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**Mission 119 Ministries**

**DECONSTRUCTING CALVINISM**  
**EPISODE 15: PILLAR PROOF TEXT**  
**JOHN 6:44**

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# **SERIES GOALS**

- **Short, focused lessons**
  - **Explain Calvinism**
  - **Address claims of Calvinism**
    - **Exegetically**
    - **Historical**
    - **Philosophically**
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# EPIISODE GOAL

- **Exegete popular TULIP  
proof text John 6:44 based  
on context and the actual  
meaning of the word  
“draw”**
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# THE PILLAR VERSE(S)

**John 6:44** 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... 65 And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father.

- no reference to any inward calling
  - no reference to the elect
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# LARGER CONTEXT

- The larger context of John's Gospel is Jesus' earthly ministry, primarily but not exclusively to a Jewish audience that included believers and non-believers.
  - There were believers (e.g., John the Baptist and many of his disciples that we meet in John 1) who were looking forward to Messiah but had never seen or heard him.
  - But what happens when a first century believer meets Jesus for the first time? (See John 10:1-6)
  - And what of those in the crowds who were not believers at the time they first met Jesus?
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# IMMEDIATE CONTEXT

- In John 5, Jesus points to several witnesses that he is who he claims to be: (1) John the Baptist (5:32-35); (2) the works / miracles (5:36), (3) the Father (5:37), and the Scriptures (5:38-40, 46-47)
  - Note Jesus' comment to that audience that "ye have not his word abiding in you: for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not." (John 5:38)
  - "Search the scriptures...they are they which testify of me... For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me. But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?" (John 5:39, 46-47)
  - Feeding of the 5,000 in early part of John 6
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# DRAW / DRAG

- The word translated “draw” in John 6:44 is the Greek ἔλκω (helkuō) which has three primary definitions according to the Green Lexicon BDAG
  - (1) **“to move an object from one area to another in a pulling motion, draw,** with implication that the object being moved is incapable of propelling itself or in the case of pers. is unwilling to do so voluntarily”
  - (2) “to draw a pers. in the direction of values for inner life, *draw, attract,* an extended fig. use of mng. 1”
  - (3) “to appear to be pulled in a certain direction, *flow*”
  - Liddell and Scott include the definition, “draw to oneself, attract.”
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# DRAW / DRAG

- Jeremiah 31:3: "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I **drawn** thee." S
  - Song of Solomon 1:4: "**Draw** me, we will run after thee: the king hath brought me into his chambers: we will be glad and rejoice in thee, we will remember thy love more than wine: the upright love thee."
  - In John 12:32, we read that Jesus "will draw all men unto me" and we know that not all men are dragged to salvation because that would be universalism.
  - Conclusion: When no physical exertion or coercion is involved, the idea of dragging does not fit.
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# WHAT IS 6:44 SAYING?

- Clearly, no physical dragging is in view.
  - During Jesus earthly ministry those who professed wanting to be disciples must first respond to the Father's attracting / wooing.
  - But how does the Father do that? John 6:45-47 answers this question and Jesus quotes Isaiah 54:13: "And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children."
  - Jesus alludes to a passage about future Jewish people in the Millennium who are attracted to the Messiah.
  - They must respond in belief to the revelation made available to them, which points us back to the material in John 5, and Jesus' presentation of himself as the true bread (manna) from heaven in John 6.
  - They cannot merely come to Jesus for food and signs.
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# WHAT IS 6:65 SAYING?

- By the end of John 6, many “disciples” depart because they cannot handle what Jesus is saying — they get stuck on the physical imagery and won’t accept the spiritual meaning.
  - Many are murmuring against him (6:61) and others leave (6:66)
  - Jesus says the issue is that they never believed despite all of the available revelation
  - Because of their rejection (disbelief), they are not given the privilege of being Jesus’ disciples and therefore are sent away (or cast out). *Compare 6:37.*
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# SUMMARY

- The pillar proof text(s) are part of a larger unit of thought (Chapters 5 and 6) and we need to consider that context, as well as the larger context of the entire book of John.
  - Jesus does not even remotely suggest two callings — one outward to all and one inward — nor does he indicate any coercion.
  - Throughout John's Gospel the key term is "believe" and indeed John's purpose statement in 20:31 is that his readers might "believe" Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and therefore have eternal life
  - John 6:44 and 6:65 reiterate the central truth of John's Gospel that we come to Jesus by faith in who he claims to be (Messiah), as testified by John the Baptist, Jesus' works, and the Father
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