

## Seeing How Jesus Responds to Rejection, Pt 2

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**John 6:41-47**

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So, eight weeks ago was the last time we were in the book of John, and eight weeks ago we talked about the scary doctrine of election. Not the election like who's going to be president, that's scary. But also election, which is God's selection of people for salvation. We see clearly in verse 37, take a look. "All that the Father gives me will come to me," so there are people that God has who he gives to Jesus and then they believe in him, and at the same time we saw it in the same text that people must come to Jesus. They must make a choice to leave their rebellion and make a choice to believe in Jesus or they are not saved, and people will be held responsible, held accountable by God for not believing in Jesus. So, you've got God's sovereign election for salvation on the one hand, and you've got human responsibility to believe the gospel on the other hand and people who've been fighting over this for centuries, and I'm not going to resolve it here for you today, just spoiler alert. Why?

Because I hold both of these truths' intention, because I think the Bible holds these truths' intention. In the words of a pastor named Charles Spurgeon, he put it this way, "I was once asked to reconcile these truths, but I answered, no. I never reconcile friends." That God will save his people, that God has people, his people that he will save is somehow in the mind of God and in reality, compatible with whoever comes to Christ will be saved. Now, why is this so hard for us to understand, like many things in the Bible, Spurgeon helps us here too. He said, "Can you understand it for I cannot. How man is a free agent, a responsible agent so that his sin is his own willful sin and lies with him and never with God, and yet at the same time, God's purposes are fulfilled, and his will is done even by demons and corrupt men. I cannot comprehend it."

He continues without hesitation, "I believe it and rejoice to do so. I never hope to comprehend it. I worship a God I never expect to comprehend." Anybody else? It makes sense that there are going to be things in the Bible that don't make sense to us, that it's hard to reconcile with other verses in the Bible that creates a tension for us, but that's okay. That's okay because that is proof that we are dealing with reality. We are dealing with the God that is here in the scriptures, whose ways are not our ways and whose thoughts are not our thoughts, and whose high as the heavens are above the earth, so his thoughts, not our thoughts, his ways, not our ways. Well, today's text is going to go deeper into this election and responsibility, but I hope that's actually an encouragement for you, that we don't skip texts that we know are going to get us in trouble with some people.

Is that encouraging for you? I hope it is. That we don't come to the Bible as an editor. I know people over there and over there. They're not going to like this. People online are going to kill me

for this. Well, I'll just pretend it's not there and just move on to the next verse. I hope it's encouraging you that we seek to preach every word of the Bible because every word came from God as the ultimate source, even the ones that are going to get us in trouble. Now, I say that knowing that we live in a world where people only listen to those that they already agree with. It's called an echo chamber. They're not listening to learn and grow and even be challenged, but to be affirmed that they're already right. But when Jesus shows up, he says a lot of things that didn't fit into the echo chamber of his day or even of our day.

His words were not what the Messiah was supposed to say. It's not what he was expected to say. It's not what the people wanted him to hear, which is why once again, we're going to see how Jesus responds to rejection. See in verse 36, Jesus makes it clear that the people he is talking to do not believe in him. These are the same people that he fed, thousands of them with five little cakes of bread and two little sardines. These people are after Jesus because they want his blessings. They're after him for the miraculous, for the sensational, but they don't really want what? They don't really want him. If they could just have the blessings without all the teachings, if they could just get this endless supply of food without having to deal with him, that would be great. Maybe some awe, wonder and a little bit of gratitude sometimes, but he's saying so many things that they do not agree with that don't fit their paradigm for who he is supposed to be.

So, the words in the middle of John 6 here are Jesus' response to people who reject him and reject his teachings as unbelievable. They don't see him for who he really is and what's worse, that's because they make up a Jesus and ideas about him that cause them to hate the truth when they hear it from him. They believe that their imagined ideas are true, and the true Jesus of the Bible is actually imaginary. They like the Jesus in their own minds, the Jesus that they think he is, and because of that, they don't want the actual Jesus. Ever met anybody like that, coworker, student at school, teacher, friend, family member? Oh, they like Jesus but not the Jesus of the Bible.

