

### The Father's Drawing

In John 6:44, we find that none come to Jesus unless the Father draws them. This means that every saved soul, at some point was drawn by God the Father, toward Jesus, and toward that faith through which His grace of salvation is given. What does drawing mean in this context? I believe it is simply opening up opportunities by various and sundry ways for man to find Jesus and His saving grace. Prior to Jesus' earthly ministry, death and resurrection, that was the same drawing and the same faith through which the Old Testament saints were saved. We can see this clearly from John 1:1 and 14 when we realize what he is saying when we read that "*in the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*" Then in verse 14 we discover that *The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us...* Thus Jesus was always there and active in the Spirit as the Word toward whom the Father could draw all souls. While Jesus had not yet appeared in the mortal flesh, He had been made known in terms of expressions of Himself toward which the Father could draw all who would choose to see the light.

Since at the time of Calvin, there has been the question, does the Father draw everyone or only a select few? If He draws only the few and they are all saved, His drawing must be irresistible. However, if He draws everyone, and because everyone is not saved, then His drawing is not irresistible and so man must have the power to resist that drawing, and therefore some choose to not be saved. Most certainly, it is the latter, for several reasons, the discussion of which is beyond the intent of this writing.

From this, we may reasonably ask how can it be that the Father's drawings are not always successful? Surely our omnipotent sovereign God has the power to do anything and everything. The answer is that He has chosen to give man a form of what can be called sovereignty over his own will, which by definition God has chosen not to violate. Thus man has the choice to follow or to ignore God's drawing. This sovereign will is self evident in our daily lives, especially in those who don't know God, and those who even deny His very existence. Many take issue with this idea of the sovereignty of man's will because it seems inconceivable that God would give up any part of His own absolute authority, yet strong clear examples of this abound throughout Scripture as to limits of

interference God has imposed on Himself where man's choices are involved. Here again is an issue beyond the scope of our subject.

If man has that sovereignty of choice, doesn't that negate the concept that the Father draws all who come to Jesus? Couldn't some come directly to Jesus of their own free will without being drawn? Certainly not, because the inerrant Word of God tell us so. Mans natural heart, being deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, is incapable of this. Unless through God's drawing, a ray of light of truth penetrates his natural darkness, there can be no coming to Jesus. God's drawing in no way negates or diminishes mans free will or right to choose. God uses many ways to draw people without overriding their sovereign will. He uses His already drawn sons and daughters as examples to open pathways for His drawing. Their witnessing and their prayer can soften hearts and remove barriers to His drawing. God uses teachers, pastors, missionaries, and other evangelicals as well as Bible expositors to convey His Word and thus effectuate drawing. Both tragedies and triumphs provide opportunities to change attitudes and open the ways for the Father to draw those who might chose to come to Jesus.

If one has the faith that saves, that is has felt, acknowledged, and fully accepted the Father's drawing to Jesus, and all that that entails, then there must be evidence of it in that person's repentant nature, love, obedience and gratitude. Unless each of these manifest and proceed to grow in both mind and heart, one should most carefully and critically examine that faith to see if it be genuine, and if it was the Father and not another power who did the drawing. The extent of that examination should deal with all four of these evidences and should be in the context of the whole word of God, not just a few popular, attractive, and non-challenging verses. Perhaps the following can provide an outline guide for that evidence, at least as I see that it ought to be.

1. Repentance – Scripture assures us that without repentance there is no salvation. Repentance is the spiritual, mental, emotional, and physical turning away from the worldly ways and toward our Lord and Savior Christ Jesus. That turning, if genuine, is surely the effectualization of the Father's drawing. It must however

- be considered a work-in-process of a total change of focus, a change of priorities, and a change of attitudes as well as behavior toward sin, sin being everything that is contrary to God's will. To know fully what is and is not of God, one must determine it from Scripture, not merely from the opinions of others or from one's own intuition, feelings, or very likely deceitful rationalizations. There is another essay available called "Repentance" that is a detailed study of the word meaning which should be helpful in finding relevant Scriptural references to this.
2. Love – is an essential component of every saved soul. 1Corinthians 13 is completely devoted to explaining Christian love and all of its many essential manifestations. The beginning verses tell us that in effect that without love, we are nothing. The final verse tells is "*and now abideth in faith, hope and love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.*" These words, and the entire chapter, provide a wonderful insight into the very nature of our Lord. We know from other parts of Scripture that God is love. Therefore, we have here a detailed description of just what that means. Read the chapter, everywhere substituting Jesus in place of love, or charity, and see how perfectly it applies! Now substitution your own name if you wish to read a morbidly hilarious joke! That substitution should make clear how far away any of us are in terms of having that perfect love. Genuine Godly love is a commitment and one of action. Words and emotions are not love, no matter how well expressed and how passionately they are presented. Godly thoughts followed by Godly actions are the only valid expressions of Godly love. Our loving God implants this love to all He effectually draws.
  3. Obedience – to God's will can only come from knowing God's will. This is found with certainty only in God's Word. Jesus said, if you love me, you will obey me. Therefore love and obedience are inexorably linked together. I don't see how they can exist separately, nor can genuine godly love and obedience exist anywhere but in a repentant heart. As noted above, Paul claimed love to be the greatest virtue above faith and hope. With love conditioned on obedience, it is

evident why this is so. Obedience may be considered the action aspect of love, the part requiring, faith, energy, effort, commitment, work, suffering for Him, and perseverance.

4. Gratitude – is what joins the Holy Spirit in the new heart of every justified (saved) soul. Gratitude for having been rescued is what motivates all godly thoughts, feelings and actions of the saved soul. There is another essay called “Gratitude” that deals extensively with this.

