

The sermon

Intro

Think about your desires for a moment. What do you desire most in life? If I had this I'd be satisfied. What longing you desperately want escapes you?

Is there anything that could truly satisfy all your longings? What would your life look like if you could have every possible desire met?

Think about reality for a moment. In this life, is it even possible for you to have every desire met? Is it reasonable to think I can have every desire met? Is there anything that stands in the way? If so, what?

This morning we look to Jesus himself to understand why he came. Jesus sheds light on how our every longing can be realized.

READ PASSAGE

Body

Point 1: Eternal life stems from relations within the Trinity (6:35-40)

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." – 6:35

Who is Jesus talking to? Jewish crowds. People who were there for the feeding of the 5,000 (6:1-15). People who said they needed a sign before they believe (6:30).

"bread of life" means life is found in Jesus. Jesus is the source of life. Jesus gives life. Jesus defines this life as never hungering and never thirsting again.

Response required

Note the response required to access this bread. Coming to Jesus, believing in Jesus.

What do we mean by coming to Jesus? To move in Jesus' direction. To approach Jesus. Jesus put it this way in John 14:6:

Jesus said to him [Thomas], "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.

To possess life we have to go through Jesus. There's no other option. We need to believe him. We need to go to him. Every other religious guru and belief system leads to something other than life!

But I said to you that you have seen me and yet do not believe." – 6:36

Jesus doesn't beat around the bush. Jesus calls out their unbelief.

All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never cast out." – 6:37

What is Jesus talking about? Jesus is pulling the curtain back on inter-Trinitarian relations. A behind the scenes look at God's eternal plan of salvation.

1. The Father gives a group of people to the Son.
2. Every one of these people come to Jesus without fail. They believe.
3. Those who come will never be discarded by Jesus. They're eternally secure.

If a person's given, they'll come. If a person comes, they'll never be rejected. The one who comes will never hunger or thirst again. The blessings of salvation in Christ can never be undone!

For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me. – 6:38

Jesus was fully human, but not merely human. He's eternally existed as God the Son. Jesus dwelled in heaven with the Father before the manger.

Why did Jesus come? Jesus came to obey the Father's will. Jesus was sent. We shouldn't think of Jesus obeying with reservations (I think I have a better idea) or Jesus complying because the Father would punish him if he didn't. Jesus willingly agreed with the Father in joyful unity.

*Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷ but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. ⁸ And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. – **Philippians 2:5-8***

When Jesus dwelled in heaven in the form of God, he willingly embraced the idea of taking on human flesh and dying on the cross for our sins.

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. – 6:39

Why did Jesus come? To ensure that every single individual the Father gave him would experience eternal life.

The Father wills that every person the Father gave the Son is raised on the last day. Not one given person lost. To be raised on the last day means to be raised from the grave for eternal life.

*Do not marvel at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice ²⁹ and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment. – **John 5:28-29***

Great question. Will Jesus fail? I hope your answer is no. Jesus won't fail to achieve the Father's will. Another question. Will every person he's been given be raised? I hope your answer is yes. Every person Jesus was given will be raised.

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. " – 6:40

Jesus reiterates the Father's will. The Father wills that everyone who takes notice of Jesus ("looks") and then acts on what they find ("believes in him") be raised at the final judgment to everlasting life.

Application

Life is found in Jesus. Life means an unending existence where every desire and need is met. Sinful desires excluded. No one will hunger or thirst in the kingdom of God. No one who's permitted to enter the kingdom will ever desire something better. Life will be as good as it can get in the age to come. Everything we were designed to experience will be realized! No boredom. No wishing things were better. You won't be disappointed.

Illustrations: Bob's Big Boy and Buffalo Wild Wings.

We're not born with eternal life. Something needs to happen before we possess eternal life. You need to come to Jesus. You need to believe in Jesus. Those who come to Jesus will never be cast away. Eternal life can't be lost.

Practical question: why will I never hunger or thirst in the kingdom to come?

Point 2: Eternal life comes to those who believe (6:41-47)

So the Jews grumbled about him, because he said, "I am the bread that came down from heaven." – 6:41

The Jews didn't like what Jesus was saying.

They said, "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How does he now say, 'I have come down from heaven'?" – 6:42

We know his parents. We know where he came from. There's no way he came from heaven. He's a lying fraud.

Jesus answered them, "Do not grumble among yourselves. – 6:43

History repeats itself. Just like the Jewish people repeatedly grumbled against Moses in the wilderness, they grumble against their Messiah. Jesus isn't saying what they want to hear.

No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day. – 6:44

Jesus explains their unbelief. **"No one can come"** is inability language. No one is able to come to Jesus/believe in Jesus in their own strength. Something must happen before a sinner believes: the Father must draw us. And what happens when a person is drawn? They come. How do I know that everyone drawn comes? Because the one who was drawn will be raised by Jesus on the last day. The sequence is:

1. Can't come unless drawn.
2. Drawn.
3. Raised on the last day.
4. Which means the drawn person came.

If everyone drawn comes, and if only some come, then only some are drawn. Drawing doesn't make belief possible. Drawing ensures belief happens.

The word translated **"draw"** is used elsewhere for hauling/pulling fish in net (John 21:6, 11). It's used of Paul and Silas dragged into the marketplace by the owners of a slave girl (Acts 16:19). It's used of Paul being dragged out of the temple by an angry mob (Acts 21:30). And it's used of the rich dragging the poor into court (Jas 2:6). The picture is people being pulled against their will. The picture isn't people cooperating with the one dragging them.

