



How is it that several people look at the exact same evidence and come to opposite conclusions? I am guessing that most of you never heard of Ronald Wayne. Mr. Wayne lives in a modest home in the Nevada desert. He owns a few handguns, an impressive collection of VHS tapes and still uses a Motorola flip phone. No one would accuse Wayne of being a techie but things almost turned out very differently. In 1976 he was working in a garage with two other guys trying to build a personal computer. Two weeks after the company was officially founded he sold his 10% stake for only \$800. Had he held onto those shares of Apple stock, today they would be worth about \$50 billion.¹ So how did Ronald Wayne and Steve Jobs look at the exact same evidence but arrived at opposite conclusions?

Do you know the name of the company that owned the largest search engine in 1995? It was a company called Opentext Corp. They were bought by Yahoo and got out of the search engine business. Instead of being a blip in tech history, instead of Google, they may have been worth \$500 billion today. Why did Opentext and Google look at the same evidence and come to opposite conclusions?

The same is true for evidence in the spiritual world. Why do two people or groups of people look at Jesus and decide to keep following him while others look at the exact same evidence and reject Jesus?

Here's a recap of last week's main points.

1. Fickle followers want free stuff.
2. Fickle followers force human solutions to spiritual problems
3. Fickle followers forge their own spiritual paths.

The more Jesus talked to the crowds, the more disturbed they got. Let's read the rest of the chapter.

41 So the Jews grumbled about him, because he said, "I am the bread that came down from heaven." 42 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'?" 43 Jesus answered them, "Do not grumble among yourselves. 44 No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day. 45 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— 46 not that anyone has seen the Father except he who is from God; he has seen the Father. 47 Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes has eternal life. 48 I am the bread of life. 49 Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. 50 This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. 51 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."

52 The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" 53 So Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. 54 Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. 55 For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. 56 Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him. 57 As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever feeds on me, he also will live because of me. 58 This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like the bread the fathers ate, and died. Whoever feeds on this bread will live forever." 59 Jesus said these things in the synagogue, as he taught at Capernaum.

60 When many of his disciples heard it, they said, "This is a hard saying; who can listen to it?" 61 But Jesus, knowing in himself that his disciples were grumbling about this, said to them, "Do you take offense at this? 62 Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? 63 It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. 64 But there are some of you who do not believe." (For Jesus knew from the beginning who those were who did not believe, and who it was who would betray him.) 65 And he said, "This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father."

66 After this many of his disciples turned back and no longer walked with him. 67 So Jesus said to the Twelve, "Do you want to go away as well?" 68 Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life, 69 and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God." 70 Jesus answered them, "Did I not choose you, the Twelve? And yet one of you is a devil." 71 He spoke of Judas the son of Simon Iscariot, for he, one of the Twelve, was going to betray him.

So before we go any further, let me answer my own question and then we'll work out the ramifications as we go. Why do two people or groups of people look at Jesus and decide to keep following him while others look at the exact same evidence and reject Jesus? The answer is the same one that I left you with last week and the same one Jesus gave twice in this teaching.

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

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

The answer is clear. Two people or sets of people look at the exact same evidence and some decide to follow Jesus and others do not. The difference between the two is that one group is drawn by the Father and the other group is not. Let me deal with two rather significant issues that immediately may come to your mind.

First, some might think that this doesn’t answer the question because after all, the Father draws everyone. This is a fairly common belief which goes like this. No one can come to Jesus unless the Father draws them. This is the impassable barrier to belief. But the Father draws everyone and enables them to believe. After they are drawn in this way, some choose to believe and others do not. Again, this is a fairly common interpretation of this verse. But the problem is that the rest of Jesus’ teaching does not allow this interpretation. Verse 44 clearly says that those who are drawn are raised up on the last day. Therefore, everyone who is drawn by the Father believes on the Son. This is seen even more clearly when you compare these three verses I showed you last Sunday.

