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Series: The Sermon on the Mount
Message: A Sermon to Live By

Transcribed Message
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Rod Dreher published a book in March of '17 entitled The Benedict Option. The subtitle of his book was A Strategy for Christians in a Post-Christian Nation. The title of the book, Benedict, comes from a 6th century guy who left the world that he lived in and he went to a monastery and became a monk. So he borrowed that name from Benedict of the 6th century. Dreher does not suggest in the book that we leave society and we run off to a monastery and live the life of a monk. But what he does suggest is this. That we build communities that he calls networks of resistance to outlast and overcome the occupation. It's an interesting read. I would give you the spoiler alert that the one main lacking thing of the book in my mind that disqualifies the whole thesis is there's nothing in there about the power of the gospel. There is nothing in there about the capacity of what Christ can do by means of His saving grace. How God's people live in the midst of a fallen world is a question that Christians have been asking from the very beginning. Since Jesus came and began the church and the ministry of the body of Christ in this new and exciting way that we experience today, we've been asking that question. How are we supposed to as the people of God live in the midst of this fallen world?

I would suggest to you on the basis of Scripture that the answer is less likely that we run off and become monks in a monastery and it's more likely that we go and become missionaries in a culture that needs to hear the gospel of Christ. Rather than running and hiding, I would suggest that the Bible says we're supposed to be going and engaging. How we do that is of great importance to us and it's of great importance to our Lord. In Matthew chapter 5 all the way through chapter 7, Jesus gives us a sermon to live life by and that's what we want to do.

We begin this morning a new series from Matthew's gospel chapters five, six and seven. The sermon on the mount. As we look at this, I remind you that what we try to do is we go in the Old Testament for a series, and then we go to the New Testament for

a series. Then we go into something from the life of Christ, the teaching of Christ, the work of Christ. Then we throw in a topic now and then. Well, it's our turn to look at what Jesus is teaching here in Matthew 5. As we just look at that overview of the whole sermon on the mount, I want to suggest this. When we come under the rule and the authority of Jesus, we go where He sends us and we do what He tells us. Literally, when we do that, He turns our life upside down. In the midst of this world we're going to look a lot different because why? Because we're People of the Book.

Let's look first of all at the context of this. It is always good whenever you're doing this, when you're handling the Word of God, it is always good to know the context. So we're going to set the context for these chapters in the Gospel of Matthew. If you do that, you start off by seeing something of the structure of Matthew's Gospel. You know that we have four Gospels of the New Testament: Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. You know that each one of them is relating something to us about the life of Christ. You know that each one of them takes a little different approach, a little different tack and has a little different purpose in mind. Matthew is writing to a largely Jewish audience and he is going to write in such a way that he is presenting Jesus as the King, the Messiah to God's people.

As you unfold the Gospel of Matthew, it would look something like this. Chapter 1 is the genealogy of the King. Chapter 2 we have the birth of Jesus. We have His protection from Herod. We have the visiting of the Magi. We have His flight to Egypt. Chapter 3 we find Him being baptized by John. John the Baptist is on the scene and Jesus comes to be baptized by John. As I was even writing that down, I thought what an incredible experience that must've been for John the Baptist. Here is the Son of God and he baptizes Jesus in the account that Matthew gives us in the third chapter. Chapter 4 is all about the temptation of Christ. He is taken off into the wilderness for 40 days and 40 nights and He faces the intensity of the battle going up against Satan. And then you get to 5, 6 and 7. It's here in 5, 6 and 7 that it seems to me Matthew was saying Jesus the Messiah, the King is on the scene. He's here. He has announced that for us. Matthew, as he does that, tells us of the ministry of Jesus.

So look back into the fourth chapter for a couple of verses. Matthew's Gospel chapter 4 and look at the ministry of Jesus as he kind of brings it into a summary at

verse 23: “And He went throughout all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom and healing every disease and every affliction among the people. So His fame spread throughout all Syria, and they brought him all the sick, those afflicted with various diseases and pains, those oppressed by demons, epileptics, and paralytics, and He healed them. And great crowds followed Him from Galilee and the Decapolis, and from Jerusalem and Judea, and from beyond the Jordan.”

