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How appropriate for tonight's study, the difference that being in Christ makes in our life, in particular what it means to be a new creation. Tonight, I want to encourage you to open your Bibles to the gospel of Matthew 5 and for those of you that may be new to us or with us, on Sunday evenings we are very slowly and strategically walking through the gospel of Matthew. Now allow me to give a brief description of our approach in this season on Sunday evenings. We're not walking through the gospel of Matthew to see a particular view per se of whom we know as the person of Christ through one of the respective gospels, the book of Matthew is so strategically located in the Bible that it serves as more than just a view of who Jesus Christ was and is, it actually gives us an amazing perspective on the totality of scripture. For 430 years, the Israelites, the Jewish people, went without scripture, without "thus saith the Lord," without the prophets not just speaking a matter to their life but being worthy of being inspired, preserved scripture. Over 400 years of silence and then we have what we know as the gospel of Matthew. Numerous occasions where, in fact, 68 in particular where it says "as it is written" in 28 chapters, that's an average of 2 ½ times per chapter there is an allusion to what the Old Testament scriptures were saying in regards to Jesus Christ as the fulfillment not only as Messiah but the King and the Lord of the Israelite Jewish people and humanity at large.

I am convinced that the book of Matthew not only gives us this great connection to what we know as the Old Testament, it serves for us an incredible ability to reveal the totality of scripture, particularly as we know events known as the Second Coming, end times, particularly the book of Revelation. There are significant portions of the book of Matthew involving such matters, but tonight we come to chapter 5, and chapters 5 through 7 are considered by a good portion of people as the chapters of all chapters. This is what we know as the Sermon on the Mount and tonight before we begin, I want to give a little bit of a disclaimer, so to speak. We're going to look at the Sermon on the Mount potentially from just a little different angle than maybe we have in days past in our life, and here's why I'm giving a disclaimer: nothing tonight at all is to diminish the impact or the message of the Sermon on the Mount, much the opposite; the purpose of tonight is to see it as so much more than we've often given it credit for. And so tonight it's not about just a different angle, tonight's not just about a different perspective, tonight, if you'll allow me to use the analogy for some of us who remember these days, hopefully tonight will serve as that "classic favorite tv show of our childhood that we see in color for the very first time."

Tonight in verse 1 of chapter 5, it says,

1 And seeing the multitudes, he went up into a mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him: 2 And he opened his mouth, and taught them, saying,

Now tonight, I want to serve simply as an introduction to the Sermon on the Mount at large and in its totality. The next time we gather, we'll deal with what we know as the Beatitudes in specific. Then we'll take this famous message and we will break it apart passage by passage, paragraph by paragraph, teaching by teaching. But tonight, I want to look at the Sermon on the Mount just addressing some very simple basic questions such as who was it that Jesus was speaking to, what did he say, and here's the most important question, why did he say what he said, to whom he said what he said, when he said it.

So let's begin with the "who." Who has Jesus gathered around him? It says, "And seeing the multitudes, he went up into the mountain: and when he was set, his disciples came unto him." Now let's talk about the audience for just a moment. This is a large group of people and oftentimes Jesus spoke and preached to large groups, particularly when we get to what we know as the feeding of the 5,000, that count was just the men that were there not inclusive of the wives, children, friends, neighbors, etc. But this large group is gathered and here's what's interesting: it refers to them as the disciples. Why is this important? Because in the gospel of Matthew, it won't be until chapter 10 that he pulls aside those selective 12, those apostles, as we know. This is critical for our understanding tonight because this message was not just a strategic message to a specific 12 for a very strategic purpose, this was a message to all of those in the community, all of those who had come up, all those that had gathered around him. This is a collective message for humanity at large, not just a specific group for a strategic assignment.