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

Each verse ends with the phrase “I will raise him up on the last day.” Only those who are truly saved will be raised up on the last day in the resurrection. All three verses have a slightly different angle to salvation. None of those whom the Father gives will be lost. Verse 39 is from God’s perspective. It is an eternal decree—an unconditional promise that none will be lost. Everyone who is truly saved will persevere until the end. The apostle Paul teaches the same truth but I find no greater comfort for my eternal destiny than this perfect promise. Yes, I must believe but ultimately, my eternal life is not in my hands but in God’s hands.

All who believe will have eternal life. This is from our perspective. This is the part of salvation that is seen and experienced by the believer. Everyone who believes in the Son will have eternal life. At some point in our lives we don’t believe and at some point we do believe. We may not always know the moment in time at which that happens but every believer moves from unbelief to belief; from no faith to saving faith.

Finally, verse 44, at least the way I see it, it part of God’s secret will. You cannot come to the Son unless the Father first draws you. That is a plain fact. And again, all of those who are drawn by the Father are “raised up on the last day” and enter eternity with Jesus. So you can’t say that the Father draws all people which enables some to believe. That just won’t jive with this passage at all, especially since finished his teaching to the crowd by repeating the exact same truth in

verse 66. *“This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father.”*

Verse 65 was Jesus’ explanation of verse 64. *But there are some of you who do not believe.”* Why do did some in the crowd not believe? Verse 65 is the exact answer to my leading question. Why do two people or groups of people look at Jesus and decide to keep following him while others look at the exact same evidence and reject Jesus? *This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father.* Some of those standing in the crowd before Jesus did not believe because they were not drawn by the Father.

Now for the second and perhaps more important implication of this truth. Do you and I know who the Father has drawn unto himself? Of course we don’t. Since I have believed in the Lord Jesus Christ for going on forty years, I do believe that my faith is genuine and therefore I was drawn by the Father. And you could say the same about yourself. But beyond that we have no idea who will drawn by the Father and who will not. That’s why I refer to this as part of God’s secret will. He doesn’t need to and will never disclose this secret will. It is a sovereign act of God behind the sovereign veil of his own purposes. We don’t know what his purposes are, only that he has them and has every right to have them.

So the implication is that this does not change the way we do church or evangelize. Evangelism is a call to your next door neighbor and to the whole world to turn from their sin and place their faith in Christ alone. Our job is exactly how Paul described it in 2 Corinthians.

17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. 18 All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; 19 that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. 20 Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. 21 For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Let me draw some principles from this beautiful passage.

1. You are a new creation and you are in Christ.

This is not the secret will of God. This is the revealed will of God that promises that every believer is in Christ. The Holy Spirit dwells with in you but you are also literally “in Christ” as well. It is a place of being and dwelling. You don’t have to do anything to stay there. You are just there by virtue of being a believer. You don’t have to behave a certain way. You don’t have to avoid a certain number of sins to stay there. However, the mere knowledge that you are a new creation in Christ will have an effect on how you live. You can never lose your position as a new creation and being found in Christ.

2. Christ gave us the ministry of reconciliation.

What is the ministry of reconciliation? Verse 19 explains it: *that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them.* So reconciliation is just another term for salvation but it is a very personal term. Romans 5:10 says that unbelievers are enemies of God. The relationship between man and God is not just broken, it irreparably

broken because we oppose God. We don't want to be reconciled but in Christ, God restores that relationship with us. We move from enemy to friend. And as a result, not only are we reconciled to God but we are given the ministry of reconciliation. So what does that look like?

3. Christ gave us the message of reconciliation.

First, he gave us the message of reconciliation. There is no ministry without a message and Paul laid it out clearly in verse 21.

For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. If you know me you know that I have always called this the gospel glove because it has five key parts to it, like the fingers of a glove.

- *For our sake*

This phrase means “in our place” or “instead of us.” Something happened on our behalf.

- *he made him to be sin*

There are two pronouns here. The first he is the Father and the second him is the Son. God made the Son to be sin. This was the plan from the before the foundation of the world. This was the Father's eternal purpose that the Son would be made sin. So putting the first two phrases together we know that the Father made Jesus to be sin instead of us.