A lot has happened when you get to Matthew 5. More than what Matthew records for us in terms of the chronology. The Gospels aren't necessarily put together chronologically. A lot of things have happened by the time you get to Matthew 5. Jesus has performed many miracles. Jesus has already cleansed the temple. He's gone in there and overturned the tables and upset the whole system. He's already had a conversation with Nicodemus the Pharisee at night and told Nicodemus he's going to have to be born again. He's chosen the 12 disciples. He's had an extended ministry of healing, in fact, healing a man on the Sabbath which really angered the religious leaders, claiming as well to be the very Son of God in equality with the Father in which time they wanted to kill Him. So all of this has already happened. When you come to Matthew 5, Jesus's ministry is already drawing large crowds. People are aware of this one, the Jesus of Nazareth. He has also aroused the anger and the hostility of the religious leaders. This has already unfolded when we come to the Sermon on the Mount. The question that is being asked already with all that has happened is could this be the Messiah? Could this be the promised one? When you look at Matthew's Gospel he's answering that question for us.

Chapters 1 through 4 – where did this man come from? Chapters 5 through 7 he's answering what does this man believe? Then in 8 through 10 he's answering what can this man do? Matthew is constructing his gospel in such a way that he is answering this question as he lays out the ministry of Christ. Jesus is the Messiah. He's the King. Here is His message. Here are His actions. You decide. That is what Matthew is doing. What he is not going to allow us to do is to accept the ethical teaching of Jesus that he's going to unwrap here in these chapters, and reject the claims that Jesus makes about Himself and about who He is and about the miracles that He's performed. He's not

going to allow us to separate those two because he wants us to see that those in fact validate Jesus as the King and the Messiah.

Let's take a closer look at the sermon itself. Matthew sets the table for us by bringing us the ministry of Christ into focus and telling us the questions that are being grappled with. We're going to begin interestingly enough by looking at the name of the sermon. We've always understood it and heard of it as the Sermon on the Mount. Most people have heard of the Sermon on the Mount. You may not know anything about it, but I bet a lot of people have heard of the Sermon on the Mount. Most of your Bibles probably have at Matthew 5 the heading that my Bible does and it's called the Sermon on the Mount. Interestingly, that wasn't even given that title until a man by the name of Augustine came along in the 4th century and he titled this teaching of Jesus the Sermon on the Mount. From that time forward, for 1700 years that title has stuck and we generally refer to this as the Sermon on the Mount.

Someone else has come along and suggested another title. They have suggested it might be equally valid to call this a mountain of a sermon. A mountain of a sermon. We got the Sermon on the Mount, but what if it in fact is really to be understood as a mountain of a sermon? This is after all the first recorded extended teaching of Jesus the Messiah. This would be like His inaugural address. This is the first time the gospel writers put together for us this length of teaching in a discourse that Jesus gave, as we'll see in a moment, to those that were there on the mountain with him. John Stott says of this Sermon on the Mount that "it is the best-known teaching of Jesus. It is the least understood teaching of Jesus and it is the least obeyed teaching of Jesus." I think you could probably argue about a couple of those whether it's the most known. There are certainly parts of the Sermon on the Mount that are very well known. Other parts though probably are not.

But if Jesus is presenting Himself as King and the kingdom is near as He has said, then we should want to know what? We should want to know how do we live as Christ followers in this kingdom? Jesus answers it seems to me in the Sermon on the Mount that very question. How is it that we're supposed to live? Look at the topics that we're going to be looking at in the months to come: happiness, the kingdom, persecution, evangelism, the law, false teaching, murder, anger, swearing, taking of

oaths, sexual immorality, adultery, divorce, justice, giving, praying, fasting, money, anxiety, judging, discernment, heaven, hell, wisdom, foolishness. It's all there. Jesus is going to bring to this amazing set of verses and chapters a perspective that shows us how it is that He wants us to live as those who are followers of Christ.

It's very likely that as we go through this that what Matthew is giving us is teaching that Jesus would have done throughout His ministry. There's no doubt that it happened on this day on this occasion, but we also know as you read the other Gospels that some of the things that Jesus teaches in the Sermon on the Mount are taught in other places and even given a greater breadth of instruction and meaning. So when you look at the Sermon on the Mount, you can read it yourself in about 10 minutes. I do not believe that Jesus brought all of these people to the mountain and He just preached for 10 minutes. I just can't. I cannot believe that. I don't think that's possible, is it? Are you guys with me on this? You can't just teach for 10 minutes, can you? He taught all day long as a matter fact. Do I have an amen on that? He taught all day to these people and this is in a sense I think Matthew the Levite giving us a summary of these various topics that Jesus no doubt taught extensively on, not only that day but other days and other opportunities as well.

So if this is a mountain of a sermon, do you know why it's a mountain of a sermon? Because of the teacher. If it's a mountain of a sermon, it's because of the teacher. Who is this teacher? We've already said. This teacher Matthew is presenting as the Son of God, the Messiah, the King. He is by definition going to be the greatest preacher and the greatest teacher who ever lived. He is the one who the woman at the well said come and learn of a man who's told me everything that I've ever done. He knows things about me that I haven't told anybody. He knows everything about me. Come and meet this man. That is who is giving this Sermon on the Mount. He is the one that Peter said when the Lord was in that question and answer session with the disciples Lord, who would we have besides You? You alone have words of life. That's the teacher that we encounter here. That's why this is a mountain of a sermon. It is a mountain of the sermon because the teacher who's giving it to us.