The second thing I want you to notice about the "who" is this: every single person, every person that listened to the Sermon on the Mount was an individual to up to that point had been trusting the obedience, the keeping, and the fidelity to the law for their relationship with God to be in a proper standing. In fact, I'm going to address a somewhat rhetorical question that I often ask when it comes to not only to the gospel of Matthew at large, but in particular the gospels in totality, but the Sermon on the Mount in specific: how many born again Christians were present at the Sermon on the Mount? And the answer is none. There is not one single person who had witnessed the empty tomb. There is not one single person that had heard Jesus Christ make those famous seven statements from the cross because chronologically speaking what we know as the pouring out of the blood of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins was not yet present, it was not yet made available. Up to this point, every single person that was listening to this message would have been somebody who at some level was trusting their faithfulness to the Old Testament law to be in a right relationship with God. That is going to be absolutely critical to our understanding of the Sermon on the Mount and Jesus, I believe, is going to take this audience, take this group of people, take where they are, and he's going to utilize this position, a position of futility, would we agree? I mean, think about time and time again, season after season, celebration after celebration, bringing the lamb prepared for the

Passover, bringing the turtledoves, bringing the peace offerings, bringing the wheat offerings, all these offerings of the Old Testament they continued to bring, they continued to struggle, and yet Jesus Christ is going to end the Sermon on the Mount saying that he, by what he is going to accomplish, will provide them a better way.

So what does this do? It allows not just the gospel of Matthew, it allows the Sermon on the Mount to be a means of transitioning. One of the things that we've been talking about over and over in the gospel of Matthew is this, that the gospel of Matthew transitions us, it takes us from the Old Testament to the New. It takes us from Judaism to Christianity. It takes us from the temple being in a specific location in Jerusalem to us being the temple of the Spirit of God with Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. And so, again, what we see in the Sermon on the Mount is the opportunity for us to see what Jesus Christ explicitly proposed to those who were curious, those that were concerned about their own relationship with God, according to verse 1, those whom he referred to as disciples.

Now there would have been those there that would have been very faithful to the faith, never missed a celebration, never missed an opportunity to worship and/or give of the sacrificial system, and I'm quite sure there would have been those that would have been very nominal in their walk with the Lord. Why is that important? Because Jesus Christ by setting aside and calling them disciples and not apostles, he did not segment them into these are the faithful ones and these are the non-faithful ones. He took those that were gathered together and basically said, "Every single one of you, no matter how hard you've tried or how lackadaisical you've been, every single one of you is in the exact same position when it comes to your ability to fulfill the law and make your relationship with God in a "proper standing."

So what is what we know as the Sermon on the Mount? Now this next section tonight really deals with scripture in totality but the Sermon on the Mount in specific. Let me define biblically what scripture is for us this evening. The first thing is this: it is inspired by God. According to 2 Timothy 3:16 it says that all scripture, not just the scripture that we like, not just the scripture that's our favorite, but all scripture without exception is inspired or "God-breathed." That means that whether we're on the Sermon on the Mount, whether we're in the book of Leviticus, or whether we're in the book of Ephesians, it doesn't matter where we are, every word, every statement, every aspect of the text is directly from God to humanity.

But the Bible is not only inspired, the Sermon on the Mount is not only inspired, it is preserved. Psalm 12:6 and 7, it says that the words of the Lord are as a refining fire, been purified seven times, they are preserved from this generation forever. If the Sermon on the Mount was no longer needed in our context, God would not have preserved it for us, but God inspired it 2,000+ years ago for these individuals who many of them were very different than you and I today. I don't know many people who are listening here in person or watching online that grew up in a sacrificial system going to the feasts of Israel and presenting that which would hopefully bring a right relationship with the Lord. And so even though the original hearers and the original context were very different than us, God has preserved it specifically for our understanding.

Finally, according to 2 Timothy 2:15, that you and I when we come to scripture have as our goal to rightly divide the word of God so that we might be a workman who needeth not be ashamed. Why is that critical tonight? Because when we look at the audience, when we look at the approach, when we look at the statements not only that Jesus made but to whom he made these statements, one of the most important things we can ask ourselves is who were they, what did he say, and why did he say it? Which leads to, I think, a very important description of scripture. Every single passage that we study, it doesn't matter where it's located in scripture, it doesn't matter if it's one phrase or the entirety of a book of the Bible, every passage can be approached with three very important approaches. 1. The historical approach. 2. The doctrinal. 3. The spiritual. Allow me to unpack that for just a moment.