No, they reject him and because they reject him, maybe they reject you too. Well, if that's ever been your experience, what do you say to yourself when you're rejected? What ideas fill your mind? What truths comfort you? What ideas drive you to prayer for those who reject you? See, the teachings in our text help us understand why some people believe and others don't. And our text, unlike everything else in the world really, is going to make God really big and it's going to make us really small, and that's a really, really good thing. Let's take a look at how Jesus responds to rejection. Look back at verse 41, "So the Jews grumbled about him because he said, 'I'm the bread that came down from heaven. They said, Is not this Jesus?' Like, who's this guy? 'Is not this guy, this Jesus, the son of Joseph whose father and mother we know.' Who does he think he is? 'How does he now say, I have come down from heaven?'"

Notice John calls these people the Jews. This phrase is most often used as shorthand for the religious leaders, the enemies of Jesus. Now, since verse 59 says that this event is taking place in the synagogue of Capernaum, these are probably the town's religious authorities. So as Jesus is talking to the people that have chased after him from the other side of the sea of Galilee and

come to him and met him in Capernaum because they need breakfast after he fed them miraculously with dinner the night before, as he's talking to those people who reject him, you have these religious leaders who show up, probably overhear what Jesus was saying and they don't like it at all. Verse 41, notice they are grumbling. This is an expression of unbelief, disagreement, displeasure, complaining.

They don't like what Jesus said about coming down from heaven. Here they are creating, this is the Jesus who he really is, so what he's saying, that can't be true. You see what's going on there? They don't like what Jesus said about coming down from heaven. In their mind, verse 42, they know he didn't come down from heaven because why? They know his mom and dad. But they don't know what we know from other texts in the book of John, which is what? That he's the God man who is both eternal but came here, became a human being to die for our sins. They don't know that. They were God's chosen people. Think about that. People that God loves with an everlasting love, and here they are grumbling, complaining, disagreeing with their God when he stands right in front of them. Well, in order to respond well to rejection, you and I must point #1) ***Admit People Will Reject You Too. Admit it, people will reject you too.***

If people rejected the son of God when he walked the earth, healed the sick and fed thousands miraculously, listen, people are going to reject you too. Even people you love dearly, like God dearly loves the Jewish people. You see hate, a lack of love, animosity, conflict, even persecution, Jesus prepares his followers for all of that when he says, John 15:18, "If the world hates you, know that it has hated me before it hated you." Why? Because if verse 19, "If you were of the world, the world would love you as its own, but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you." And why does that happen? I mean, we're such nice people, aren't we? For the most part, aren't we really nice?

We smile and we drive the speed limit while most of you and... Drive the speed limit, pay our taxes, law-abiding citizens, we smile. We're nice to people. Why would they hate us of all people? We're so nice.

Well, it's because of your commitment to Jesus above all things. 2 Timothy 3:12 says, "All who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted," will be, it's promised. But listen, a weak, compromising, pragmatic man pleasing father of Jesus, that won't get any rejection at all. But if you reject that as ungodly, then just know this Christian, it won't feel like a blessing but being rejected, but Jesus says it is a blessing. Luke 6:22, "Blessed are you when people hate you and when people exclude you, when they make plans and don't tell you about it, when they have all kinds of fun times together and leave you out of it. When they revile you, which means mock you when they spurn your name as evil on account the son of man," and then he continues, verse 23, "rejoice in that day." What day? The day you are rejected for Christ.

"Rejoice in that day," and he adds, "and leap for joy." Why? Two reasons. Number one, "Behold your reward is great in heaven." We are rejected here, but in heaven we will rejoice because the reward therefore for people rejecting us for Christ, he says is great. It is massive. And second, he says, "For so their fathers did to the prophets." When you are rejected for Christ, you are in a

long line of the heroes of reality. You belong in that group when you are rejected for Christ. Now listen, I know most Christians know everything I just said. You didn't just learn something new that you'd never heard before, but we still go out of our way to avoid being rejected for Christ, don't we? We know it's weak and compromising and shameful. It's conduct unbecoming a Christian, but we avoid rejection anyway and we rationalize it like this.