I want you to notice two things about this sermon and how it unfolds. First, He is on the mountain. What is the significance of Matthew telling us that this is taking place

on the side of a mountain? What was significant about a mountain? A mountain in Scripture does have significance. A lot of really significant things have happened on a mountain all through the story of the Bible, not the least of which is God has given divine revelation to His people from a mountain. Remember who went up on a mountain? Mount Sinai. Moses went up on a mountain and there God gave His people the law under which they were to live as the people of God in this covenant relationship with Him. So a mountain has significance. It is not just Matthew filling in some topographical geographical stuff. No, there's a spiritual significance to the idea that Jesus is giving this and He's doing so from the mountain.

Listen to what Moses himself said in Deuteronomy chapter 18 verse 15. this is Moses: "The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you and from among your brothers – it is to Him you shall listen." Isn't that amazing? Then jump over to verse 18. He said: "I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers. And I will put my words in his mouth and he shall speak to them all that I command him." You see in Deuteronomy 18 Moses is actually looking down the corridor of time and he's looking to the One, the Messiah, the Promised One, the prophet of God who was going to come. He was going to be on a mountain and He was going to give them God's revelation. This is a pretty remarkable thing that we find Jesus and we find Him on the mountain.

The other thing I want you to see is that He is sitting down. He's sitting down. chapter 5 verse 1: "Seeing the crowds, He went up on the mountain, and when He sat down, His disciples came to Him." Now again, we could just read right by that first verse and miss something significant. It was the custom of the day when a rabbi was teaching, when he assumed the position of sitting, that the conversation took a decided shift and there was something more authoritative. There was something more significant that would follow. When the rabbi was walking or when he was standing, it wasn't the same as the significance of when he would sit down and gather his disciples and his learners around him. That's what's happening here. We have something of the flavor of that today. Academic circles and universities have what? They have endowed chairs. What's an endowed chair? The oldest endowed chair in our country is the Hollis chair of Divinity at Harvard. It is a chair that obviously speaks of a symbolism. It is a metaphor for an

authority. It's a metaphor for a teaching position that somebody has endowed with a certain amount of money to provide professors to be sitting in that chair, if you will.

Here's my question to you. Why am I standing and you're sitting? Do we have this right? We stand within the Protestant tradition because there was a period of time in church history when the Bible wasn't available to anybody. In fact, the church had literally chained the Bible to a pedestal so nobody could have it. Everything funneled through the church. Even today when we hear of the Pope speaking *ex cathedra*. Do you know what *ex cathedra* is? It's Latin for from the chair. He's assumed a place of authority to speak, they believe, of God's revelation. So when the Protestant church brought back the Word of God, they said we want it to have a central place in our assemblies. We had pulpits and we had people who stood behind that central place where the authority of the Word of God was to be declared. So that's why we do that.

Which by the way, in case you didn't know you know there were no church buildings until the 4th century. The church didn't even have buildings until the 4th century. There wasn't anything about pews and sitting down until the 13th century. Then it was wooden or stone pews that were lining the outer part of the wall. It wasn't until the 15th century in America pews really took over the church. So that is just extra. No charge for that. But I wanted you to know that there is a reason why you're sitting and I'm standing. That's kind of a part of it.

Jesus is teaching and He's preaching. What's the difference between teaching and preaching? Some people suggest it's just a matter volume. When you preach, you yell. When you teach, you talk. We had a family many years ago here at Covenant that came and visited for a while. Then they moved on. When we inquired as to why that was, they said your preacher just doesn't yell enough. So I offered to yell more but they didn't stay. But for some people that is kind of it. Preaching is kind of loud while teaching is a little softer. Probably more Biblically centered is the idea that in preaching there is a proclamation. There may be more admonition. There may be more of a sense of urgency at times. teaching is more of an explaining and bringing to an understanding and equipping. So Jesus is doing both. He is preaching and He is teaching.

Now notice the listeners of the sermon. who is going to be in on this? "Seeing the crowds, He went up on the mountain, and when He sat down, His disciples came to

Him.” The first thing I want you to see is there's crowds of people. We're not told how many there were but Jesus was always moved by the multitudes. That is just a part of the heart of our Lord. Even in Matthew 23, when He gave some of the strongest rebukes that we have from the mouth of our Lord, at the end of that chapter what do you see Jesus doing? He is weeping over Jerusalem. He is brokenhearted. So when Jesus saw multitudes of people He was just always moved to see them. We're not surprised when Matthew says they're coming from the north, they are coming from the south, they are coming from the east and they're coming from the west. They're coming from everywhere.

