

The following is a rough transcript, not in its final form and may be updated.

Where There Is A Will...

John 6:38-40

Intro: We've been looking at the statements of Jesus to the multitude of people who found Him in Capernaum. He had fed them bread and fish the day before and they were back looking for seconds. Their minds are on their bellies but Jesus is attempting to adjust their focus a little higher – to the spiritual bread that came from heaven: Himself! As I said last week, the topic Jesus addresses in our current text (35-40) brings us to the deep end of the theological pool. Are we in over our heads? Of course we are! Anytime you delve into the mind and heart of God, you are way out of your league. But, the Lord gives us a measure of His Spirit that helps to us understand and apply His Word.

Our present topic involves the essence of our salvation and I'll admit that it is a very heady subject. Sometimes it is a challenge to follow along and sometimes it's a challenge to just accept what the Bible declares. As difficult as it may be to wrap our minds around this subject effectively, I'm convinced that it is critical for our own spiritual growth and maturity as individual believers and as a church. Our local Christian culture suffers greatly from a severe lack of knowledge on what the Bible has to say concerning our salvation and the security of it. I can't tell you how many times I've had conversations with people who are clearly believers that in some way make the comment that they do certain things (good things) because they, "don't want to go to hell." There is a strongly held yet seldom mentioned undercurrent of belief in our area that holds to the idea that a Christian can somehow lose their salvation. A lot of this is denominational influence but at its core, this belief stems from a basic lack of understanding of Biblical salvation.

In order to believe that you must do something to retain your salvation, you must 1st believe you had to do something to obtain your salvation. As we saw in our last study, that is not the case. Man, by nature, is incapable of choosing to believe in God. He will not believe. Since this characteristic lies so deep in our nature, the will not is actually cannot! That's why the Bible says that man is "dead in trespasses and sins" He's as unable to save himself as a dead man is unable to return himself to life. What would it take

for a dead man to respond physically to Jesus' voice? A miracle; a resurrection (Lazarus). In the same way, it requires a miracle for a person who is dead in sin to believe on Jesus.

This is the miracle of the new birth. It's what James refers to in **1:18** of his epistle. This speaks of the moment when the Christian life begins as the moment at which a child is conceived. It says this is done according to the will of the Father and not of the child. Who ever heard of a baby deciding the time or place where it should be born? The idea is ridiculous! It's no more ridiculous than believing that we become children of God by deciding that we would like to be born into God's family. If you're a believer in Jesus, it's because the matter of your faith in Christ was decided first by your heavenly Father. He engendered you and He did this by the Holy Spirit working through the Word of God.

We saw the same reference to spiritual conception in the prologue (**1:11-13**). This teaches that there are 3 ways a person does not become God's child. It's not by physical birth (human descent). No one becomes a child of God simply because their parents are children of God. No one inherits the relationship. Also, no one becomes a child of God through emotion. A person can be moved to tears in a revival service and still not be born again. Lastly, it's not of their own will either. No one becomes a believer just by sitting down and deciding that they will believe. We can't do that. Then, how do we come to believe? God must first do a miracle inside us to make us alive spiritually.

Of course, a person must still believe. You must accept Jesus if you are to be saved. But, is there anything in man that facilitates salvation? Of course not! If that were the case, there could be boasting in heaven. Salvation is not of man; salvation is of God who intervenes. Men believe because God has first regenerated them. So, if there is nothing a person can do to gain salvation, it stands to reason that theirs is nothing they can do to retain salvation. Thankfully, we don't have to rely on reason in this area because this is exactly what our text addresses today.

38-39- These verses deal with the keeping the power of God. How do we know our salvation is secure? Because God never begins a work that He doesn't intend to finish and thus, no one He has called to faith in Jesus will ever be lost.

It's critical that we understand this great truth because our knowledge of it (or lack of) will affect our lives. If we do understand it, we'll have a solid foundation on which to stand that is sure; a truth upon which we can build.

