was a truth in the dispensation in which Jesus lived, which is why He forbade many to proclaim His identity. However, the day would come, after the words of John 6 were spoken, in which the Father would draw all men unto Himself, as v. 45 and John 12:32.
- Verse 45 –
  - Jesus combines prophecies from Isaiah 54:13 and Jeremiah 31:34.
    - Since both of these are about the New Covenant which God makes with Israel, the student of the Word *should* have enough sense *not* to apply them (and their context of verse 44) haphazardly as they wish. Yet, this is exactly what Calvinism has done.
    - Only to the degree that verse 45 is true of the church can verse 44 be true of the church.
  - Is verse 45 true of the church?
    - Isaiah 54 is about Israel and her Redeemer (v. 5). Israel had been **as a woman forsaken** (v. 6) who endured **a little wrath** but soon **everlasting kindness** (v. 8). This kindness is the promised fulfillment of the Kingdom and the New Covenant, described in verses 12-15. Isaiah 54:13 is unrelated to the church in *every way*.
    - What of Jeremiah 31:34? Verse 33 explicitly states that this is the **covenant that I will make with the house of Israel** and thus cannot itself be applied to the church.
    - Thus, since verse 45 is untrue of the church and unrelated to her being, why would we seek to relate verse 44 to the church and make it true of her? To do so is theological malpractice.
- Verse 46 –
  - If verse 45 is of those that **hath learned of the Father**, Jesus states in this verse that the truths of verse 45 are yet future, for no person **hath seen the Father**, except (as Jesus implies), Jesus Himself.
- Verse 47 –
  - Since Jesus had **seen the Father** He was able to claim the authority to offer the Father's judgment, and thus an ultimate freedom from the curse of death.
  - Is it true that one living in Jesus' day who believed on Jesus *had*, in that day, **everlasting life**?
    - If so, then the gift of eternal life was *not dependent* upon the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ (for He had not yet been to the cross).
    - If so, were the works of the law required?
  - By the "plain sense" of these verses, we are forced to say that the above is true. So then, we must ask, "did any actually believe?" It would be hard to claim believers prior to His living presence after

- the resurrection. The disciples fled and fought against Him (or outright denied Him), and the women came to anoint the *dead* body, completely disregarding possibility of resurrection.
- It seems *plausible* to state that Jesus *could offer eternal life to anyone, anytime, anywhere*, but that *nobody received this life through His offer until after the resurrection, because nobody believed in Him until then*. It is also plausible that *obedience to the law* was required (both here and until Paul), not to gain *eternal life*, but to gain the Kingdom of God on earth and the benefits it provides.
  - While this thought seems almost heretical (when compared to standard theological assumptions), the other option is to claim that what Jesus was speaking was simply not true.
  - If Jesus *could* offer eternal life to those who believed on Him, then why did He go to the cross?
    - He did so because Adam's sin against God and the subsequent loss of humanity to Satan's sway was an offense to God that could not go unaddressed.
    - Only by the wrath of God being poured out on Jesus, and His overcoming of the powers of death and darkness could God's honor be restored. And thus in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus He became **Lord both of the dead and the living** (Rom. 14:9).

#### JOHN 6:48-58 | JESUS: EAT MY FLESH AND DRINK MY BLOOD

- Verses 48-51 –
  - There was a **bread which cometh down from heaven** in Moses' day, but those who ate it are now dead. Jesus is encouraging the nation to want *more* than manna.
  - Jesus claims to be **the living bread** (v. 51). He then makes the startling claim that whoever will **eat of this bread, he shall live forever**.
  - In light of verse 47, which also offers everlasting life, we must either conclude that one can *believe on Jesus* (v. 47) or **eat of this bread...my flesh** (v. 51), or that *these are the same thing*. A few considerations:
    - It does not appear that Jesus is teaching a multiple-choice option: *believe* or *eat*.
    - It does not appear that Jesus is teaching a requirement of *both* believing and eating.
    - If He was teaching the above option, one would have to determine what it meant to **eat of this bread**. Since it almost cannot at all be taken literally, one would have to spiritualize it beyond the spiritualization required in taking belief and eating as synonymous.
- Verses 52-56 –
  - Questioned by His audience, Jesus "doubles down," and insists that **except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you**.
  - Again, one must mitigate these words with verse 47 and determine whether or not there is any way to take this *eating and drinking* literally and also to take verse 47 as truth.
- Verses 57-58 –
  - Jesus comes again to the issue of His own origins: **the living Father hath sent me**. Because Jesus comes back to this issue, it stands as a clue as to the meaning of the eating and drinking.
  - A summary of the issue:
    - Jesus gave the requirement of belief (v. 47).
    - Jesus gave the requirement of eating His flesh and blood (vv. 51-58).
    - We must determine if these are *synonymous* or *side-by-side* or *simultaneous* requirements to eternal life.
      - Simultaneous leaves us not knowing what it is to eat/drink His flesh/blood.

- Side-by-side has the same issue, plus giving two roads to eternal life.
- Synonymous seems to be our best option: *to believe is to eat His flesh and drink His blood.*
- To determine if *synonymous* is an option, we must search the Scriptures for additional *flesh* and *blood* references.
  - John 1:13 - **the will of the flesh** is a reference to physical abilities.
  - Matthew 16:17 - **flesh and blood** is a reference to the physical world.
  - 1 Corinthians 15:50 - **flesh and blood** is a reference to the physical body.
  - Galatians 1:16 - **flesh and blood** is a reference to physical people.
  - Ephesians 6:12 - **flesh and blood** is a reference to the physical world.
  - Hebrews 2:14 - **flesh and blood** refers to physical life.
- Conclusion:
  - Jesus has been insisting that He was *God in the flesh* (John 1:14).
  - The Jewish people were having the most difficulty believing that this Jesus of Nazareth could be *God in the flesh*.
  - Jesus stated that He could give life, but only if they believed in Him (v. 47).
    - Believing in Him required that they accept His as *God in the flesh*.
    - Jesus used a *figure of speech* when He told the audience to *eat* and *drink* His *flesh* and *blood* (i.e.: accept Me *physically* for who I am *spiritually*). That is, *a belief that Jesus is God in the flesh is a prerequisite for believing in Him, because it is His identity.*
- Note on the Lord's Supper:
  - The Roman Catholic church devised the *eucharist* to be a means of literally consuming the flesh and blood of Jesus.
  - The Protestants designed *communion* to be the means of *spiritually* consuming the flesh and blood of Jesus.
  - The Fundamentalists and Evangelicals reject both the *physical* and the *spiritual* presence of Christ in the elements, and thus see them as a memorial only.
  - For this reason, the Roman Catholics have the *Mass*, the Protestants have *Communion*, and the Fundamentalists and Evangelicals have the *Lord's Supper*.