If we speak the truth then we will be rejected, and if we're rejected, the people who reject us will hate Jesus and be lost forever. That's how we justify it. One of our recent podcasts, I was interviewing Eric Metaxas and he called this the idol of evangelism, which is shocking. Wait, wait, you can't make an idol out of evangelism, and he says, no, no, no. When evangelizing lost people is the excuse that we give for disobedience, it becomes an idol. But historically, that's not how it worked out. Historically, what happened is that when Christian's face being rejected with courage and obedience, anyway, do you know what that did to the non-Christians who are watching them? It actually reached those non-Christians for Christ. It evangelized them. You know why? Because it showed lost people that there were something worth more than people's opinions, worth more than the confiscated property for being a Christian, worth more than the safety and even life itself, and you know what that was? It was Christ that he was better.

So sure, some people will reject you for your commitment to Christ, but maybe some of them will see how precious Jesus really is because you were willing to risk the relationship by telling them the truth. Could it also show some of those people at least that their soul is that precious to you, to you. Their soul is precious to you because you were willing to risk the relationship in order to tell them the truth that will save their souls. This is a compromise that is very easy for us to rationalize, but we need to get back to being faithful regardless of the cost, regardless of the backlash, regardless of the rejection because Jesus is the truth, and he's better than having the acceptance of those who hate him. He is better. He's better so let's speak the truth in love to people that we think will reject us.

Some of the people we think will reject us won't, but let's speak the truth to the people we think will reject us because it honors the Christ who died for our sins, and because it loves the people that desperately need him. This is what Jesus was doing that day in Capernaum with these religious leaders, speaking the truth in love. Now look, as he speaks to them, verse 43, "Jesus answered them, do not grumble among yourselves." I find this funny because in verse 42, they're talking to each other. They're not talking to Jesus. It's like Jesus is walking by as he hears them complaining about him and he goes, "Hey, stop that. Stop complaining about me." But what you see Jesus doing in this moment is he's holding them responsible for not believing what he said is fact, and instead what are they doing? They see themselves as the one who are going to decide what is true and what is not true, not him, so their discontent, disagreement revealed their rebellious hearts.

And I love this, Jesus doesn't answer their objection to what they're saying about him. Like, okay, guys. I know it's confusing. I said I came down from heaven, but listen, I'm the eternal God, but I became a human being because I need to save human beings from their sins and that's

how they do it. So, I was born miraculously and here I am now. He doesn't do any of that. In fact, notice what he does. What he does is he explains why they were rejecting him in the first place. Oh, the reason you are grumbling, complaining, and discontent with what I'm saying is because no one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him and I'll raise him up on the last day. "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." In the end, what he's saying is that God is the one who determines, who does and does not come to Jesus.

And since these people had rejected Christ, at least up until that point, that was the proof that contrary to what they thought was true, God was not at work in their lives. We'll dig in the details in a minute, but for now, if you and I, if we're going to understand people's rejection of Jesus and even how to speak to them when they reject Christ, we must, point #2) ***accept that God initiates people's faith in Jesus. Accept God initiates people's faith in Jesus.*** God is the primary cause of a person's salvation. Yes, people come to Christ and yes, they believe in Jesus. Our text here just now explains why that happens. What is the reason for their decision? Where did their decision come from? Answer, it ultimately came from God who initiates people's true faith in Jesus. False faith, faith that doesn't save, that kind of faith originates within a person. But true faith, faith that saves, that faith comes from God. It starts with him as the source, the giver, the initiator of saving faith.

Now, you might not expect Jesus to say that kind of thing to a bunch of people that don't believe in him. I mean, I know for myself, I've often thought, well, if I'm going to talk about election, I'm going to talk about it from the stage with everybody, Christians, non-Christians, everybody's going to disagree. I'm going to talk about it with a group of guys that are like, hey, I really want to go deep. He should be talking about this with his disciples at a weekend retreat, just the 13 of them. Hey, guys. I need to tell you something. I need to tell you the deep stuff. That's not Jesus. No, he actually just did this with them in verse 37. He does this with people who reject him there when he is like, "Oh, the reason you're rejecting me, well, that's because all that the Father gives me will come to me." So, if you're not coming to me, well, it's just you don't belong to the Father, that's why.

