

LESSON 3



EXCEPT THE FATHER DRAW YOU

Scripture Texts: *John 6:44-45; 1 Corinthians 1:9; Romans 2:4; Acts 2:37-39, 3:19; James 4:7-10*

Jesus died for our sins. God (the Father), the Holy Spirit, and the Word of God all have a great part in our salvation. Conviction works in the heart of a sinner, and it is very important and needful that one feels the convicting and drawing influence of God. We cannot choose our own time to be saved. The result of refusing the drawing of God is always of a serious nature. The right response to the drawing of conviction is to yield to it.

MEMORY VERSE: *"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day."*

John 6:44

The Father's Part in Salvation

Before one can repent and receive Christ through salvation, he must be drawn to it by the supernatural touch of the Father. He sends conviction of sin and a desire for Jesus Christ.

All three Persons of the God-head work together in bringing this work of conviction. No one of Them can be said to accomplish any work by Himself independently of the Others. Yet each has certain phases of divine work in which He leads and the Others support.

In John 6:44-45 Jesus invited us to come unto Him. We may think it is all in our hands, that we can put it off or choose our time and way to come. Not so. The Father must touch our hearts to draw us. It is a supernatural work. If we heed His drawing, if we hear and learn of Him, His truth will draw us toward Jesus to be saved.

The greatest privilege and honor that man can experience in this life is to be spoken to by the Spirit of God and offered salvation through conviction.

We read in 1 Corinthians 1:9 that God calls us. We should answer. "He, that being often reprov'd hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy" (Proverbs 29:1). The Holy Spirit is the Agent through whom the Father draws us. Jesus spoke of Him as the Holy Ghost, whom the Father would send in His name. One of the Spirit's functions is to reprove (or convict) the world of sin and of righteousness and of judgment, as we read in John 16:8. This is the influence in the heart that we call conviction.

Workings of Conviction

One in the grasp of conviction feels his sin and suffers the pain of guilt. He sees God's righteousness and longs to possess it. He realizes his life is laid bare to the all-seeing eye of God. These are the strong cords by which the Father draws us. Romans 2:4 tells us that the goodness of God leads to repentance. The hard step of repentance is a good step because it leads to the entrance of life everlasting. It opens to us the Kingdom of God. The Father sends the persuasions of conviction because He loves us. We are told in 2 Peter 3:9 that He is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

In Acts 2:37-39 we find a good example of the workings of conviction. Peter, newly filled with the Holy Spirit,

preached, exalting Christ and accusing the people of His crucifixion. The Spirit fastened truth in their hearts. They were pricked in their hearts—conviction seized them. To escape the results of their guilt, they cried, "What shall we do?" They obeyed Peter's command to repent and be baptized. They were valid candidates for baptism when they had repented and were born spiritually. Continued obedience, joy, and victory followed. It was the Word of God activated by the Holy Spirit that brought conviction. God's Word still brings conviction when it is applied with godly love and prayer. Hebrews 4:12 tells us the reason.

Our Response

In Acts 3:19 we read, "Repent . . . that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come. . . ." God sends these times. These are the times when it is most easy to heed and yield and be filled with life. Most can remember a time of refreshing in a service when God's call was louder, His drawing was stronger, and His joy was greater. These times come from the Lord. We do not send them.

When influence, providence, and circumstances so combine as to allow His call to reach us, we should heed. A time we might set, after neglecting or refusing His call, might find us too hardened to hear it. When the Father draws us, what is our part? James 4:7-10 gives us the answer to this question. Submit to God and resist the devil. Draw nigh to God. Cleanse your hands (make right outward sins). Purify your hearts (cast out sinful thoughts and motives). Be afflicted, mourn, and weep (sorrow for sin). Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord. These are true characteristics of repentance. The fruit of repentance is forgiveness, cleansing, and life in Christ. Our response is to obey at the first drawing of the Father.

JUST A THOUGHT

**It is what we have in our hearts that makes us thankful,
not what we have on the table.**