The historical approach is simply this, that this event known as the Sermon on the Mount happened in the early days of Jesus' ministry obviously upon a mountain with a large group of people whom he spoke for as is recorded three chapters of scripture. It is what it is. It involves who it involves. And it happened in the context in which the Bible lays out that it happened. Every single passage in the Bible can be described historically. There are persons that are involved. There are places that are involved. And there's timeframes that are involved. It's the doctrinal and the spiritual that is most important not only for us tonight studying the Sermon on the Mount but the context of all scripture. When we say doctrinal, doctrinal means that every passage of scripture was given to a specific people, at a specific time, for a specific purpose.

Now when we talk about spiritual, that means as a born again believer in Jesus Christ, even if that scripture originally in its original context was not written to born again believers, that does not segregate me or take me out of the responsibility to understand how that passage impacts my life. In fact, one of the greatest examples that I can give for us is known as the Roman Road and the 10 Commandments. The 10 Commandments was given in the book of Exodus 20. I'm sure you're familiar with the context historically. The Jewish people had been in captivity for over 400 years. They'd been in Egypt. In fact, one of the things that just is so marveling to me is when they came out of Egypt, they went across the famous Red Sea into eventually what we know as the wilderness. There was nobody that knew anybody that had ever known anybody that had understood what it meant to live a life of freedom. I know we give those Jewish people a hard time for their lack of faith but nobody knew anybody who knew what it was like to walk in freedom. Remember when the Israelites came out, they eventually ended up in what we know as the wilderness. Moses is on Mount Sinai. He has delivered what we know as the 10 Commandments. He comes down and he presents them to the people. Remember what was spoken doctrinally about the 10 Commandments. It said, "If you do these, then you are God's people and he is your God." That's what was given doctrinally.

Now let's talk about the Roman Road for just a moment. For those of you who may not be familiar with that, that is a means or a mechanism that we typically utilize in the book of Romans to describe today how somebody who is lost and dead in their sins can be saved and one day know they'll spend forever in a place called heaven versus hell.

Romans 3:23 says, "For all have sinned, and fallen short of the glory of God." Romans 6:23 says, "The wages of sin is death but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Romans 5:8 says, "While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Romans 10:9 and 10 says that, "If we believe in our heart and confess with our mouth the Lord Jesus, we shall be saved, for with confession is made unto salvation and belief unto a right relationship." And then obviously verse 13 of chapter 10 says, "Whoever calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." Why is that distinction important? Because nobody coming out of Egypt that went into the wilderness, not one single person had any understanding of what we know as the Roman Road. Not one of them. They didn't have an understanding of the blood sacrifice of a Messiah, three days, three nights in the tomb, and then raising from the dead. It was completely foreign to them. What did God give them? He gave them the 10 Commandments, "Have no other gods before you. Do not take my name in vain," etc. and their adherence to those commandments placed them in a right relationship with God. Today, you and I have this incredible benefit of living two millennia on this side of the empty tomb. Jesus Christ is the fulfillment of the law, the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies. He lived, he died, he was buried, and he rose again, and if we confess our sin and ask him to save us, he does so.

Now why do I draw those two distinctions? Because in the book of Exodus, they didn't "get saved" the way you and I do. Now, again, I understand in Hebrews 11 it says, "By faith Abel, by faith Noah, by faith Abraham," I get it's by faith, you know what their faith was? Faith that what God wrote, God meant, and if I do it, I'm good. Today, nobody – hear me clearly – nobody in the 21st century gets to heaven by obeying the 10 Commandments. It doesn't happen. But just because we're born again believers doesn't mean we have the right to take the 10 Commandments, put them off the proverbial shelf and say, "Well, that was written to them, it doesn't apply to me." Do you see the distinction here? Because when we come to what we know as the Sermon on the Mount, it wasn't First Baptist, Israel. There were not born again believers, nobody had called on the name of the Lord, the blood of Jesus Christ had not been shed for the remission of sins. They were all "on the other side." They were all doing their best by way of the law to make themselves "right with God."

So tonight, we don't have the privilege of saying, "Well, that is not for us." What we do have the privilege tonight of doing is saying it may not have doctrinally applied to us but how do we see it in the fullness of his doctrinal approach and how do we spiritually, how do we read these passages now as a new creation? How do we read these passages now as a believer? And though they don't "save us," how are they to be applied to those of us who are saved? Which leads to the "why," and this, to me, is the linchpin of the Sermon on the Mount. Why did Jesus say what he said? Why did he communicate what he communicated? We're going to walk through the Beatitudes, we're going to walk through passages that deal with finances, we're going to walk through passages that deal with relationships, we're going to walk through passages that deal with temptation, we're going to walk through passages that deal with our inability to do that which we would hope and desire to do.

