

WHY DID THEY NOT BELIEVE?
John 6:22-71

Intro: This is our fifth anniversary Sunday as a church. We met for the first time on January 25, 1981. How wonderfully the Lord has led and blessed during these five years! Let us keep praying for greater and greater blessing-- and praying also for a deeper work of God's grace in each one of our hearts.

Trinity Bible Church was established for the glory of God by declaring His sovereignty in all things. The particular truth which brought about the establishing of this work was the truth of God's sovereignty in salvation. We are only a small part of what God seems to be doing throughout the world to revive the Biblical doctrine of salvation. So much of man's ways and man's thoughts have been introduced into the preaching of the Gospel and into the work of the Lord that a return to these great truths seems to be heretical.

One chapter which sets forth these great doctrines of the faith is John 6. Here we have an example of the Gospel preaching which was done by our Lord. Many are inclined to say that these truths should not be preached when unsaved people are present, but I deny that claim, and my evidence is John 6. Here the Lord spoke most clearly to Jewish unbelievers and even to many of His disciples (professed) who could not accept them, and He did not hesitate to set before them the doctrines of God's sovereignty in salvation.

Often we hear that these doctrines destroy evangelism, that a man who believes these will not be evangelistic and will not be interested in missions. Let me read to you a brief section from the autobiography of Charles Spurgeon. It had to do with services which were held when the Metropolitan Tabernacle was first opened in 1860--126 years ago this year!

(Read Vol. II, pp. 45, 46.)

During one night this past week, or in the early morning hours, and I do not know if I were awake, or did this in my dreams-- but I was turning over John 6:44 in my mind, preparing to speak on it.

I was concerned mainly with the first two statements:

- 1) "No man can come to me . . ."
- 2) "Except the Father which hath sent me draw him."

When I got up in the morning and looked at the verse I, of course, saw that there was a third part to the verse:

- 3) "And I will raise him up at the last day."

We have here three of the doctrines known throughout history as

the doctrines of grace:

- 1) The doctrine of total depravity.
- 2) The doctrine of irresistible grace.
- 3) The doctrine of the perseverance of the saints.

Total depravity suggests inability where the things of God are concerned. Another title sometimes used for irresistible grace is effectual calling (the term which Mr. Spurgeon used). And so we see that the Lord not only taught these doctrines, but He taught them to unbelievers.

Now let me give you two divisions of this verse which I had the other night, and the third one which I have added since then:

- I. THE INABILITY OF MAN.
- II. THE INTERVENTION OF THE FATHER.
- III. THE INSISTENCE OF THE SON. (Insistence means to hold firmly to something, which our Lord certainly was doing.)

There are two statements in this rather long text which I want you to note: one is in v. 36; the second, in v. 64. Both are the words of the Lord Jesus to the effect that the people there were not believing. The question is, Why? And the answer is in the first part of v. 44, which teaches . . .

- I. THE INABILITY OF MAN: "No man can come to me."

"No man can" means no man is able; no man possesses the ability. It is not simply that he will not come; it is that he cannot come. He does not possess what it takes to come to Christ. And to come to Christ means to come to Him for salvation--the theme that occupied the Lord's attention in this discourse.

The whole chapter illustrates this fact. Note the following six facts;

- A. Their purpose in seeking the Lord -- v. 26.
- B. Their problem in understanding His words -- v. 28.
- C. Their request for a sign -- v. 30.
- D. The offense at His claim to have come down from heaven -- vv. 41, 42.
- E. Their disgust at His teaching -- v. 52.
- G. Some of His disciples (professed) turned and walked no more with Him -- v. 66.

What greater evidence could we ask for than the evidence we have in this chapter that "no man can come to me."

I am sure that one reason we have this chapter in the Bible is to prove that statement made by our Lord: "No man can come to me."

This means that if men are left to themselves they cannot and will not come to Christ for salvation.

Then the question may very well be asked, Why preach the Gospel?

This brings us to the second statement, and implied in this is a fourth doctrine of grace: the doctrine of election.

II. THE INTERVENTION OF THE FATHER: "Except the Father which hath sent me draw him."

In other words, the fruit of the preaching of the Gospel is to be seen when the Father draws people to Christ.

At this point we need to look at v. 37:

All that the Father giveth me shall come to me;
and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.

What does it mean that the Father has given certain ones to His Son? This is the doctrine of election--unconditional election.

Salvation is not left to the discretion of men, but is determined by the will of the Father. And His will was exercised before the foundation of the world when He sovereignly chose His elect.

Robert Murray M'Cheyne wrote those words which expressed the meaning of unconditional election:

Chosen not for good in me,
Waken'd up from wrath to flee;
Hidden in the Saviour's side,
By the Spirit sanctified;
Teach me, Lord, on earth to show,
By my love, how much I owe. (IVF Hymnal, #63)

So the Father draws men or they will not come. He could draw everyone, but He does not. All whom the Father draws, come.

And He calls men through the preaching of the Gospel. That is why we preach the Gospel. Cf. 2 Thess. 2:13, 14.

But let us not overlook the last statement.

III. THE INSISTENCE OF CHRIST: "And I will raise him up at the last day."

The Lord insisted on this. There was no doubt about it.

This is a statement that is parallel with the latter part of v. 37: "And him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."

Here is that wonderful truth that those who know the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour, who have been drawn to Him by the constraining power of the Father, will never be cast away, will never be in danger of losing what they have in Christ. What a marvelous salvation we have!

Concl: Why did they not believe?

I can give you three answers to that question:

- 1) They did not believe, they did not come to Christ, because they could not! They did not have within themselves what it took to hear the Gospel, to understand the Gospel, and to believe in Christ. Faith does not come from us; it comes to us from God.
- 2) They did not believe because they were not of the elect.
- 3) They did not believe because they were not drawn by the Father.

Listen to these words of our Lord Jesus which are found in John 10:22-30.

But it can be to our encouragement that the Gospel is still being preached, and God is still at work drawing His chosen ones to Himself, and people are still believing, still coming to Christ. If you are without Christ tonight, the Word of God says, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." It is not for you to determine if you are elect. It is for you to believe. And when you believe, you can be sure that you are chosen of God because you could not believe if you were not.

May the Lord bless His Word tonight in the salvation of some whom He will draw to Himself through this ministry of His Word.