And they would've been like, what? We're the chosen people? Absolutely, we do. He's like, No. If you did, you would come to me. If you're refusing to come to me, it's because God isn't at work in your life, at least not yet. That God is the giver, the gifter of saving faith. This is what Ephesians 2:8 says, quote, "By grace you have been saved through faith, and this salvation, this faith is not your own doing. It is the gift of God," end quote. Saving faith, making the choice to believe, to trust in Jesus, that is a gift from God. Yes, a person must believe, they must choose to believe, but where does the ability to believe come from? That is the question, and the answer to that question is God, and that's what verse 44 is about.

"No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him." Now, I have eight points to get through in 18 minutes, and so strap in. Are you ready? Eight points here to help us understand what Jesus is doing in verse 44. First, those words, to come to me is the same as

believing in him. We saw this in verse 35, where coming to Jesus and believing in Jesus are used synonymously for each other. So to come to Jesus is to believe, to believe is to come to Jesus. Second, the words, no one, are very technical phrase that mean no one, not one person. This is all humanity. Each and every one of us fall into the category that Jesus is about to explain here. Third, the word, can, you see that? No one can. The word can speaks to ability. So, put it together so far, no one person, no one in all humanity has the ability to, to what? What does the text say? It's hard to say, huh? No one has the ability to what? Come to Jesus, to believe in him. No one by himself is able... They do not have the power, they do not have the ability to believe in Jesus. This is complete inability to come to Jesus, that's what he is saying here.

Fourth, is the glorious grace-filled word. What? Unless, unless introduces an exception, a departure from the universal truth about humanity. What must take place first for someone to come to Jesus since we just saw it is impossible for anybody to come to Jesus? What condition must be met? What requirement must be fulfilled according to Jesus? Fifth answer, the Father must what? Draw them to Jesus first. Look at verse 65. Jesus repeats himself, he said, "This is why I told you" He's talking to a group of people that do not believe in him again. He said, "This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father." The Father must grant a person permission to believe in Jesus before they believe in Jesus.

Six, I want you to notice in verse 65 and verse 44, the word him, which means that Jesus is not talking about groups of people. He's talking about individuals. It is true for each individual person. They do not have the ability to believe in Jesus unless the Father draws them first. Seventh, let's slow down a little bit and talk about this word, draw. This word, draw, depending on the context means to attract, to woo, to entice, compel, tug, drag or pull. It means to move something or someone towards something else, and when it is used, almost always it implies resistance.

Like John 21:6, it's used of hauling a net of fish out of the water and into a boat. In John 21:11, the same word is used of hauling the net overflowing with fish off of the boat and onto the shore. It's used in Acts 16:19 of Paul and Silas being dragged before the authorities by people who wanted to punish them for preaching Christ. Acts 21:30, the same word is used for people dragging Paul out of the temple in Jerusalem in order to kill him for being a Christian. So, when New Testament authors use this word, it's not wooing or enticing like, "Hey, Paul, come out, come out wherever you are, we want to kill you." No, this word translated, draw refers to people being compelled, even dragged to do something that they wouldn't choose to do on their own.

Paul and Silas wouldn't choose to be dragged before authorities. No way would Paul choose to be dragged out of the temple and to be executed, so this drawing or dragging is an action that's done to people. This word is not used for people who are voluntarily of their own free will, choosing to do something, not when this word draw is used. So verse 44, can people resist this drawing? I would say, absolutely. Humanly speaking, they can resist it. As some of you can attest, you've been resisting God's work in your life. You pushed against him, maybe like C.S. Lewis, you were dragged kicking and screaming to Christ. The question is not, can you resist it?

Hebrews 4:7 says, "Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your heart." The question is, can that resistance ever be final? And I would say the answer is, no.

The resistance is as effective as the fish resisting the net pulling them out of the water. This word is used for when Peter has that sword in the garden, remember that? It says that he pulled the sword out. That sword gives no resistance, it simply does exactly what Peter wants it to do. This resistance is as effective as Paul's resistance to the people that were dragging him out of the temple. He didn't win that fight. And remember all of this is said to people who what? At this moment that he's talking to them, they're rejecting Christ. Jesus isn't saying, hey, the reason you're rejecting me is because you're rejecting the drawing of God on your life.