The picture is God overrides our hostility, love for sin, pride, rebellion, whatever prevents us from coming to Christ, and successfully, without fail, brings us such that we come willingly. Theologians call this irresistible grace.

Note that the Father and Son work in perfect harmony. The Son comes. The Father draws. The Son raises on the last day.

Jesus appeals to the Old Testament.

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- – 6:45

Jesus cites Isaiah 54:13. A time when God's **"covenant of peace shall not be removed"** (Isa 54:10; see Ezek 34:25; 37:26) AKA the New Covenant. A time when the people's offspring would possess the nations (Isa 54:3). A time when there will be no oppression and terror and nothing to fear (Isa 54:14). Isaiah envisions a time when everyone present has been taught by God.

Jesus explains: **Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me.** Meaning everyone the Father teaches comes to Jesus. No exceptions. Everyone the Father gives to the Son comes (6:37). Everyone drawn comes.

Jesus is peeling back the curtain on election and predestination during an evangelistic conversation! Jesus says the Father has given some people to the Son for salvation. Jesus says these same people will come to Jesus without fail because the Father draws them.

Later, Jesus put it this way:

And he said, "This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father." – 6:65

Jesus is repeating what he said in 6:44. The given, the drawn, the taught, the granted are the same group. If you came, you did so because the Father granted you to come.

not that anyone has seen the Father except he who is from God; he has seen the Father. – 6:46

God's drawing is invisible. The Father teaches without being seen. God doesn't visibly walk into a bar in a fisherman's suit with a giant net and drag people out. He doesn't physically drag people out of Mosques either.

Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes has eternal life. – 6:47

Jesus declares himself the source of eternal life. Jesus calls out their unbelief. Jesus tells them they need to be drawn to come. Jesus urges belief.

Jesus explains the dynamics behind belief/unbelief while urging unbelievers to believe. Fascinating!

What do I need to believe you ask? Jesus is God. Jesus' words are true. There will be a day of judgment. Those who believe in Jesus will be raised to life in a place where we'll never hunger or thirst for anything better. Eternal life is found only in Jesus.

Trust in Jesus. Tell us if you do.

Application

Let's share Jesus' thinking. Effectual drawing in no way excuses unbelief. Effectual drawing in no way makes gospel proclamation unnecessary.

These are good truths God wanted us to know! If I believe, I've been given by the Father to the Son. I've been drawn to the Son by the Father. I've been granted to come. Jesus will finish the job. He'll raise me on the day. All glory be to God, Father, Son, and Spirit.

Practical question: believer, how does Jesus explain your coming to him?

Point 3: Eternal life comes through Jesus' death (6:48-51)

I am the bread of life. – 6:48

Jesus repeats himself.

Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. – 6:49

Manna didn't give eternal life. Jesus does.

In response to Israel's grumbling against Moses and Aaron, God gave the people "*bread from heaven*" called manna (Exod 16:2-4). Israel ate manna for 40 years in the wilderness (Exod 16:35).

Manna kept people alive for a time, but it didn't prevent death.

This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. – 6:50

To keep the analogy of eating manna going, Jesus speaks of eating him to escape death. Eating Jesus isn't literal. Eating the bread of life, Jesus, as we've seen earlier, means coming to Jesus, believing in Jesus. Jesus isn't saying we get eternal life by eating a cracker at communion.

The one who believes/comes will be rescued from death.

Why did Jesus come? So that everyone who believes in him will be rescued from death forever and ever.

I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh." – 6:51

Jesus is living bread. He doesn't rot the manna did (Exod 16:20). Life comes through Jesus' death!

What does it mean to live forever?

In this life, death happens. If we live long enough, our body decays over time. Eventually our breath fails. And we die. Body and soul are separated until the hour we read about in John 5:28-29. At that time, the body and soul, of every person who has died, Christian and non-Christian, will be reunited for judgment. The exception being those Christians alive at Jesus' coming. They will never experience death.

At that time, the wicked will be relocated to the eternal fire where they will experience eternal punishment meaning eternal conscious torment. The righteous will be relocated to the kingdom of God where there will be no sin, no death, no bodily decay, no tears, no suffering, no violence, no hate, no lies, no injustice, no international invasions, no predators, no fears (Rev 21:1-4). Instead, worship, joyful submission to Jesus, love, unity, peace, work, etc. Forever and ever. Without end. Body and soul can never be separated again.

Eternal life comes to sinners through Jesus' death on the cross. Jesus gives his body for the world so that we can experience eternal life. Jesus gives. We get. Jesus suffers. Our suffering comes to end.

Jesus mercifully came and gave his life to rescue us from our dreadful condition: sin and death.

What does Jesus' death have to do with eternal life you ask?

In order for sinful us to have right relationship with the holy God, our sins need to be taken away, forgiven.

God is good. So he doesn't take sin casually. God cares when people lie to you, steal your money, say mean things about you. Because God's good, he punishes sin.

No sin ever committed will be left unpunished. For those who refuse to come to Jesus, their sins will be punished in hell. For those who come to Jesus, their sins were punished on the cross.

Jesus died as a substitute. Jesus gave his life for the world. Jesus died for fallen people who've been blinded by Satan. For broken people like me and you.

We can't erase our sins by any good we do. We need the one and only sinless man, Jesus, to take the punishment for us so we can be declared not guilty.

To be raised on the last day you need to believe in Jesus (he's God the Son, he gives eternal life to everyone who believes) and you need to trust in Jesus' death (he died in my place to take away my sins).

Trust in Jesus' death. Tell us if you do.

Practical question: am I trusting in Jesus' death or something else?