



## BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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### The Sermons of Dan Duncan

Romans 8: 31-34

Romans

“Unspeakable Comfort”

TRANSCRIPT

[Message] When I was a boy, I think the date was probably 1956, my family was in Washington D.C visiting relatives and I remember driving through the city, I don't remember what street but there were embassies and there was this strange building, interesting building and I asked about it and I was told it was a mosque. I didn't know what a mosque was and it was explained and the explanation, what I was told, at least and I think this was correct, that it was the only mosque in the western hemisphere. Well, that's changed, there's now a mosque in Richardson, they're all over. Islam has spread and we're told that is the fastest growing religion in the world and I don't know that much about Islam, I confess but I do know this: it doesn't know the grace of God and that is what we study this morning. In a magnificent text, Romans 8:31-34, it's a text that will require some thought by all of us and that's good. I think most of you that are here expect to be taught things theologically and challenged to think and we will do that, but the bottom line of our text is God's unchangeable, unfailing love for his people.

So we read beginning with verse 31. What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not spare his own son but delivered him over for us all, how will they not also with him freely, give us all things? Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies, who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is he who died, yes, rather, who was raised, who was at the right hand of God and who intercedes for us. May the Lord bless this reading of his word. Let's bow in prayer.

[Prayer] Father we do praise you and thank you that when we open the bible we read of your sovereign grace. Not goodness and kindness that's extended to a people on conditional terms and not favor that is granted if we are first favorable towards you, but unconditional love. It's a word that's used quite a bit in all kinds of context today. Too bad because it loses its meaning but as we go to your word, Father, we see what unconditional love truly is. You loved an unworthy people, you saved people who were not seeking you, you saved not just a few, but a multitude. You chose a people for yourself, your son redeemed us at the cross, the spirit applied that redemption. It is a certainty, it is a gift. It is, as the prophet Jonah said, your work, salvation is of the Lord. We come to that this morning, Father. You have revealed things to us in our text and I pray that you'd bless us as we seek to understand them, as we study them together, I pray that you would instruct us. It is you, through the spirit of God that must open our minds to understand your truth. If we are not taught by the spirit of God, these words simply remain words. We don't apprehend the truth and the truth of your word does not take route in our heart apart from his ministry and so we pray for that, Lord. Pray that we would gain a clear understanding of the things that we will consider, that we will understand the implications of these great promises and that taking route within us, it will change our lives and make us more and more like Jesus Christ.

So that we would go from this place and be lights in the world, a dark world, a fallen world, a world in the grips of evil and yet we have the power of God within us, we have the power of your word which is a sword that brings down fortresses of unbelief and error. So Lord, we pray that you teach us and make us fit for the conflict of this world, world in which we live and make us effective ministers for you. Change us, Father, through our time of study, bless us spiritually. We also pray for your material blessings. We pray that you would bless those who are sick, that you would give them healing, we pray for those who are without employment, we pray that you would encourage them and that you would open doors of opportunity. We pray that in all of difficulties of life, you would lose them to bless your people, as you promise to do. So we thank you for that.

We pray for our nation, we pray that you bless it, bless our leaders with wisdom. Bless our armed forces, we pray that you give them protection and effectiveness in

establishing justice, we pray for that. We pray for peace and we pray that your word would be able to go forth throughout the world into the darkest corners of the world. So we pray for your church, we pray that you'd bless it, we pray for ourselves, we pray for our meeting, not only in this hour but this evening when we return to this place and remember our Lord, remember our first coming, remember his death and remember that we're doing that until he comes and he will come again, that day may be soon, when justice is established in this world and his kingdom is established, we look forward to that day. So bless us now, Father, prepare our hearts for our time of study and worship together. We pray this in Christ's name, Amen.