No, it's saying the exact opposite of that to religious Jews who were all about God, Jesus is saying, "If you reject me, it's because God is not at work in your life. If he was at work in your life, the proof would be that you would come to me. Anything or anyone that draws people away from me," he's saying, "or teaches people things that cause them to reject me," he's saying that is not and cannot ever be from God. So, he's saying, "You're grumbling, you're complaining, your rejection of me is proof that the God, you think you serve is not at work in your life at all." So rightly understood in context, Jesus words in verse 44 are evangelistic. They're meant to help these people realize, these religious people who are all about God, it was meant to help them think, "You know what? God is not at work in my life because if God was at work in my life, I would come to Christ. But because I'm rejecting Christ, that is proof according to Jesus that God is not at work in my life at all."

It is meant to create in them a hesitation about their standing with God and go, "Wait a minute." So, he's attacking their assumptions. And finally, notice eighth, the safety of those who come to Jesus. End of verse 44, "And I will raise him up on the last day," and as everyone who comes to Christ, everyone who believes in him cannot ever be lost, but they will live for eternity. And after all of that, I'm sure it raises some questions for you. I tried to put myself in people's shoes and, "Okay, what questions would they have?" Maybe this one, "Is this drawing," we talked about in verse 44, "something that God is doing in the hearts of all people?" My answer to that question is no. This is not something God does in and for every person because verse 37, notice he's also verse 37 talking about people that come to him. But notice it says, "All that the Father gives me will come to me."

For God to be drawing all people to come to Jesus, it would mean that he would have to give all people to Jesus because God gives all people to Jesus. They're drawn to Jesus, they come to Jesus, but all people don't, what? They don't come to Jesus. And so, this can't be talking about what God does in all people. Since all people don't believe in Jesus, and since all people don't believe in Jesus, God's not drawing all people to Jesus, he only draws the people that believe in him. Some of you Bible scholars, Bible nerds out there, might be like, wait a minute, John 12:32, Jesus does say, quote, "He will draw all people to himself." See, you're wrong. Jesus just corrected you.

Well, if this word draw here, same word in John 12:32 is what we've seen it to be, then that would mean drawing all people to himself would then again mean what? That all people would what? Come to Jesus and be saved. Are all people coming to Jesus and being saved? They're not. So then what does Jesus mean by all people, he will draw all people to himself? It means that he will draw all kinds of people, Jewish people and non-Jewish people, which we see in Revelation 5, when what? In Revelation 5, there are people around the throne worshiping Jesus from what? Do you know? Every tribe, every language, every people group and every nation.

When Jesus says, "I will draw all people to myself," it is, "I will draw all kinds of people to myself because I will save the world. The world being all kinds of people." Well, you might not agree with that, but now you might be asking, well, why does God need to draw people to Jesus in the first place? I imagine you asking this question, why does he need to do that? Can't people just come to Jesus without God drawing them? What does verse 44 say? Nope. Verse 65, nope. No one can just come to Jesus without God drawing them in the first place. Why is that? You might ask. Thanks for asking.

The answer is because sin has so infected all of us, it's infected every part of us, even our ability to make choices. Even our choices are infected with rebellion so that the New Testament says we are dead, meaning unable to respond to spiritual truth unless God makes us alive first, Ephesians 2. We're slaves to sin, John 8, unable to free ourselves. We're held captive by Satan to do his will, 2 Timothy 2, not able to do God's will. We are hostile to God, Romans 5, Romans 8. We're blind to the truth 2 Corinthians 4. We're unable to please God Romans 8, and unable to understand spiritual truth 1 Corinthians 2. So that's why illustrating this idea of drawing as a father enticing his child to do something with ice cream is not a legitimate illustration for what we're seeing here.

You know why? Is there something inside the child that what? That wants the ice cream, but there is no part of the sinner that wants to come to Jesus because rebellion has infected everything about him, including his mind, his heart, his soul, his emotions and his will, which is the source of all of our actions according to Jesus in Mark 7. So, the idea that most people have that we can just do what we want, you just come to Jesus or not, believe in him or not entirely on our own free will, that salvation is ultimately in our power to initiate and God just sitting there hoping that we're going to respond like, please, maybe today? These ideas and those like them cannot be more antithetical to this text. No one is prevented from coming to Jesus who wants to, and we must want to come to Jesus before actually coming to Jesus, but people can't come to Jesus because in their rebellion they don't want to come to Jesus.