Look over a page or two to the end of the sermon at the end of the 7th chapter and verse 28: “And when Jesus finished these sayings, the crowds were astonished at His teaching for He was teaching them as one who had authority and not as their scribes”. Now why do you suppose there was such a difference between the teaching of Jesus and the teaching of the religious leaders of that day? Obviously this is the Son of God. Obviously this is the Messiah. This is the king. So that is inherent in the message. But there's also the sense that the religious leaders were dealing in the superficial. They were dealing in the legalistic stuff. Jesus is bringing them the authority of the Word of God, the truth of the Word of God, the power of the Word of God. It takes me back to the verse I mentioned last week. 1 Thessalonians 2:13. Paul says I'm so glad that when you heard the teaching of the Word you received it for what it was – the Word of God and not the words of man. We really don't need to hear the words of man frankly. We don't need the opinions of other people. We need the authority and the teaching and the power of the Word of God. That's what Jesus did and the crowd knew that there was something different about the way He taught.

Notice secondly there is the disciples. The crowds are there and He sits down and His disciples came to Him. So there are others there besides the disciples. For sure there were the 12, but I think there may have been others who had already made a commitment to follow Jesus. So the “disciples” is probably a word that includes the 12 but goes beyond those 12 to others that had understood who Jesus was. I think it looks like this. Jesus is sitting down and immediately around Him are His disciples, His followers. But then all around are others who are in fact listening. It might be some

indication to us here as to how it is that we're to live. How is it that the followers of the King are supposed to live in this time and in this fallen world? Doesn't that picture for you that it's not a sense of isolation? There is separation but there's not isolation. Jesus is willing to have the disciples there because He wants to teach them the things about how it is that you follow Me. But there's also an understanding and He is perfectly happy to have these others who have come to hear as well. We come out of the world and we come to this place and we gather here for the express purpose of being equipped. But we're perfectly okay with having others come and be a part of this gathering as well. I think that's what Jesus is demonstrating here. That's what I think we would want as pastors and elders at Covenant to be happening all the time. We understand that the purpose that we gather is as Paul says in Ephesians 4 to equip the saints for the work of ministry in the service of God called you to and all of us together.

That's the main reason we come together – to give glory and praise to God, to focus on the glory of God, to be equipped so that we grow in our obedience to God. But all of that with the purpose of being able to take it out there to the world. But you know what? If some of them come here we love that. If you're one of those this morning and you're curious about this stuff and you're a seeker, we love for you to be here. There's going to be a lot of things perhaps you don't understand. You might be scratching your head about what some of this means. What are they doing that for? But you know what? You keep coming, and you keep listening, and you keep learning, and you keep asking questions, and I believe fully that God the Holy Spirit will make known to you His gospel and His truth and the wonder of who He is. That's what I see happening here. Jesus equipping the disciples but fully embracing the opportunity to share this with all who are listening.

Now let's look finally at the purpose of the sermon. The purpose of the sermon. It should not come as a surprise to you when John Stott says that this sermon is the most familiar, it is the least understood and it is the least obeyed and practiced. It should not shock and surprise you that there are a range of answers to the question of what is the purpose that our Lord had in giving this teaching in the way that He did, in presenting Himself as King. He's the Messiah. In this setting, what was in the heart of our Lord behind this teaching? Some of which, as we're going to see, will turn your world upside

down. Jesus is going to say things that are disturbing, that are very contrary to the way we normally think.

What ultimately was His purpose? Let me give you four suggestions and then I'll give you the right one. We'll start with the first one. The first one is some people look at the Sermon on the Mount and they say this is a social justice program. They love to go to Matthew 7 and the Golden Rule and pick and pull different verses out of the Sermon on the Mount. They say if the whole world would just live like this we would be going into a utopia. This would be the Golden Age. We can do this. We are the people of the world. If we're just nicer to each other and kinder to each other and if we just do a few of these things that Jesus talks about in the Sermon on the Mount, this would be a great place. It would be a lot better. Well, it would be a lot better if people lived the Sermon on the Mount. But trust me. Jesus is not trying to usher in some liberal utopia because it completely overlooks our most basic problem, doesn't it?

