

Drawn to Life (John 6:41-71)

- I. Grumbling, Coming, and Eating
 - A. Enemies, Followers, and Friends
 1. Enemies – the Jews (the religious brass – the skeptics)
 2. Followers – the sign seekers (Feeding the Five Thousand)
 3. Friends – the apostles (spiritual highs and lows)
 - B. Familiar or Family
 1. Are we familiar with Jesus? Visible church
 - a. Association with the church is not relationship with Christ
 - b. What assumptions do we make about God, others, ourselves?
 2. Are we family to Jesus? Invisible church
 - a. The family of Christ can still fall flat
 - b. Do not judge the Savior by the saved
 - C. Grumbling in Unbelief
 1. Grumbling presupposes we have a right to assess Jesus
 - a. Jesus challenged their presuppositions about the Messiah – angered by His claims to divinity
 - b. The Jews are hearing Jesus but not understanding Him
 - c. Do not allow your perceptions to cloud Christ's purposes
 - d. Jesus assesses our attitudes (He searches our hearts)
 - e. What will He find? There isn't anything we can hide from Him.
 2. Capernaum or the Wilderness?
 - a. Like Israel wandering in the wilderness (water and manna)
 - b. A Spirit of Discontentment leads to Forgetfulness (fallen focus)
 - c. The crowd wants to know what Jesus has done for them lately
 - d. These followers don't trust in Jesus, they only want the signs
 - e. We are rarely thankful for yesterday's provision, constantly worried about today's sustenance, and often doubtful about God's goodness for tomorrow.
 3. **Philippians 2:14-15** Do all things without grumbling or disputing; so that you will prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world,
- II. Coming to Christ
 - A. Natural vs. Moral Ability
 1. Man does not lack the natural ability to come to Christ
 - a. Physical – man can come to church and pray to God
 - b. Mental – man can believe the Bible is true and understand it
 - c. Do men naturally humble themselves to the requirements of the Gospel?
 - d. The affections of unregenerate man are predisposed to prioritize temporal pursuits
 2. Man lacks the moral ability to come to Christ
 - a. Our nature is corrupt – lack the will and power to come to Christ
 - b. A mother's nature to preserve the life of her child – Solomon (1 Kings 3:16-28)
 3. Conscience cannot save us
 - a. It can only whisper in its current condition – damaged by the fall
 - b. It can make us aware of our sin but not our need for a Savior
 - c. It cannot tell us the consequences of our sin or make us to abhor them
 4. Powerless to come to Christ
 - a. The sinner is described as dead in trespasses and sin before coming to Christ
 - b. **Ephesians 2:4-5** But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),
 - c. Even after Christ has saved us from sin we still struggle with it
 - d. **Romans 7:15** For what I am doing, I do not understand; for I am not practicing what I [would] like to [do], but I am doing the very thing I hate.

- e. **Matthew 26:41** "Keep watching and praying that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak."

B. Ability vs. Action

1. Not being able to come to Christ does not mean we should do nothing
 - a. **Hebrews 11:6** And without faith it is impossible to please [Him], for he who comes to God must believe that He is and [that] He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.
 - b. This is why we evangelize, preach the gospel, and train our children in the way they should go
2. Our bad habits or shortcomings are not excuses to stay as we are
 - a. You wouldn't excuse the behavior of a drunk or a criminal
 - b. Sitting still seals our fate – we send ourselves to hell (not God)
3. Preaching the Gospel needs to be accompanied by the Father sending the Spirit to change the will
 - a. Capernaum heard profound preaching, saw mind-boggling miracles, and witnessed a perfect person (God incarnate) yet they did not repent like Tyre and Sidon would have.
 - b. **Luke 10:15** "And you, Capernaum, will not be exalted to heaven, will you? You will be brought down to Hades!"