The old statement of faith for the church of England is the 39 articles. In article 17, the doctrine of predestination is explained and then is described as full of sweet, pleasant and unspeakable comfort. To many it's full of controversy, which is not all bad. Sometimes controversy causes us to sharpen our thinking and may even separate the wheat from the chaff but the doctrines of God's sovereign grace were not revealed to cause trouble but give comfort. They are the ground of the believers security in Christ. That's Paul's conclusion here in Romans 8, he has been writing of God's play of salvation, how he has predestined the great multitude of people to eternal life, how he calls them, justifies them and will certainly glorify them. Nothing can thwart God's plan to save us, not even affliction. In fact, he causes all things, including affliction to work together for our good in order to accomplish his purpose of glorifying us.

Believers in Jesus Christ are as secure in their salvation as God's love is unchangeable as his word is unbreakable, as his purpose is invincible. What greater comfort is there than that? And Paul now ends the chapter with a paragraph that confirms our comfort. It is a triumphant conclusions that divides into two parts, verses 31-34 and verses 35-39, the first part has the feel of courtroom, with statements like, 'who will bring a charge' and 'who condemns?' The second part verses 35-39 gives the sense of a battlefield with words and expressions like peril, sword, put to death and overwhelming conquer, but the subject in both sections is the same, it is the security of the believer. We'll look at the first half this morning, verses 31-34, which Paul begins with a question: what shall we say then, to these things? What conclusions can we draw from God's election and predestination from his justification and calling and the

certainty of our glorification? What should our response be to his eternal love for us? Paul answers that question with another question. If God is for us, who is against us? The question is rhetorical, the answer is obvious, the if doesn't imply any doubt, it means if as is the case or since God is for us, who is against us?

Now of course, many people and many things are against us, in general terms, God's people are posed by three great enemies, the world, the flesh and the devil. The world's system is contrary to God and his truth and is a powerful influence, exerted on us every day and under its pressure we are influenced to conform to it, become like the world and have the attitude and disposition and goals of the world, that is the pressure we are under continually. When we don't, when our lives stand in contrast to the social life around us, to the conduct in the office, for example, then there is opposition from those around us, but the enemy is not only without, it is also within the flesh, what Paul spoke of in chapter seven, the principle of sin that dwells in our members. It influences us to rebel against God, it influences us to live for self. It's one of our great enemies and then behind all of this, behind the world and its influence and behind the flesh and its influence, there stands the prince of this age, Satan, who Peter says prowls around like a roaring Lion seeking someone to devour. We experience his fiery darts daily. We have many and great enemies.

The Christian life is a constant struggle. In verse 35, Paul gives a list of hardships that we face, our pilgrimage through this world is a dangerous journey but Paul's meaning is since God is for us, those enemies cannot prevail against us, how could that? God is the almighty, he's omnipotent, he's all powerful, whatever concept you may have of God, you can be assured it is too small. God is all powerful, no one can stand against him. He is above the circle of the earth and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers, Isaiah said. He is a mighty fortress, a very present help in time of trouble, David said. Nothing is hard for God. In fact, as Paul has already stated in verse 28, God even uses our enemies and the calamities of life to bless them. He makes them serve him. Job is a good example, the Lord allowed Satan to do his worst. We all know the story of Job, he lost everything, even his wife and his friends became his enemies. He was alone, he was sick, he was poor, he is confused through much of that book,

doesn't understand what is happening to him, but the book ends with Job praising God and triumphant.

Not even the full hatred, ingenuity and power of the evil one could defeat him, not because Job was so special, he was a special man, it's true, but that wasn't the key to Job's victory in that book. He triumphed because God was for him. Now someone might say, yes, but Job remained faithful through it all and we don't always remain faithful and what if we don't remain faithful? What if God's attitude towards us should change and he stops being for us? And so in verse 32, Paul deals with such doubts as that, doubts about God's continuing favor, doubts about his love, by showing that his love toward us could never fail. At first proof of that is what he's already done for us, through his son, verse 32, 'he who did not spare his own sign but delivered him over for us all, how will he not also, with him, freely give us all things?' The conclusive proof of God's love for us and that his love for us can never fail is the cross of Christ and the sacrifice that he has already made for us? He's given us his own son. When did he do that?