This truth is actually seen in [vs37](#). Sure, Christ's statement there opens the gates of heaven to any man, woman or child who will come but; it also speaks of God's power to keep the one who does come, and to keep them eternally.

The original Greek text contains a double negative that, in effect, denies that the one who comes to Christ will ever be driven away—either now or later. The verse literally says, “whoever comes to me I will never, never drive away.”

This truth is developed more fully in our current text. Not only does Jesus promise to reject no one who comes to Him, He also states His determination to lose none of those who do come. Who are those who'll never be lost? All who come to Jesus. Whoever you are and however you may have come, if you have come to Jesus as your Lord and Savior, this truth is for you. Whether you're aware of it or not; believe it or not; resist it or not - it doesn't matter. If you've truly believed in Jesus Christ, then this verse is His declaration that you will never be lost. He will keep you. You can know that you'll be in heaven one day just as certainly as you know that Jesus Himself will be there.

But what if I get to the point where I would deny Him? This is an honest question and many people that hold to the security of the believer often stumble at this point. The Bible teaches that Jesus is able to keep you even then! What would this look like? If people come up and ask about Jesus, would you ignore them or tell them to go away? Maybe curse them out and tell them you don't know Him? That's exactly what Peter did, right? He had lived with Jesus for 3.5 yrs but when it came down to brass tacks, Peter denied Jesus with oaths and cursing. Did Jesus forsake Peter? No! Peter may have been far from the Lord at that moment but the Lord was not far from Peter. Jesus later appeared to Peter personally and recommissioned him to service and used him mightily to spread the Gospel. The keeping power of God is for all. It's for you whoever you are, however you've come, whatever you may or may not have done.

But, not only is the keeping power of God for all who've come to Jesus, it's

also absolutely certain. It's certain because both the will and the power to keep those who've come to Christ from falling are God's. It wouldn't be a certainty if the will and power was man's. Paul writes about the keeping power of God in **II Tim 1:12**. Paul is saying that God has the power to keep everything he deposited with Him. This means that when we trust in Jesus for salvation we're trusting that God is not only able to keep our spiritual deposits, but that He will actually keep them.

What are some of the capital investments believers have placed on deposit with God? 1) Our faith for salvation. Can God keep that? Of course (**John 10:27-28**)! **Rom 8:35, 37-39** nothing can separate us from the love of Christ. Not sin, not physical suffering; not supernatural powers; not anything - not even ourselves. 2) Our faith that God is able to accomplish His purposes in our lives. Can God keep that? **Eph 2:10** says He can and will. When we come to Jesus we step out of one kind of life into another kind of life and we are committing ourselves into the hands of One who is determined to form us, direct us, push us, and (if necessary) even pressure us so that He might mold us into the image of the Lord Jesus Christ. 3) Our faith that He is able to see us through temptation. Can God keep that too? Yes (**I Cor 10:13**). God is clearly able to keep all of the capital deposits we have placed in Him.

What dividends are paid on those deposits? Marvelous ones! Security in this life and the next, blessings so richly partaken of: love, joy peace that passes all understanding and countless more. All of our spiritual deposits we have entrusted to the Father are being held securely in His capable hands and we'll enjoy the benefits of them for eternity.

40- "There's nothing certain in this world but death and taxes." That may be true for the lost man but it is not true for the believer. For one thing, if the rapture happened today, every Christian would cheat death by it. But, regardless what the case may be for other, for the Christian at least, there are things that are far more certain. Jesus has been discussing some of these certainties in this passage. How do we know they are certainties? They are founded on the combined wills of God the Father and God the Son. For the 3rd consecutive verse, Jesus has referenced the Father's will and this in conjunction with His own will gives us the assurance that what He declares will be accomplished.