C. Choosing Christ without Compulsion

1. Christ does not drag people to Himself unwillingly
 - a. He does not save us against our will – the Holy Spirit changes our will
 - b. The Gospel becomes irresistibly sweet to us because we have been made alive
 - c. No one is dragged kicking and screaming to heaven or hell – we run there willingly
2. Draw (ἔλκω – helkoo) – means to drag like a sword or a bucket
 - a. Word used in John 18 (Peter's sword) and John 21 (disciples' net)
 - b. God's drawing is always effective in turning the repulsive into the irresistible
 - c. Christ's love becomes so central that we stake eternity of its truth
 - d. Newton's First Law of Motion – our inertia takes in the direction of sin until God steps in
3. The work of the Spirit in us
 - a. The Spirit finds us with high opinions of ourselves that keep us from Christ
 - b. The Spirit reveals our wretched sinfulness to us which drives us to repentance
 - c. The Spirit sends us to the cross – we exchange our despair for Christ's righteousness
 - d. If we claim dominion over our ability to come to Christ, we demand credit for the work of the Holy Spirit

D. Our Religion for Christ's Righteousness

1. If our religion rests on our strength, it stands like a house built on the sand
 - a. Do not rely on your behavior, your character, or your righteousness
 - b. They will fail us when we need them most – feel good about something then you fall flat?
2. Build your house on the rock of Christ's righteousness
 - a. When we have no more hope of saving ourselves, we can have hope that a great and merciful God will save us
 - b. The God who we disobey, who we run from, who we insult and anger is also our only hope for salvation – how does that make us feel?
3. How can we be secure in our salvation?
 - a. I know who I was on my own and I know who I am in Christ.
 - b. True believers know that were it not for Christ, they would still be wandering the wilderness
 - c. If God draws you to Himself, He has loved you for all eternity – He will keep you
 - d. **John 6:37** All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out.
 - e. **Isaac Watts:** Great King of Grace! my heart subdued; I would be led in triumph too, A willing captive to my Lord, And sing the vict'ries of his word.

E. We believe in order to understand – Saint Augustine

1. We cannot take credit for coming to Christ or those we bid come and see
 - a. God teaches our hearts to understand in a way no man can – humbles and rebuilds us
 - b. Jesus is the curriculum the Father gives us – the message of the cross

- c. **Matthew 16:15-17** He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." And Jesus said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal [this] to you, but My Father who is in heaven.
 - d. God frees us from the despair of fruitlessness and pride of getting it right
 - e. Our role in evangelism – we call sinners to come and bear witness in our lives
2. Seeing and believing – eternal life in Christ's kingdom
- a. We can only see the truth when we have been drawn into Christ's kingdom
 - b. We see better when we don't look at ourselves (the function of the eye – Victor Frankl)
 - c. Faith is a gift of God that is proof of life residing in us – the miracle of belief
 - d. **2 Corinthians 4:3-4** And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

III. Living bread and Dead bread

A. I am the Bread of Life (Ego Eimi – I AM – Yahweh) repeats himself from John 6:35

- 1. If you only admire Christ from a distance and you don't partake of him, you will die
 - a. Everyone suffers from spiritual hunger until they meet Christ
 - b. Christ uses physical symbols to make spiritual points – born again, living water, eating
 - c. Eating and drinking are profoundly personal – no one can do it for you (sick child)
 - d. Eating is substitutionary – we eat dead food (it dies to give us life)
 - e. Because Christ has died, we can live and find satisfaction in Him

2. Manna in the Wilderness

- a. We need to be careful not to confuse the sign for true sustenance
- b. Signs do not bring us to Christ, they only solidify what we already believe
- c. Manna in the wilderness did not produce faith – they still grumbled
- d. Bread was a staple of the ancient world (85% of average income in Palestine)
- e. Jesus' followers wanted a domesticated God who met their wants (genie)
- f. **John 6:34** Then they said to Him, "Lord, always give us this bread."