Well back in Chapter 5, in verse 8, Paul said that it was while we were yet sinners. That's how God demonstrated his own love toward us. If he loved us when we were his enemies, won't he continue to love us now that we are his children? Of course he will. His love for us can never fail even though we fail very often and the cross proves that love because it is what the father did intentionally, purposely to save sinners, that's Paul's point. This is what God did. The cross was not a terrible mistake of history, in which evil men conspired against Christ and killed an innocent man, contrary to his plans, contrary to God's will, nor was the Lord's sacrifice something that he did independently of the Father, as is sometimes imagined, as though Jesus Christ loves sinners but the father is a hard, implacable judge and Jesus poured out his life in order to influence or persuade the father and soften his heart toward sinners. The Father already loved sinners, his love is eternal, Paul explained that in the verses previous to this. He foreknew sinners, meaning his fore loved them and sent his love to die for them. It was the Father who delivered him over for us all, Paul says. It was God's plan. He ordained the cross from the beginning.

Isaiah 53:10, 'the Lord was pleased to crush him, putting him to grief.' Someone said, 'who delivered up Jesus to die, not Judas for money, nor Pilate for fear, nor the Jews for envy, but the Father for love. In fact, Paul emphasizes the Father's love in sacrifice of Christ by stating it both positively and negatively. Not only did he deliver him up, he also did not spare him. That's similar to God's statement to Abraham in Genesis 22:12, when Abraham showed himself willing to offer up his own son Isaac on Mount Mariah, you know the story. The knife was raised when the Lord stopped him and the Lord recognized that Abraham, as he said, had not withheld his son from him. But while the Lord spared Abraham's son, he did not spare his own son. He could have, Christ did not deserve to die. In fact, Christ is the only one of all humanity that deserved to be spared. He is the only sinless man, but the Father did not spare him because he loved us and we could only be saved by his son being offered up for us.

That preposition that Paul uses here, for, in the Greek text has the sense of being for us, for our benefit but it means far more than that. It also means in our place. It indicates substitution. The Father put his son in our place in judgment, where he bore our sins and our penalty. He paid our debt so that we wouldn't have to pay our debt. He died so that we might not die spiritually and would have his life eternally. What greater proof could there possibly be, that the Father loves us and that his love is constant and unfailing? He will never stop being for us but someone might worry because of our needs and how great those needs are and they are great. We need many things, our needs are constant, they're very demanding. Paul promises that God will give us all things, but is that an absolute promise? Are there limits to God's grace? How can we be sure that God will fully and completely supply all of our needs all of the time? And again the conclusive proof is the gift that he has already given to us, that of his son. There is no greater gift than that.

No one can give a greater gift than his or her child. That is a great sacrifice that is hard for any of us who are parents to contemplate but this means so much more than that. Christ is God's own son and that description of him, his own son, sets him apart from the rest of us. God has many sons and daughters by adoption but Christ is God's unique son, that's the sense of that description. He is not a son by adoption, he is his only begotten son. He is his eternal son, he is God the son. Now since he gave him, the infinite, eternal, divine son of God,

what won't he give? That's the force of Paul's reasoning here. It is in the form of an argument from the greater to the lesser, one of his 'how much more than' arguments. If God gave us the greatest gift he could give, then surely he won't hold back the lesser gifts. There is nothing that he won't do for us. He will give us, as Paul says, all things and give them freely. So the cross, as John Stott put it, is the guarantee of the continuing, unfailing generosity of God and we see his generosity and the fulfillment of this promise in a number of ways. He gives us strength, the strength that we need to fight the good fight. We struggle every day, we face the temptations of our enemies, the world, the flesh and the devil everyday and those temptations are very strong but we have promises. For example, 1 Corinthians 10:13, no temptation has overtaken you, but such as is common to man and God is faithful who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able. There is a limitation to the temptation that he will let you go through and you have that as a promise.