They must want to come to Jesus first, which is what God does, and then they come to Jesus, which is what John 6:44 is about. If you were here in John 3, or you could go back online and watch it, this is what Jesus talks about when he talks about the work of the spirit in salvation, that he makes the sinner alive spiritually. At this, they become willing to believe. They want to believe, which is why they then do believe. So, no one is drawn by the Father to come to Christ because they want to be drawn. When the Father draws the sinner to Jesus, they receive a new



nature and in that new nature they become willing, they want to believe and then they believe. Well, now I imagine you asking something like, well, if what you're saying is true preacher, that means Jesus tells people to believe in him who do not have the ability to believe in him.

Exactly, exactly. Just like he said to the paralyzed man, what? Pick up your bed and walk, that is a sick joke, unless in his words come the power to do what he said. It's just like saying to the tomb that Lazarus is in, Lazarus, what? Come out. It is the same exact thing here. In those cases, as with Jesus telling people to believe who can't believe, it is God using his word that carries his power with it to do in us, for us and through us what we cannot do on our own. This by the way, is where Jesus goes in verse 45. "It is written in the prophets, and they will all be taught by God." He's saying, "If you're not drawn to me, God's not teaching you. Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me." Jesus refers to Isaiah 54:13, and then he takes that truth and applies it to the people there that day saying to them, "If you don't come to me, it's because God is not teaching you." Which again is a massive rebuke because these are the synagogue leaders most likely.

If they're not synagogue leaders, if they're just a random group of Jewish people, they still believe that they have direct access to God through their scriptures, that he is teaching them and he's going on, no, he's not. Not if you're rejecting me. You see, only those who believe in Jesus have been taught by God, which is an aside like any teaching that is without Christ or opposed to Christ or teaching that is based on a Christ that is not the Christ of the Bible, you can be absolutely sure that that teaching is not what? It's not coming from God. You see, God draws people by opening their eyes to the truth. "Then they hear and learn the truth," verse 45, those are synonyms for embracing the truth, and when they embrace the truth, they come to Christ. I've said it before, the proof that a person has been drawn by God and taught by God again is what according to Christ in these verses? The proof is that they come to Christ, they believe. So, there is a salvation order in this text.

First, the Father draws or teaches the sinner. Next, the sinner hears and learns what the Father was saying. Then third, the sinner comes to Jesus. Fourth verse 47, they have eternal life. And then finally, verse 44, Jesus resurrects them on the last day. Then put it all together, God is the initiator of people's faith in Jesus. He gives faith to sinners as a gift of his grace. He's the prime mover, the one who starts the whole process of a person going from spiritual death to spiritual eternal life. Or to put it as simply as I can, God saves sinners. We are lost, he finds us. We are blind, he gives us sight. We are dead, he gives us life. Why? Because we cannot come to Christ without him. This illustration has helped me. Maybe it'll help you. It's helped me understand how I can affirm all of this and at the same time affirm that people must come to Christ, they must choose to believe.

Well, when a sculpture is completed, the hammer can say, "I did that." The chisel, the hand, the arm, the fingers, the eyes, all of those things can say, "I did that," if they talked. But all of those things are secondary. The primary cause of the sculpture is the sculptor, just like Jesus is saying here, "Yes, people believe, they choose to believe, but the primary cause of salvation is God."

And again, I know some of you may not disagree, and I'm willing to risk that in order to preach the truth as I see it in this text. I hope that all of us, if not now, someday will see this truth like a Tootsie Pop. You remember those? They're still in your kids' Halloween basket six months later. But do you remember those? Tootsie Pops really, really hard on the outside, but sweet in the middle.

I hope that's how this teaching will be for you. If it's not so now. Sweet because when you accept it lessens pride and it reveals the lack of control that we really have over our lives and our destinies. But it also places that control in the hands of a good and gracious God who always and only does what's right. Sweet too because it helps you understand what the reasons are for why you experience rejection from people for being a Christian. It helps you understand how to pray for them, even how to talk to them, that God is not at work in their lives, that the ideas that they believe that caused them to reject Christ didn't come from God, and therefore it's not true, and that in love, they need Jesus. If that's you, listen, what I would say to you, is don't try to understand all of this stuff before coming to Christ.