How so? 1) The sovereign will of God is the origin of all things and all things

are ordered by it. God's will is absolute, unlimited and determined solely by Himself. God doesn't need to consult anyone to formulate or execute His plans. God's will is fixed; it doesn't adapt to changing circumstances. It controls the circumstances, because it's omnipotent. God's will is irresistible; He's foretold the end from the beginning and has promised to keep all who come to Him.

2) God's will is confirmed by Jesus. Jesus confirmed the Father's will primarily by going to the cross. He further confirms that will by receiving all who the Father gives Him, sanctifying them and will ultimately present them to the Father without any spot or wrinkle of sin. In effect, the Father places them in the protective custody of Jesus Christ.

3) God's will ensures our complete salvation. **Vs37** taught that God's will is seen in our salvation. **Vs39** teaches that God's will is seen in our preservation. **Vs40** teaches that God's will is seen in our conversation (manner of living). Eternal life is a present possession. God's determined to accomplish His will in us right now. He doesn't just begin a work in us when we accept Jesus and then completes it when we die with no concern for what happens to us in the meantime. That is absurd and unbiblical. The fact that God's placed His own, eternal and everlasting life within us is evidence that His will extends down to the way we live, think, act, and grow in this present life. You may not have any interest in what God's plan for your life is, but He has an interest in your life and He can be very insistent!

4) God's will is determined. **Phil 1:6**, "Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ." God is determined to carry out His plan in a Christian throughout their life until they die or Jesus returns to take them home. **Rom 8:28-29** also speaks of God's present purpose in the believer's life. God's great purpose is to make each person who believes in Jesus Christ like Jesus. God has created and called millions of sinful men to Himself just so that He might reproduce Jesus Christ in them. This doesn't mean we become divine but it does mean we'll be like Jesus. This is the whole point of our present transformation.

This doesn't mean we'll be more aware of how good we're becoming. On the contrary, we'll become increasingly aware of how sinful we are. Early in his career, Paul called himself "the least of the apostles" but toward the

close of his life saw himself to be the “chief of sinners”. We won’t be conscious of increasing holiness but we’ll be becoming more like Jesus even as we become more aware of our sin. If we’re smart, we’ll be giving Jesus more and more control over us so that His life will be seen in us in greater ways. It means that the fruits of the Spirit will be seen in us “love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control” ([Gal 5:22-23](#)).

There’s a serious side to this too. There will inevitably be times when the sovereign and irresistible will of God comes into conflict with our wills and we’ll try to resist the inevitable. When this happens, God will begin to deal with us, and His dealings will become progressively sharper until we return to the path which He’s determined for us to go.

Geologists say that the earth’s surface is covered by tectonic plates and these plates are constantly moving. The plate the Americas is on is moving away from the European plate by 1 inch a year. The west coast is being passed by the enormous plate that lies beneath the Pacific Ocean. This drift rate is 4-8 inches annually. No one understands the forces that cause the land masses to move. But they do move, and the movement is both fixed and irresistible.

Now, earthquakes generally occur along the lines where these plates meet, but not at every point along the line. Some places have had violent earthquakes while at other places along the same line, there have never been any earthquakes and apparently never will be. What’s the difference? In the places where there are great earthquakes the edges of the two land masses lock in place and resist the movement. Pressure builds up and the adjustment comes suddenly. But, in places where there are no earthquakes the land masses do not lock, the adjustment is gradual. Geologists refer to the movement along these areas as creep.

How does this apply to the will of God for the believer’s life? God’s will is as irresistible for us as the movements of the great continental plates. We may not understand God’s will, but it moves anyway and at its self-determined rate. What will you do? Will you resist it? If so, forces will build up and God will make the adjustment violently in your life. Will you yield to it constantly? If so, God in His grace will open your eyes daily to see His way and will grant you the power walk in His will. The adjustments will be gradual but

they will be consistent

Where there is a will, there is a way. Thank God the determining factor of the Christian life is the keeping power and irresistible will of God. If it all was based on man's will – it would not be certain. But because it is based on God's will and confirmed by Christ's will, it is not only certain – it is assured!