Paul goes on, he will provide a way of escape so that you will be able to endure it. Those temptations are going to be difficult, very hard, but we can know this: God knows everything about them, he has planned them all, he has limited them, we're to look to him, he will provide. He gives us companionship, we need companionship, we're not made to be alone, we're to be joined together with others, we're to be joined in a company of saints. It's not good for man to be alone and yet, sometimes we find ourselves alone. Paul did. He was abandoned in Rome, when he stood trial before Nero. He wrote Timothy about the situation and 2 Timothy 4:16-17 and he said 'no one supported me, all deserted me.' I marvel over that statement, to think of the apostle Paul, a great apostle, who sacrificed his life as he took the gospel across Asia and across Europe, establishing churches. This man comes to Rome and in his darkest hour, he's abandoned by all, he stands alone but he added, 'the Lord stood with me and strengthened me' so that he was rescued out of the lion's mouth.

The Lord will never abandon us, men may, but the Lord will never forsake us. Psalm 27:10, 'when my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up,' he promises to be a father of the fatherless and a judge for the widow, Psalm 68:5. Many promises like that, he will never abandon us and he will provide us with the wisdom that we need to make the hard decisions of life, to give us direction in life. James tells us that, he gives to all

generously and without reproach, so he guides our thinking and he provides for our material needs as well, Philippians 4:19, 'and my God, they'll supply all your needs according to his riches and glory in Christ Jesus.' What great promises those are and that's what Paul is saying here. He will freely give us all things. Now all must be qualified, all does not mean all things without exception. All doesn't always mean all in the sense that we might think. He's not going to give us every wish that we might have. The 'all' here must be understood in view of verse 28, all things that are for our good, all things that will contribute to our glory to come. Material riches seldom do that. We desire them, we often desire them much because that's the pressure of the word, its influence upon us, we never feel that we have enough, there's always more to have. So we desire those things but the more we have in the material world does not guarantee that we're going to have more and of the spiritual good. In fact, very often it's the opposite, very often material things are to our spiritual detriment. We become materialistically minded and drift.

So it doesn't mean that God's going to give us every material want that we desire. He may deprive us of those things. In fact, he may deprive us of everything so that we may look to him but the best will come out of that. If we lose much, our natural thought is, 'well God's not for me.' That may be the greatest thing that God can do for you, to take the things of life away, so that you will cast yourself wholly and completely on him, because that is where our riches are. But everything that we need and is for our good, we can be assured he will give us. He will not withhold the best from those he loves, but who is that? This is a great promise, but who is it for? Paul speaks in broad terms, it is for those for whom Christ died and he identifies them as us all. Is that all without exception? This verse has very obvious implications theologically, implications regarding the extent of the atonement and the question: for whom did Christ die? It's a question that we really have to address and must answer in order to understand this text and to understand the 'all' that he is referring to.

Many would explain it as a universal all, meaning that Christ died for all without exception, for everyone who has ever and will ever live. Just as all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, so to God delivered him over for us all, everyone, without exception and the word all sometimes does have that meaning but the context, as always, determines the

meaning of words and here, the context determines exactly who it is, Paul means, when he writes 'us all.' It is the same as those in verse 31, the 'us' whom God is for, who were foreknown or fore loved by God and predestined, called, justified and glorified and it's the same as those in the next verse in verse 33 whom Paul specifically calls 'the elect' against whom no charge can be made. There's nothing in this passage that suggests universalism, that Christ died to pay for the sins of every person who has every lived or ever will live.