Let's think about the "why" in context of the "who." The individuals that gathered around to hear Jesus speak these words were not just simply those of an Old Testament faith, they were not just simply those who went to the temple and to the synagogue on a regular basis to do as the "law required." These individuals were unique. You see, two chapters earlier in chapter 3, we are introduced to a very odd character in scripture, a man who we know as John the Baptist. Remember John the Baptist, he comes out in a very unique clothing, a very unique diet. In fact, every aspect of him was so different and so odd. And so what did he do? This prophet comes out of the wilderness, he goes to the Jordan River and begins to do something that nobody had ever seen done up to that point before, he took people who were willing to repent and confess their sins and he dunked them in the water. What's interesting is the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the scribes, they came to John the Baptist and they did not ask him, "What are you doing?" Remember what they asked him? "Are you him?" Why would they ask if John the Baptist was him? Because back in Deuteronomy 18:18, it said that the Messiah would come in like manner as Moses.

Now do you understand that when somebody's baptized in our context today, we talk about it being a picture. Why is it a picture? Because in 1 Corinthians 10 it says that the Jewish people in the exodus were "baptized unto Moses." Think about the picture for just a moment. They're in slavery, they pass under the water into freedom. Baptism is a picture that we were enslaved to our sin and because Christ has saved us, he has set us free and made us a new creation. Those individuals that gathered to hear Jesus most assuredly, I'm sure there were some that were "curious," had been those who had gone to John the Baptist, had been those who you understand that when they allowed John the Baptist to baptize them, something significant took place because what did John say? He said, "Behold," this is speaking of Jesus, "the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world." Jesus Christ has already undergone his public baptism. John the Baptist made it very clear, "I am not even worthy to tie his shoe laces. He is the one that was promised."

This is significant because I want you to put yourself in the proverbial shoes of those who were in the Sermon on the Mount's audience. These are individuals much like you and I, who had spent the majority of their life getting up every day, doing the best that they could to somehow appease the law to be in a right relationship with God, but they understood just as Galatians 3 says, it's a taskmaster, it's a schoolmaster that shows us not so much "how righteous we've become but how unrighteous we truly are." There had come a day in their life where they were willing to go down to the Jordan River and allow this odd prophet to put them under the water and to bring them back up and then do what he said, follow this rogue rabbi out of Nazareth by the name of Jesus Christ.

Now I'm going to ask you another rhetorical question: do you really think in any aspect of normality those individuals that had been baptized by John the Baptist could go back to their local synagogue on a regular Sabbath service? Absolutely not because the Pharisees, remember John the Baptist, he chastised them. He said, "Why don't you bring fruit unto repentance? You vipers, what is wrong with you?" And so, again what we see happening by the time we get to the Sermon on the Mount, we have two groups of people within the community, we have those Pharisees and Sadducees who are saying, "You know what? We're gonna keep doing it the way we've been doing it because it's what we

know to do." Then there's a group, people like you and I who said, "You know what? I can bring all the turtledoves in the world, I can bring all the lambs in the world, it's never going to do it. I need the one whose self-sacrifice can cover it all."

So these are the individuals who came, who listened, who were seated there on the mountain when Jesus spoke these words. There's a very prophetic element of what we know as the Sermon on the Mount. In fact, this is where I'm going to "flip the proverbial script." There have been those for years and, by the way, when I say those that have done this, don't this in a contrary manner. There have been those that have taken what we know as the Sermon on the Mount and have basically stated that it is a thesis for "Christian living." Now I'm going to deny that if you do life as the Sermon on the Mount projects, then you're doing pretty good, but I want you to think about the Sermon on the Mount for just a moment. Think about the audience. Think about the timeframe. Think about what's happening around. Was Jesus Christ telling them specifically how to know they lived a right life, or was Jesus Christ communicating to them every aspect of their life that if not fulfilled properly would lead them down the wrong road?

