



John 6:37-40

“Called, Converted, & Kept”

37 "All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out.

38 "For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.

39 "This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day.

40 "And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day."

What makes a person truly believe in Jesus? How do we go from unbeliever to believer? How do we get saved?

Historically there have been a lot of opinions about that. For instance, there are many who believe with the 19th century evangelist Charles Finney, that conversion depends simply upon the skill of the preacher and the right use of means. As Finney put it, *“There is nothing in religion beyond the ordinary powers of nature. It consists entirely in the right exercise of the powers of nature. It is just that, and nothing else. When mankind become religious, they are not enabled to put forth exertions which they were unable before to put forth. They only exert powers which they had before, in a different way, and use them for the glory of God.”*

So you get the right preacher, the right music, the right message, and a revival will always result.

Well let’s think about that, who was the best Christian preacher who ever lived? We could come up with countless names - all of us could list our personal favorites, but if we could ask all of those men whose names we might come up with, the Spurgeons, the Whitefields, the Moodys, and ask *them* whether they thought they were better preachers than their Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, I don’t think you would find one of them who would say they were. **And yet in this chapter we have a multitude who have heard the preaching of Christ, and yet still will not believe.**

Well, then maybe its miracles that are the key to conversion. They are many today who claim they would believe in Jesus, if only he would appear to them and show them miracles, there are Christians who maintain that if you can show men signs and wonders, they will believe.

And yet once again, here again Jesus is addressing a group of people who have seen His miraculous power, and yet as He plainly states in verse 36 they do not believe. So if it isn’t the skill and winsomeness of the preacher and the right use of means that converts men, and it isn’t miracles, how does it happen?

Jesus in his conversation with Nicodemus in verse 3 said that conversion is not a result of the “ordinary powers of nature” it is an extraordinary work of the Holy Spirit. In order to be converted we must be born again, *regenerated*. Jesus makes it clear that apart from the working of the Holy Spirit in their hearts no man will be converted and believe in Him. Unless God changes them, no man will come to Him. As Leon

Morris puts it so well “*People do not come to Christ because it seems to them a good idea. In never does seem a good idea to natural man. Apart from a divine work in their souls men remain contentedly in their sins.*”

Simply put unless that process of regeneration occurs, unless God makes us alive we will remain dead in trespasses and sins. But who will this happen to? Is it regeneration random or arbitrary? No, again Jesus says that regeneration is the result of the Father’s choice. His election. Those whom he has chosen will come to Jesus. *All that the Father gives Me will come to Me.*

That is why while Jesus called all men to come to Him, just as preachers today, issue a general call to all men to repent and believe in Him, only some men do. There are two different callings in the preaching of the gospel, there is the general call that goes out to all men, the time is at hand, repent and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and as that preaching occurs there is the *effectual call* to the elect that is accompanied by the Holy Spirit’s drawing power. It’s called effectual because its effective, it changes hearts, it causes people to be born again.

That is why in the same church during the preaching of the same sermon, one man listening to a preacher is transfixed, captivated by the message and moved to tears, while a few seats away another man is bored to tears and in a few moments will begin to nod off or begin the head bob, the slow blink, the sly people watch. I see ‘em all. In one man, the message is being received into a new heart, the seed of the gospel is falling into good soil, that has been prepared to receive it. While in the other, the message is bouncing off a hard and stony heart. The man who is effectually called will come to Christ.

Its interesting isn’t it, that Christ again called men to come to Him, and in one sense the people in these verses had come to Him, I mean they were right there in front of Him listening to Him preach. But spiritually they had not. That should warn us, that it is possible to come to church, without actually ever coming to Christ. Coming to Christ is not a change of physical location it takes place within you when you are allowed like Paul on the Damascus road to see yourself as you really are, you see your sins, you know cannot save yourself, but you understand that Christ can and so you turn from your sins and your attempts to justify yourself and you run to Him, and lay hold on Him, and trust Him and lean all his weight on Him for salvation. Until that has happened, you may have come to church, but you have to Christ.

The Good new is that EVERYONE is welcome to come to Him, even the greatest of sinners, it does not matter how bad you are. He assures you that *no one* who truly comes to Him will be cast out. One of the greatest lies that the devil tells to those who are becoming anxious about salvation is *you are too vile to be received by Christ*. Wait until you’ve become a better person, and then you can go to Christ. The Devil would like us to think that coming to Christ is like trying to get into an exclusive boarding school, and likewise he is pleased as punch when the members of the church act like it is. But our savior waits to receive sinners. What did Jesus tell the Pharisees when they asked him why he received sinners and tax collectors? “*Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.*” What then is required in order for you to come to Christ, to know that you are a sinner, without any other hope. As Joseph Hart rightly put it:

***Let not conscience make you linger,
Nor of fitness fondly dream;
All the fitness He requires
Is to feel your need of Him.***

Even better, Jesus promises you that if you do come to Him, He will never lose you, never let go of you. Not even the grave can separate you from Him. Jesus tells you in these verse that the heart of His mission, the purpose of His incarnation was to save those whom the father elected and to bring them to glory. What an amazing contemplation, Jesus the Son of God, became man, lived a sinless life of humiliation, and died not in order to make it possible for someone somewhere to maybe be saved if they hold on to the very end, but TO SAVE YOU AND GIVE YOU ETERNAL LIFE.