If you were drowning you should not get answers to your questions about water and gravity and all of that stuff. You do all of that after you are rescued. So, in the same way, if this is confusing for you, right now, you'd say you're not a follower of Jesus. Come to him, and then let's talk about this and a whole bunch of other things that Jesus talks about in this text. Despite this strong statement of God's necessary initiating work in the salvation of sinners, if you were there that day, the question that would enter your mind would be, who do you think you are to say this? What gives you the right? What gives you the authority to say all of this? Why should I take you seriously? Verse 46, "Not that anyone has seen the Father except he who is from God, he has seen the Father."

That Jesus can say all of this, that he can give insight into the invisible operations of God in a sinner's salvation? Is because he has and continues to see God. To live in the loving presence of God the Father, he alone has this access because he is in the words of the text, verse 46, "He is from God." So only Jesus speaks the truth about salvation and God's work in salvation, and what qualifies him to do so, he says here, "Is this loving, close, eternal relationship that he has with the Father." So, to the people there that day rejecting Jesus, they're rejecting the God that they serve by rejecting Jesus because only Jesus, notice, has seen the Father. He repeats that because it is so critical. It is what gives him the right, the authority to say all of this. So, to reject him is to guarantee you will never ever know the true God. Which by the way, if somebody ever says to you, "I've seen God, I've been to heaven," what are you supposed to do?

Listen to them and go like, "Oh, here's my money." No, never. Jesus makes it clear. This is the third time in the book of John, only he has seen the Father, nobody else. So, all these trips to heaven, I don't care if it's a little tiny sweet looking little kid talking to Dr. Phil. It's not true because Jesus here makes it clear, no one has ever seen the Father except for him. Okay, off my high horse. That's not a high horse that's actually protecting you from con men out there. Only Jesus has seen the Father because he's lived an unbroken, loving, joyful, fully satisfying

fellowship with the Father, and that's what salvation is all about. God opening that fellowship, that eternal fellowship up to those who would believe in Christ. And he did that, he came here, took on a human nature and a human body to allow us to have fellowship with God, the same fellowship that he has enjoyed for eternity.

Think again, if you're the people there that day. They have just heard that they're not in a right relationship with God at all, and they're not because they haven't come to Jesus. They're grumbling. Their rejection shows God is not at work in their life because if he was, they would come to him. So, hearing very clearly that they are on the outside looking in, notice what our merciful savior calls them to do. Verse 47, "truly, truly I say to you, whoever believes has eternal life." He calls on them to come to him, and that word has is so critical. That word has is in the present tense so that eternal life is not something that you hope to have one day, but that if you come to Christ or if you are in Christ, that is something that you have now and will have for all of eternity. It's not something that you can earn. It's not something that you'll get if you just do enough and you're good enough, but it's something anybody can have if they would believe in Christ.

So, when salvation is looked at from God's perspective, only those the Father draws to Jesus and teaches will believe. When looked at from the human perspective, verse 47, whoever you are, come to Christ. From the face of opposition and rejection, Jesus doesn't back down from the truth. He doubles down on the truth, and so when we are rejected, point #3) ***Assert Only Faith in Jesus Saves People. Assert that only faith in Jesus saves people.*** Why? Because the temptation in the moment of rejection is the compromise. And that moment it's going to be, well, I'm going to hedge my bets. Yeah, religion makes all kinds of people really good and really nice, don't worry about it. That's going to be the temptation, avoid people getting mad at you, don't fall for that temptation. Jesus alone has seen the Father. He alone speaks from the Father, so that what he says is approved by God as true. Meaning Jesus is the only way for anybody to ever be saved. He says it himself that nobody comes to heaven except through him because he's the way, he's the truth and he is the eternal life.

1 John 5:12, put it this way, "Whoever has the son has life, whoever does not have the son, does not have life." It's that simple. So, do you have the son? Have you come to him for eternal life? Do you believe in him? Are you trusting in him for forgiveness of all, that's right, all of your sins? If not, what are you waiting for? I mean, what could possibly be better than being forgiven? People's opinions of you? Some imaginary sense of independence and control over your life? Maybe sin? Maybe that's what it is. Is that better than Christ and forgiveness of sins and eternal life? Listen, all of that is fool's gold. One day you will realize the truth about all of that, that it is worthless compared to Christ. Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your heart. Resist the resistance in your soul and come to him. Believe in him. Give your life to him.