Here's what I mean by that. I want you to turn to the end of Matthew 7. I want to fast forward. Now by the way, we are going to deal with the Sermon on the Mount in particular, I want to deal with the last section beginning verse 24. I want you to imagine the scene. Jesus Christ has talked about how to handle finances, he has talked about how to handle our families, he's talked about how to handle our temptations, he's talked about how to handle our anger, how to handle our lust. I mean, he has exposed humanity for every conceivable way that we could fall into the trap of sin that thus under a law system would need "atoning for." I want you to hear how he ends the Sermon on the Mount in verse 24 of chapter 7, "Therefore," can I push pause for a moment? You remember the old adage: therefore is there for a reason? He's finished it all. He's laid it out and he says, "Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it. And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people," listen to this, "were astonished at his doctrine: For he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes."

I want you to think about how the Sermon on the Mount ends. He's laid out all these passages and all these teachings about how to navigate and live life, and he sums it up and he says, "All right, here's the conclusion of the matter. There's only two ways to live life. You can either build your life upon the rock or you can build your life upon shifting sand. The rains are going to come, the floods are going to come, the winds are going to blow but at the end of the day, only those whose house is build on the rock will stand." You know, in 1 Corinthians 10, it speaks of that famous passage back in Exodus where the Israelites came out of Egypt into what we know as the wilderness through the Red Sea, and there it talks about that experience where the water came out and nourished the

people of Israel when they got on the other side. There's an interesting statement made in 1 Corinthians 10, it says "and that rock was Jesus Christ." And think about all the allusions in scripture to Jesus Christ being a rock or "the rock" by which our life must be built and settled upon.

Why is this important? Because I think with the way that Jesus concludes the Sermon on the Mount, and this is important to understand from the very beginning of it, is he says, "All right, guys, you've got two choices here, you can either continue this sacrificial system, you can continue going to the feasts, you continue doing all these different things but realize at the end of the day and at the end of your life, it's simply going to be shifting sand. Or you can place your life upon the rock." Which, I believe, he was speaking of himself which leads to this conclusion, that what we know as the Sermon on the Mount is not so much an instruction manual on the how-to of Christianity as it is an instruction for us or an explanation for how desperately we need Jesus Christ in our life because those that are a part of a sacrificial system, those that are a part of all these means and ways of somehow bringing and giving and sacrificing, you read the Sermon on the Mount, let me give you an example of how a cursory reading of the Sermon on the Mount goes from your life and mine.

You read the first paragraph about this story and you say, "Oh, I've got that. Not a problem. That's not a struggle of mine." You read the second one and you say, "Oh, that's not an issue. I've got that covered. I'm in good with God." And all of a sudden something is going to come up and go, "Uh-oh, I don't have that one. I struggle with that one." You cannot read, there's none of us that can read the Sermon on the Mount and say, "Yup, that's a description of my life." What happens when you read the Sermon on the Mount? You read it and realize, "I fail there. That's a fault there. There's failure there." What Jesus Christ does in the Sermon on the Mount is not so much give us instruction for living but give us an explanation of how desperately we need him as our Savior because any amount of actions, deeds, sacrifices or religion that we build our life upon will simply be shifting sand.

So tonight somewhat in closing, I want to read a resolution. Now y'all know what a resolution is, a resolution is a statement that usually an entity, an organization, or an organism makes in regards to a matter of faith and practice. I want to read this resolution as a guide for the weeks ahead as we walk through the Beatitudes, as we walk through these struggles, as walk through these temptations. Now I have written this in the verbiage of a resolution. If you've never been around resolutions, they use certain languages to segregate and segment policy.

It says, "Whereas the message known as the 'Sermon on the Mount,' Matthew 5-7, was preached to his disciples and not preached to the 12 apostles because they had not yet been called yet, and whereas there are no born again Christians present at the Sermon on the Mount because the crucifixion and the resurrection of Jesus Christ had not chronologically nor sufficiently taken place yet, and whereas all scripture is inspired by God, preserved by God, however it must be rightly divided from a historical doctrinal and spiritual perspective, now therefore be it resolved that the message affectionately known

as the Sermon on the Mount cannot be a discourse on proper 'Christian doctrine for this age,' and be it further resolved that the Sermon on the Mount may serve as a guide and illustration on how to make decisions and live life as a born again Christian, but it does not by its contents define or describe a born again Christian, and therefore be it concluded that the Sermon on the Mount was and is a message to Jewish disciples who had left Judaism on transitioning to Jesus Christ being the fulfillment of all Old Testament prophecies regarding the coming Messiah and their inability to fulfill the law by their own efforts."