From the context, it is the elect for whom God delivered his son to death and he uses this phrase 'us all' for a very important reason. In order to express to us God's individual concern for each of us, the individual concern that God has for us in salvation. John Murray wrote this, I think it's a very good statement and to the point, 'God does not save men in the mass, he deals with each individual in his own particularity.' God does not have some general amorphous love for mankind and it saves a large group without any concern for the individual. God is equally concerned for us all individually, personally, enough to sacrifice his own son in order to save us. He had a particular concern for each one of us for whom Christ died, that's the assurance that we have of his unfailing love for us, it's not something general, it's something very specific. So from the context, the extent of the 'all' is limited to the elect, it is not all mankind in general and that also follows necessarily from Paul's question: How will he not also, with him, freely give us all things?

It's another rhetorical question intended to make the point very strongly that God will certainly give everything that is necessary for salvation for those he gave his son to save. If he loved us enough to give us his son, the greatest gift of all and there's no greater gift than the sacrifice of Christ, then he will certainly give us the Holy Spirit and grace for salvation. Now someone will say, 'but we must believe' and of course that's true. No one will deny that we must believe to be saved but God gives that too. Faith is a gift. That's clear from what Paul said earlier in the chapter in verses six, seven and eight, that we are not able to do anything that pleases God. We are unable and if we said no, he does not give faith, then we deny what Paul says here that he gives all things and gives them freely. That's the promise. Since he gave the gift of Christ, he will certainly give us all the lesser gifts, faith and perseverance. He will not withhold anything from those for whom he gave his son. How could the Father not

spare his own son the pain and shame of the cross and then fail to bring to completion the work of that sacrifice? He could not, he would not, he will not let his son die in vain.

That being so, everyone for whom Christ died must be saved. If he gave the greatest for them, he will certainly give the lesser to them. If he gave his son, he will give salvation. That is what Paul is saying. That is the assurance Paul is giving us, that God will certainly save those for whom Christ died, we have that assurance. So if us all is all mankind, then all will be saved, no one will perish. Universalism is true and yet we know that's not the case. Read about Gehenna in the gospels, our Lord spoke a great deal about hell. Read about the lake of fire in Revelation 20, 'us all' can only mean all the elect of God and the promise Paul is giving is that God will not withhold anything that is necessary to ensure their final salvation, which is true for every believer in Jesus Christ.

So what shall we say to these things? What should our response and our attitude be? It should be one of Thanksgiving, one of joy and confidence and unspeakable comfort, we are secure, absolutely secure in Jesus Christ. Now Paul adds more comfort and encouragement in the next verses with the rhetorical questions, 'who can accuse us?' and 'who can condemn us?' These questions bring our imaginations into a court of law where accusations are made and judgments are pronounced. The question in verse 33, 'who will bring a charge against God's elect?' could be answered, well many do. There are people all around us, who, when they see us fail, as we all do, point an accusing finger. The world is quick to point our inconsistencies in Christian behavior and rightfully so. We can't complain about that. If we fail, if we sin and we stumble before the world, it's going to be pointed out to us. So there are many who would accuse us and there are plenty of those failures within us that whether people see them or not are there, we see them.

We sin daily, if not publicly then privately, in our homes or in our thoughts and our consciences accuse us as does the devil. John writes in Revelation 12:10 that he accuses the brethren before God day and night. The word devil slander and the name Satan means accuser and that's what he does to the saints before God. So God hears accusations and slanders against us continually. He hears how unworthy we are of our calling, how we don't measure

up to the name saints and of course God isn't learning anything from the devil. He's omniscient, he knows all, he knew our failures before we committed them and he chose us in eternity past. He knew who we would be so there are many who accuse us, Paul knew that very well but their accusations cannot stand against us any more than our enemies can prevail against us. That's Paul's point. Who will bring a charge against God's elect? Many may do it but none can do it successfully because God has chosen us from all eternity and he is the one who justifies.