B. True Food and True Drink

- 1. True (ἀληθής – alaythays) – Undeniably real and tested to the utmost extent
 - a. Christianity is personal (we believe), pricy (we die), and prolific (we live)
 - b. Flesh and blood were offensive to Jesus audience – so was Jesus sacrifice on the cross
 - c. Not directly referencing communion – not instituted yet (body and blood)
 - d. In the Old Testament, sacrificial blood covered sin, Christ's blood removes them
 - e. **Hebrews 9:11-12** But when Christ appeared [as] a high priest of the good things to come, [He entered] through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation and not through the blood of goats and calves, but through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.
- 2. We are designed to abide and commune with Him every day
 - a. Jesus is not someone we visit when we need him or when we have time
 - b. We have free access to the best meal in time every time we come into Christ's presence
 - c. Jesus makes room for all those who the Father gives him – so should we
- 3. Jesus is food in its Platonic form – the text does not qualify how true it is
 - a. Jesus lives because of the Father, and we live because of Christ (relationship)
 - b. Jesus preserves us eternally, even when earthly food fails us we will live again
 - c. **2 Peter 1:4** For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of [the] divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust.

C. Death and Eternal Life

- 1. The world fears death but Christians do not because of our confidence in Christ
- 2. **1 Corinthians 15:55-57** "O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR VICTORY? O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR STING?" The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law; but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

3. When we believe into Christ we die with Christ and are raised with Christ (baptism)

IV. Difficult Sayings

A. Hard to accept, not hard to understand

1. When human perception collides with God's truth, where will you stand?
2. The flesh is blind to spiritual truth (can only see the temporal)
3. We make the words of Christ challenging – God does not make them difficult
4. If the Jesus you preach is a Jesus everyone likes, it's not the real Jesus (polarizing)

B. Stumbling and not profiting

1. If we take offense at the words of Christ now, how will we respond to reality?
2. Just because you are offended does not mean you have been wronged
3. The cross was offensive to Jews and foolishness to the Greeks (pride)
4. **1 Corinthians 1:22-25** For indeed Jews ask for signs and Greeks search for wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block and to Gentiles foolishness, but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.
5. An insubordinate heart cannot understand truth – Jesus demand that we submit (He will change us)

V. Disbelief and Departure

A. Neither our unbelief, nor our belief is proof of our autonomy from God

1. Unbelief is distrust of the almighty God – a dangerous place to be
2. God grants access to Christ – not all who are in the church are of Christ

B. Jesus does not chase the approval of those who fall away

1. He must be heartbroken by those who reject Him, but He trusts the will of the Father
2. Some do not want what Jesus offers, and He does not offer what we want (change)
3. No one walks away from true faith in Christ – profession does not equal possession
4. **1 John 2:19** They went out from us, but they were not [really] of us; for if they had been of us, they would have remained with us; but [they went out], so that it would be shown that they all are not of us.
5. Disciples (μαθητής – mathaytays) learners – apostacy is knowing the truth and rejecting it

VI. True Disciples

A. Jesus makes the apostles face the hard question – do you truly believe?

1. Jesus' following was cut by 1,000-fold (from 11,000 to 11)
2. Jesus does not feel bad for Himself – He seeks to strengthen their faith
3. Jesus has not lost anyone through His teaching, because they were not of Him
4. **John 6:39** "This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day."

B. Believing and Knowing Christ

1. There is no alternative to Christ – We must accept His works and His words
 - a. His Words are Life and He is the Lord – fear and fruit confirm our belief
 - b. Jesus' words are not magic – they are truths, practices, and habits
 - c. **2 Peter 1:10** Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble;
 - d. If we have faith, then we will have fruit. If we do not have fruit, where is our faith?
 - e. **James 2:18-20** But someone may [well] say, "You have faith and I have works; show me your faith without the works, and I will show you my faith by my works."
 - f. Christ is after changed lives, not full churches who produce no fruit
2. Faith is a gift from God that allows us to rely on Christ every day of our lives
 - a. Nothing we do in life can guarantee our future – Judas was numbered among the twelve
 - b. The name of Christianity and the church can be used for devilish purposes – take care
 - c. Judas is an illustration of God's providence – He is sovereign over all
 - d. **John 17:12** "While I was with them, I was keeping them in Your name which You have given Me; and I guarded them and not one of them perished but the son of perdition, so that the Scripture would be fulfilled."