

Sermon Outline

“LIFE IN HIS NAME”
THE PURSUIT OF WHOLENESS AND THE GOSPEL OF JOHN

THE WILL OF THE FATHER

(JOHN 6:35-40)

I. Introduction

II. Jesus is the Bread from Heaven (Jn 6:27-35)

- A. Jesus tells the people not to work for the food that perishes but for the food that lasts forever. This is the food that the Son of Man will give them if they would come to him (v 27).
- B. The people ask the next logical question: What are the works of God (i.e., the works God requires of us) in order to receive this “food that endures to eternal life” (cf. v 27)?
 - Jn 6:29: “Jesus answered them, “This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent.””
- C. The people press Jesus for more proof of his credentials.
 - 1. They want Jesus to repeat a miracle similar to the manna from heaven (v 31).
 - 2. In one sense, Jesus grants them what they are asking for. The new manna is standing right in front of them.
 - Jn 6:35: “Jesus said to them, ‘I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst.’”
- D. But not all believe Jesus.
 - Jn 6:36: “But I said to you that you have seen me and yet do not believe.”

III. The Father’s Gifts to His Son (Jn 6:37)

- A. But Jesus is not at all surprised by the unbelief of the people. Why is it that not all the people believe in him?
 - Jn 6:37: “All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out.”

- B. Why is it that some people come to Jesus and others do not? The answer rests in the sovereign will of God the Father himself.
1. God the Father is the One who brings people to Jesus, who gives believers to Jesus. Whomever he gives to Jesus will never be rejected and can never be lost.
 2. Ultimately, the cause of our belief in Jesus doesn't rest in us, but in God the Father who enables us to believe, who creates that saving, Christ-ward gaze in our hearts.
 3. Implication: Those who do not believe in Jesus are those whom God the Father has not given to his Son.
 4. Since these people are never touched by the grace of God, they remain in their state of unbelief and rebellion—which is simply the natural, default state of the human heart.
 5. All that the Father gives to Jesus, Jesus promises that he will never cast out. “All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out.”

IV. The Irresistible Will of God (Jn 6:38-40)

- A. Then Jesus explains his mission to the people:
- Jn 6:38: “For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me” (v 38).
- B. What is the will of the Father?
1. The Father's will with regard to his Son:
 - Jn 6:39: “And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day.”
 2. The Father's will with regard to us:
 - Jn 6:40: “For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.”
- C. The will of God for sinners is that we should turn our eyes away from our sin, our glory in this world, ourselves—and fix our eyes upon the Son for our salvation.
- D. The will of God for every human being in this world is to reorient ourselves more and more around Jesus Christ, resting on him alone to save us from our sins.

- E. The promise that God gives through Jesus is that those who rest their lives upon the Son will one day be raised from the dead and forever freed from the power of death.
- F. This looking on the Son is not just a one-off thing. It is a continuous, life-long gaze on Jesus.
 1. While our faith in Jesus waxes and wanes, it will always be present in us, if we are children of God.
 2. But faith is itself created by God.
 3. Ultimately, we don't hold on to Jesus—he is holding on to us.
 4. Jesus holding on to us is what guarantees that our faith will one day blossom into mature, full-bodied, perfect love for Jesus. This is implied in the promises: “...*but raise it up on the last day*” (v 39)” and “...*and I will raise him up on the last day*” (v 40).
 5. When we are raised, we will finally be made whole in every part. We will see our Lord with our very own eyes. And in that moment, our sanctification will be complete. Nothing else in the world can overcome our love for Jesus.
 - 1 Jn 3:2: “Beloved, we are God’s children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when he appears we shall be like him, because we shall see him as he is.”

V. Not By Works but By Belief

- A. Looking to Jesus is how God forms his kingdom on earth.
- B. By now, we should be hearing the social-political implications of Jesus’ teaching: *God will not send his kingdom by any sort of religiously-motivated political or military action that believers might undertake.*
 - Jn 18:36: “Jesus answered, ‘My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But my kingdom is not from the world.’”
- C. God’s kingdom does not come by voting the right president into office or through legislation.
- D. No government or nation-state in this world can be identified with the kingdom of God.
- E. When we believe that political and military power can usher in the kingdom of God or at least create some mythical golden age for our

civilization, we make ourselves susceptible to oppression. Whom we trust, we eventually obey.

- F. How then does the Kingdom of God come to us? Rather, how do we get in to the Kingdom of God?
1. The Lord Jesus has told us:
 - Jn 6:35: “Jesus said to them, ‘I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst.’”
 - Jn 6:40: “For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.”
 2. We enter heaven and eternal life—*the Kingdom of God*—only when we finally realize that nothing in this world is the final solution.
 1. Food supplies can be used up and tainted.
 2. Government can be corrupted.
 3. Personal morality is insufficient.
 4. Only one way is left—the way of self-abandonment, trust, faith, and belief in Jesus.

VI. God’s Will for You

What is God’s will for us, for the entire human race? The will of God for us is that we admit that we need saving. It is for us to realize that there is no hope in the sinful pleasures we indulge in or the accomplishments we seek. It is for us to seek the Bread of Life in Jesus alone. Jesus is the Bread of God “who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world” (v 33). And God wills that everyone “who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day” (v 40). This is God’s will and promise to us. Let us look to Jesus.

Questions for Reflection

1. Was there anything in particular about today's sermon that blessed and encouraged you?
2. Was there anything that you disagree with or found difficult to accept?
3. Why did the crowds want to force Jesus to be king?
4. What kind of food did Jesus tell the people to work for? And what is the work God requires to gain eternal life (vv 27-29)?
5. Based on v 36, how did the people respond to Jesus?
6. Based on v 37, (a) how is it possible for people to even believe in Jesus? (b) What is the promise for those who do come to Jesus? (c) Why is it that some people will not come to Jesus?
7. How does Jesus define God's will for himself and for us in vv 39-40?
8. How does God's kingdom come to us? How do we enter that kingdom? What role does political or military force play in this (if any)? What are some "earthly" ways people are tempted to use to bring in the kingdom of God?