There is one thing more that I believe must be understood. The saving faith “*cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*” Romans 10:17 It’s not through the eyes, but through the ears that salvation manifests. Surely God infuses grace into the soul by other means, but it is hearing, hearing the Gospel that brings about belief and trust in Jesus as Lord and Savior. Recognize that when we read, we do see the words, but the seeing does not directly register in the brain. The seen word is translated into an inner voice that “hears” the word and thus conveys it to the brain. Many think that it is necessary to have dreams, visions, experience, and revelations as evidences of salvation. But life giving faith never results from these evidences. They may legitimately occur through God’s grace as perhaps “drawing” mechanisms, but they do not result in or cause a saving faith. Only the knowledge and acceptance of the truth of the Gospel brings about salvation. I’m reminded here, as I often am, of poor Charles Templeton, a confirmed “worldly” man, who according to his biography had a vision one night that totally changed his life, causing him to become an evangelist. He and Billy Graham often traveled together in their earlier evangelizing in Europe, Canada and here. It is said that he surpassed Graham in popularity and evangelical effectiveness. For twenty years he did this until he finally renounced his faith becoming an atheist. He preached atheism on the radio, and in his writing until his death. I suspect that the “vision” was from “another” who also has such powers to “draw” and that it was not from God. We must be very cautious in relying in such supernatural expressions and trust only in the Gospel and the rest of the Word of God, because that is the only way to truth and to salvation.

Now let me tell you a few of the ways that God drew me. Today, I realize that His gentle persuasive ways were seeking to draw me all my life, but I refused to acknowledge it. Once while pheasant hunting, my companion who was walking next to me, stumbled, striking my forehead with the barrel of his shot gun. At that very instant, he accidentally pulled the trigger. Had he been six inches farther from me, I would have been dead. Instead, only a bad bump and burn resulted. I know now that God was both protecting and drawing me at that time by trying to show me that accidents don't just happen to those He is drawing without a purpose. There is always a divine purpose if we will only look for it. In this case, it may have been only something for me to remember later as part of the evidence I needed in order to know of His continued presence in my life. At the time however I could not recognize His protection or His drawing. My only response was to curse His name.

Then there was the time in 1948 when traveling downhill at about seventy miles per hour, I crossed a patch of black ice causing the car to spin around, roll over three times, and slide a considerable distance knocking down twelve concrete guardrails. The convertible coupe was beyond towing. The pieces had to be loaded into a truck, but I crawled out from under the wreckage and walked away with only a long cut along my right eyebrow, a fractured nose, multiple lacerations and many bruises. Had the cut been even one sixteenth of an inch lower, I would have lost my right eye.

However, such a truly miraculous event failed to draw me or move me even the slightest way toward Jesus. Once again, to me, it was just dumb luck, bad luck that it happened, good luck that I got off so easily. I could no way hear or see or feel His presence and I now realize that once again His divine hand was on me rescuing me from my own fatal foolishness. Finally, but far from the only other drawing I have experienced, began in January 1995 when I was told that I had stage four severely metastasized cancer for which there was no treatment, and that it would surely end my life within six to twelve months. I realize now that my ever-loving persevering Father was again patiently, and perhaps this time not so gently, trying to draw me toward Jesus this one last time. Over the next eighteen months He guided me through a maze of protocols and procedures that

conventional medicine calls quackery. At the end of that period, I felt ten years younger, stronger and healthier, and the cancer had disappears from every part of my body and has never returned. But even then I could not see, hear, or feel His drawing. Those eighteen months were filled with severe challenges and much pain, yet I never even once called out to Him, or prayed. At the end, my pride of “self-achievement” clouded everything else, for a little while. Now, once again I see clearly that His eternal love and persistent drawing was at work and had from the beginning been molding, conditioning, and preparing me for that moment that only He knew would come. It seems to me that His process was like Jesus’ “water of life” continually falling one drop at a time on the hard calluses of denial and indifferences that covered my soul. A few months after having been healed, after 69 years of this drawing, that is continuous dripping of Jesus’ life giving water, laced with His own blood and tears, finally broke through those horrible calluses and began to bathe my soul. The drawing was completed! I finally got the message, and by His grace through my faith, He brought me into His family! Who having experienced such love and drawing, could have room for anything else in his heart but love and eternal gratitude!

For those who might be interested in some details concerning my cancer ordeal, I’ve written an essay called “My Story” which is readily available.

There is some kind of a “miracle” story associated with every soul that has been redeemed. This has to be true, because given the fallen nature of all mankind, a miracle, that is some supernatural event, or series of such events, must be involved. Natural man has an irresistible propensity to sin, and any number of ways to rationalize away any belief in the spiritual consequences. We live in a world filled with many diabolically tempting pleasurable sins. We have been given the free will to choose to either indulge in these sinful pleasures or else to run from them. Many do run from them to some extent by embracing one of the worlds many religions where they believe themselves to be safe and thereby perhaps even able to work their way into some eternal good place. But it isn’t the Creator God who draws in those directions. There is another force that draws, a very clever but evil force that God allows to function as part of His guarantee to man that he has a genuine choice. It’s the choice between eternal heaven or hell. It seems

evident by simple observation, and made certain in Scripture, that in these last days, man will turn more and more towards these alternatives and less and less toward Him, until on the day that the polarization will be complete,. Then God will call His own to heaven and give temporary earthly reign to Antichrist. Dear reader, I pray that if you have not felt God's genuine drawing, that you will see, hear and feel more carefully to find it, and to let it draw you to Christ Jesus and to the eternal life with Him that He promises all believers.