So what is the very simplistic conclusion of what we know as the Sermon on the Mount? At the end of the day, it's not what we've done, it's who we know. And one of the most frightening aspects of modern-day "Christianity," which we will address in chapter 7, is this propensity to define our relationship with God based on what we've done "right" versus what we haven't done wrong. I mean, after all, it is in chapter 7 of the book of Matthew in the Sermon on the Mount where Jesus Christ makes this statement, "Many on that day will come to me and say, 'Lord, why am I not with you? We did great things. We said great things.'" And he says, "Depart from me, I never knew you." Again, I'm of the perspective that Jesus Christ wasn't giving us an instruction manual for life, he was giving us an explanation of our desperate need for him. There's not one of us that's ever going to be righteous enough. There's not one of us who's ever going to be clean enough. There's not one of us that's going to avoid temptation fervently enough.

And so tonight, just like any day of our lives, we have to make a decision, are we going to place our life and our eternity on the shifting sand of our own righteousness, our good works, our religious fervor, or are we going to say, "You know what? There's no way I can do this in my own merit, in my own ability. I'm going to place my life, I'm going to place my eternity on the rock who is Christ Jesus." The beautiful thing about the Sermon on the Mount, it's not just an ethos or a teaching of ethic, it shows us quite clearly our inadequacies to be righteous apart from the Lord Jesus Christ himself. So tonight, let it be resolved in our lives to no longer be shifting sand but to allow our life to be rooted upon his, the rock.

Let's pray with our heads bowed and our eyes closed. In just a moment, we're going to conclude our service with the singing of a classic song of our faith, what we know as Amazing Grace. You know, tonight, before we come to that point, though, think about that word "grace." Grace is receiving that which you don't deserve and that's essentially the real message of the Sermon on the Mount. We've all fallen into temptation. We've all thought things we shouldn't have thought, said things we shouldn't have said. We've harbored emotions and angst and hatred and anger toward those that never knew our true feelings, and yet at the same time the Lord said, "I love you. I'm willing to save you. I'm willing to allow you to be in a right relationship with me not because you're good enough but because I'm willing to give myself for you." If that's not grace, I don't know what is.

So tonight, we celebrate that grace and maybe you're here tonight, maybe you're watching online, you're one of those individuals who spent your entire life trying to somehow measure up to your or somebody else's standard on what it looked like to do the right

things versus the wrong things, to somehow have God smile upon your life in eternity. Maybe tonight is one of those nights when the Spirit of God took the word of God and really took a wrecking ball to that theology to say it's not about what you do or don't do, it's about who he is and what he's done on your behalf. Maybe tonight's the night where as we talked about earlier, you just call on the name of the Lord. Or maybe tonight you say, "You know what? I'm already a believer. I've been walking with the Lord." Maybe tonight you say, "You know, I've gotten caught up in that 'religious mentality' that as long as I'm not in this place, with those people, doing those things, I feel like everything's great." But maybe tonight as you look at the context of the Sermon on the Mount you say, "You know what? It's not about what I do and what I don't do, it's about who he is and this new life that I live or should live in him." Maybe tonight as we come to our time of decision, maybe you're those that need to believe for the first time, maybe tonight is a night of reassurance, maybe tonight is a night of conviction that rather than walking out and up these aisles to render a public decision, it's about walking out with a new focus and new perspective.

Lord Jesus, tonight, God, we celebrate your amazing grace. God, we look back on the history books of humanity, so many individuals that from our perspective were "so good at doing it the Bible way" yet they all fell short. God, we desperately need you. We cannot do it apart from you. Show us tonight particularly as we sing these words, that your grace, that forgiveness, salvation, eternity in heaven, we cannot nor ever would do anything to deserve it, it is simply a gift that you've given out of your love. Tonight, may we cherish is. In Jesus' name we pray.