- *who knew no sin*

The sinlessness of Jesus is core to his work of salvation.

- *so that in him*

Here is the “in Christ” promise again.

we might become the righteousness of God

And this completes the Great Exchange. Christ became what we were so that we might become what he is.

4. Christ has made us His ambassadors.

Verse 20 explains exactly what an ambassador does. *Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us.* When we share the message of reconciliation it's as if God is sharing the same message to that person. And we not only have the what of the message of reconciliation but we have an actual demonstration of what Paul might say. *We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.* To implore means to beg and plead. This is the level of urgency and necessity of sharing the gospel, of being an ambassador for Christ.

So this is where I come full circle back to John 6. There is the secret will of God in salvation where the Father draws people to himself. One person stopped by last week to talk about this subject as he had some questions about it. We had a great conversation about this and other things. So I am most certainly open to discussing it any time. But I don't want to get into an extended debate about it, for several reasons.

First, people have and will always disagree about it. There are certain topics in the Bible that Christians have always disagreed about. That's the beauty of unity in our diversity. What matters

is not that we come to an agreement but how we talk about it with one another. Are we peaceful and kind or argumentative and difficult?

The second reason is because this is part of God’s secret will. Jesus gave us a glimpse behind the divine curtain but that’s all we get. He’s not giving us the nitty gritty details.

Third, you don’t share the gospel based on God’s secret will. You share the gospel based on the hundreds of verses that relate to it and instruct us how to share it. Paul did not approach people and ask them if they had been drawn by the Father or not. That’s not how you do evangelism. Paul’s message was *We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God*. Paul begged people to place their faith in Christ. This is what we should be concerned about. The message of salvation is to be preached to all people without distinction.

Fourth, even though Jesus knew who would believe and who would not believe, which means he also knew who was drawn by the Father and who was not, he still preached to all people. His supernatural knowledge did not change the way he ministered to people. He knew that the seeds he sowed would fall onto all kinds of soils, he still sowed seed to all of them.

Now that we settled that issue, let me finish John chapter six.

4. Fickle followers fail to see truth staring them in the face.

One potentially confusing section starts in verse 53. *“Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you.*

This is where Romans Catholics get their understanding of the Eucharist. A few weeks ago Ryan invited a friend from school to attend our church and we talked about this section of John.

Admittedly, at face value it is a tad confusing.

If it is meant to be taken literally, there are only 2 options available.

1. We must actually eat Christ’s flesh and drink his blood, a sick cannibalism that is strictly forbidden (just the blood of animals, let alone the flesh and blood of a man) throughout the Old Testament.
2. Transubstantiation—the bread and wine actually become the body and blood of Christ, and then you eat it. Less gory but still theologically wacky.

In his commentary, Dr. Carson does not pull any punches on the topic.

“Any dullard could see that Jesus was not speaking literally: no-one would suppose Jesus was seriously advocating cannibalism and offering himself as the first meal.”²

But the confusion is quickly cleared up when you go back to the key verses in this chapter.

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
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

44	No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him.	And I will raise him up on the last day
54	Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life	and I will raise him up on the last day

It is quite obvious that Jesus did not intend for his words to be taken literally. Therefore, it must be a metaphor for being drawn by the Father and believing in the Son.

5. Fickle followers do not follow the true Jesus unto death.

After this many of his disciples turned back and no longer walked with him. 67 So Jesus said to the Twelve, “Do you want to go away as well?” 68 Simon Peter answered him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life, 69 and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God.”

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¹ https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/get-there/what-if-you-sold-10-percent-of-apple-in-1976/2016/04/15/9f64f4f4-00e3-11e6-9d36-33d198ea26c5_story.html

² Carson, D. A. (1991). *The Gospel according to John* (p. 295). Leicester, England; Grand Rapids, MI: Inter-Varsity Press; W.B. Eerdmans.