That settles the issue because the judge of all the earth in the supreme court of the universe declares his people to be right with him, to be right with the law. He has justified us. He's not just forgiven us of our sins, justification means much more than that. He has ruled that we are righteous in his sight, that we measure up to the impeccable standard of the law, that we are no longer guilty and no longer liable to the penalty of the law, not simply because we are elect. People have the idea that well, if God's elected people then that's it, they're saved, there's no point in giving them the gospel, there's no point in doing anything. Election doesn't, itself, save. Election is to salvation, it is to salvation through faith. Paul wrote in Ephesians 1:4 that God chose us in him, in Christ, before the foundation of the world and the meaning of that statement chose us in Him is that he chose us to be represented by Christ in his sacrifice by his redeeming work on the cross. So election is to that.

We are elected to be represented by Christ and to believe in the one who died for us. So we are justified, not because we are elected, we are justified because Christ has died for us. His death is the basis of our justification. In Revelation 1:5, John writes about being released from our sins by his blood, not by our faith but by his blood. So justification is the result of transaction that occurred on the cross, when our sins were imputed to Christ, put to his account and he died for them, he died in our place, he paid the penalty for us as our substitute and then, in time, from generation to generation, when a person believes in Christ, God imputes Christ's righteousness to him or to her so that the believer is considered by God to be just like Christ. As a result of that, no charge can stand against us. If we are like Christ and Christ is innocent, in fact, if Christ is perfectly righteous as he is, then no accusation or charge can stand.

A great biblical illustration of that is on Zachariah 3, we've seen it before, where the high priest, Joshua is standing in the temple before God and Satan is standing beside him accusing him. Joshua's clothes are dirty, it's a picture of his sin and his guilt and Satan is arguing that he's a sinner, that he's guilty, that he's unfit to be a servant of God but God answers the accusations by silencing Satan and ordering that Joshua's clothes be changed, that the dirty garments be stripped off and that he be clothed in clean garments and God declared him to be a brand plucked from the fire. That's what we all are, sinners saved by grace and declared righteous by God, clothed in Christ and since it is God who justifies, our justification can never be overturned.

That means we can never be judged, we are absolutely secure. That's the meaning of Paul's next question: 'Who is the one who condemns?' No one, because of Christ. He will judge the world, he will condemn the guilty but he will never condemn and there are four reasons why that is so: his death, resurrection, exaltation and intersession. Paul speaks of his death first. His death was a complete payment for sin, it satisfied God's justice when, as Paul wrote back in Chapter 8:3, he condemns sin in the flesh. That happened at the cross, that happened for us, that happened in our place so there is nothing left to condemn in those for whom Christ died, he paid the penalty in full. That makes condemnation an impossibility for believers. We have nothing to fear and we can be assured of that because Christ not only died but he was also raised. His death would have been in vain if he had remained in the grave but the resurrection is the proof that God, the Father accepted his sacrifice for us all.

If Christ had not been raised, we would not have that assurance. In fact, we would have the assurance that we are still lost. We would have the assurance that God had not accepted the sacrifice, we had not been atoned for, our sins had not been paid for, so his resurrection is necessary. It is the proof of forgiveness and the insurance of our security. Thirdly, Paul says that the crucified, resurrected Christ is at the right hand of God, which means that he has been exalted and he has been invested with sovereignty and dominion over the whole creation. He is enthroned and that is directly related to the believers security. He has authority over heaven and earth. There is no hostile power, there is no catastrophic circumstance in the universe that can overpower our Lord and snatch us from his hand. He is

supreme and having died for us, he will certainly live for us and keep us in his power. We are described elsewhere as being Christ's inheritance and Christ will not lose his inheritance. In fact, he's presently ministering to ensure that we not be lost. That's the fourth reason we are secure.