But perhaps at this point you are struggling with objections, perhaps you are saying to yourself, *but what if I'm not elect, how can I come to Him if I'm not someone whom the Father predestined "to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will" (Eph. 1:5)* Friends, search the scripture, not once will you find a command to figure out if you are elect before you can come to Christ. The command is simply *come to me* and it is your responsibility to do so. In fact the only way you can know for certain that you are elect is if you do:

Take a look at your folder: ***"Is there any mark on those who are given to Christ? They are no better than others. Sometimes He chooses the worst! "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me." One of the sure marks of all that were given to Christ is that they come to Jesus: "They all come to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling." Are you come to Christ? Has your heart been opened to receive Christ? Has Christ been made precious to you? Then you may be quite sure you were given to Christ before the world was. Your name is in the Lamb's Book of Life, and your name is on the breastplate of Christ. It is for you He prays, "Father, I will that that soul be with me." Christ will never lose you. The Father which gave you to Him is greater than all, and none is able to pluck you out of the Father's hand. "***

And let me add this, until you have obeyed the gospel and come to the Lord Jesus Christ, you have no right to consider yourself to be elect. There have been people, I've actually met one or two, who have no faith, and yet consider themselves to be "elect" and therefore on their way to heaven. Calvin addressed them this way: ***"Others foolishly speculate that although they do not believe and obey the gospel, perhaps they are elect, They are madmen, therefore, who seek their own salvation or that of others in the whirlpool of predestination, not keeping the way of salvation which is exhibited to them. Nay more, by this foolish speculation, they endeavor to overturn the force and effect of predestination; for if God has elected us to this end, that we may believe, take away faith, and election will be imperfect."***

Maybe you have come to Christ, but you still have another struggle, you know how weak you are, and you worry that you might lose your salvation, and it robs you of all your joy in Christ, and all of the assurance that should be yours, so that instead of experiencing peace and growth, you spend all your time fretting and that very act worrying makes you doubt your salvation all the more, "I wouldn't doubt my salvation if I was really saved, would I? This must mean I'm falling away!"

If that is you in any measure, I beg you to listen to what Christ is saying in these verses. Understand the import of Christ's words in verse 39, that it was the will of the father that of ***"all He has given Me I should lose nothing"*** – that means if only one person in all of Christian history should lose their salvation, it would mean that Christ either disobeyed the command of the Father, or could not do what the Father sent Him to do. Do you believe that it is even remotely possible for Jesus, the Son of God, to disobey or to fail?

O ye of little faith why do you doubt? If you have come to Christ, rejoice again I see rejoice. Spend your time running the race. There are far too many Christians who have gotten to the start line, the gun has been fired, and all they do is stand there wringing their hands, *"oh I wonder if I'm still in the race. Oh and*

why am I making so little progress, why is everyone so far ahead of me.” Because YOU AREN’T MOVING. How many times does God have to shout GO! In your ear before you get moving?

Trust Christ, and run your race. If you have begun with Him he will keep you to the end. All whom the father has elected, will come to Him, and of them, he will lose none. Speaking of that, I want to close with a testimony from a wonderful little book I’ve just finished called “Heavenly Springs” they are extracts from the diary of Andrew Bonar, and if I can make one recommendation to you, if you aren’t reading the lives of the great saints who have gone before, get started [In fact I’ll give this copy away to the first person who asks me.], Kid’s that advice includes you. It will encourage and guide you more than you can know, and oh how many needless difficulties we have because we think we are the first to suffer these problems and don’t benefit from their experiences.

Anyway, this entry was written in the year of his death. (read page 206)

‘ Glasgow, 28th May 1892.

‘ MY DEAR JAMES,—It was very mindful of you to look forward to my *eighty-second year*, and to send me such an appropriate book. Yes, if spared till to-morrow, I shall have finished the eighty-second year of my pilgrimage. When I read the other day that verse in Deut. ii. 7 : “ The Lord thy God hath blessed thee in all the works of thy hand : *these forty years He hath been with thee*, thou hast lacked nothing,” I said to myself, “ *these eighty and two years He has been with me !*” twice the time mentioned there, and I can truly say, “ The Lord my God has been with me. I have lacked nothing.” More than that, He has given me “that blessed hope,” the prospect of being for ever in the kingdom with Him who has redeemed me by His blood.

‘ My dear James, it was in the year 1830 that I found the Saviour, or rather that He found me and “laid me on His shoulders rejoicing,” and I have never parted company with Him all these sixty-two years. Christ the Saviour has been to me my true portion, my heaven begun ; and my earnest prayer and desire for you and Mary and little Marjory, will always be that you may each find not only all I ever found in Christ, but a hundredfold more every year !—Your affectionate father,

‘ ANDREW A. BONAR.’