Paul writes that he also intercedes for us, that is his priestly service. So he is both an enthroned king and a seated priest and that second point is very significant because in the Old Testament, the priest never sat down during his service, the priest always stood, there was no place for them to sit. In the tabernacle there was furniture, there was the table, the lamp stand, the arch, but there was no chair. There was no place for the priest to sit down because his work as a priest was never finished. The great day of atonement with its offerings were sacrifices that had to be repeated every year. The day of atonement was not a settled issue. Each year it had to be repeated but Christ is a different priest. He made the final sacrifice and when he ascended to heaven, we read in Hebrews, he sat down at the right hand of the majesty on high. His work is finished by Christ is not inactive. He is a seated priest because there are no more sacrifice to be made, he made the final sacrifice but he is offering prayers for us continually.

That is his continued priestly ministry, he intercedes for us, he is praying for our every need, praying that all of the blessings of his death will be applied to us and grace will be given to enable us to continue in faith and live the Christian life. He's constantly praying for us. The Lord is not interested in us in some general way, but personally, he prays for us individually, just as he died for us all individually. He knows our particular situation in life, the special circumstances and difficulties that we have and he prays for them. He is intimately involved in our lives ensuring that we triumph. That is an amazing thought to contemplate. Jesus Christ sits at the right hand of the father and he is praying for each and every one of you at this very moment.

All of us, at the same time, fully and completely. He doesn't need an angel standing next to him to say, 'now remember to pray for Dan, he's preaching a tough passage right now.' He knows all of our needs, at the same moment, time does not affect him and he prays for each

of us completely, intimately, fully and prays that we will triumph. That ensures it, ensure that you will triumph in Christ. Nothing is left to chance. God's plan of salvation is from eternity to eternity. He chose a multitude to be glorified, gave them to his son to save and Christ is presently praying for us. The believers in Jesus Christ are absolutely secure in him. So what then shall we say to these things? What is to be our attitude, what is to be our response? Well, we are to believe them first of all and then rejoice in them and thank God for his grace, take comfort in it and be confident because of it.

A sovereign grace of God is full of unspeakable comfort and unbelievers, what are they to do? Well unbelievers are to believe as well. God did not spare his own son but delivered him over for us all. How can you know if you're an unbeliever, that you are the one of the 'us.' God delivered up for you, how can you know that? By believing. The elect believe and all who do are received by Christ. That's the promise, he made that promise in John 6:37, all that the Father gives me will come to me. What does that mean, all that the Father gives me? Well that's his elect, the innumerable multitude who were chosen from the foundation of the world in Christ to be redeemed by him. All that the Father gives me will come to me, that's an assurance. Then he says, the one who comes to me, I will certainly not cast out. So come to him, there's no reason not to. The invitation is there for sinners to believe, for sinners to come, for unbelievers to turn to Christ. If you don't, well it's not because of Christ, it's not because of God and his election, it's not because of particularism, that's not the reason you won't come.

He promises to receive all who come. So if you don't, it's not because of Christ, it's not because you've been shut out, it's because you don't want to come, it's because you don't want the salvation that's being offered. So you will have no one to blame but yourself but if you do want God's salvation, if you want the forgiveness of sins, if you want life everlasting, then look to Christ. Believe in the Lord, Jesus Christ and be saved, that is the promise of scripture, that is the call to life. Believe in the Lord, Jesus Christ and you will be saved. May God help you to do that and may God help all of us to understand more fully his sovereign grace, what he has done, what he is presently doing, what he will yet do and the security that

we have in him and may we live joyful lives and confident lives, lives of unspeakable comfort.  
Let's pray.

[Prayer] Father, we do thank you for your grace. We come to this text and we are reminded of it. So much more could be said, we really just scratch the surface but what a glorious truth it is to know that we who are lost, we who were ruined by the fall, we who did not even long for deliverance, who were perfectly content to live in darkness because of our sin, we're loved by you from all eternity, you sent your son to die for us, you sent your spirit to claim us and bring us to a saving knowledge of him and we are secure for all eternity. Not because of anything in us, but because of your unfathomable love, your love that's beyond our comprehension. Thank you, Father, for that. Thank you for loving us. In Christ's name we pray, Amen.