The second one speaks of that. The second one we have people who read the Sermon on the Mount and they say here's the way of salvation. They think this is what Jesus has in mind for us. Here is His way of explaining how it is that we get to heaven. If you do these things, this is the pathway to heaven. If you believe that salvation is by works, and if you believe that salvation is a way of your human efforts, then you're going to love the Sermon on the Mount. Except ... you can't do it. You're going to discover pretty soon that you can't do this stuff. You're going to be very frustrated and very confused because Jesus isn't putting forward a way of salvation. He is not saying do all of these things and you're going to earn heaven because we know salvation is by grace alone, by faith alone, in Christ alone. The words of the Sermon on the Mount do not speak of salvation and justification. They speak of something different.

The third way of looking at this as some have suggested is this is looking down into the future. It's talking about a future kingdom, primarily the millennial kingdom when Christ reigns on the earth. They think what He is talking about is that period of time yet future and so there's nothing really here for us to see today as believers in this age. So that's all for another time. I think that view misses completely what Jesus would have us take from this.

A fourth view says what we have here is we have a code of conduct that is to be rather rigidly obeyed. It looks like this so that when Jesus says hey if somebody slaps you, just turn the other cheek and take one on that cheek too. Don't ever defend yourself. It is believed that Jesus is teaching in the Sermon on the Mount an individual pacifism and national pacifism. Those that understand the sermon in this way don't serve in public office because to serve in public office in America you have to take an oath or a pledge. They don't think that you should take any oath or offer any pledge. Those folks don't want to serve on duty as a jury member because you have to take an oath to do so. You see where that goes. It is just seen as a very rigid way of living life. Many of those that understand the Sermon on the Mount that way end up living in a communal setting and separating themselves from the world.

Here's the right view. Here's another one for you to consider anyway. How about if this was in fact a revelation of how Jesus did life? What if what we had in the Sermon on the Mount is what is through the eyes of our Lord a spirit controlled believer looked like as he lived out his life in this fallen world? Romans chapter 8. Listen to what Paul says in verse 3: "For God has done what the law weakened by the flesh could not do." Jesus is going to say on more than one occasion you know what the law says. Well, this is what you really need to do. "For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit." What if in fact what we have in the Sermon on the Mount is Jesus saying this is how you do life. This is how you live your life when you're controlled by the power of God's Spirit.

Let me give you four pictures of what that looks like. First, it reveals you can never please God on your own. So you see any other view that comes to the Sermon on the Mount and says do this, do this, do this has to acknowledge right out of the gate that the absolute bottom line necessity is that we have to be born again. Just like Jesus said to Nicodemus. We have to have experienced new birth, new life. This standard that Jesus puts forward goes beyond the law. It goes beyond our capacity to do. There is no clearer picture of how desperate our situation is apart from God then when you read the

Sermon on the Mount and say go live life like that if you don't have Christ living within you.

Secondly, it reveals the only one who can meet that standard is Jesus. The mountain of the sermon is the teacher behind it who alone can meet this standard. The sermon points us ultimately to Christ. It causes us to see Jesus. Here is what God requires. Here is the one who can do that. Here is the one who can live that life out through you. The indwelling Spirit of Christ in you is the only way to meet that standard.

Thirdly, it reveals the pathway to true success and happiness. We're going to start off, Lord willing, next week and there's going to be nine statements, one right after the other, talking about happiness, talking about what we understand as the Beatitudes. It is going to be presenting to us a picture far different than the world suggests. The world is in pursuit of chasing after so many things because what is within the heart of every one of us but to find the pathway of happiness. We're not called to a life of misery. When we look at that Jesus says this is the way that you go to walk in that and it is God's intention and it is His design that we would walk in this truth and we would experience this contentment and happiness that He has for us.

Then finally, it seems to me that what we have revealed here is how to make the greatest impact possible. Go back to the Benedict option and gathering in small communities and having some sense of opposition to the world around us of the resistance that we're supposed to call it from within. Listen. If you want to have the greatest impact for the glory of God in this world, you live the principles and the truths of the Sermon on the Mount. This is the life of Christ. This is how Jesus lived His life on the earth for 3+ years. He lived out this sermon. He was a walking sermon every day about these things and it didn't make sense to most of the people who saw Him and listened to Him. He just did life so differently than all of the rest of us do, at least what we do naturally.

I was watching the news this week and there was a story from Houston and the hurricane. They were doing a live shot with a reporter with a lady that was going into her home for the first time that was basically ruined. It was a neat interchange because here's this lady standing with this reporter on national TV, live TV, and he says how are you doing? And she says we're going to be okay. And he said really? How is it that you

can be okay in the midst of all of this destruction and loss? She said we believe because of our faith. We believe that God is good all the time. He is good in the good times and He is good in times like this.” The guy was a little bit taken back I think and he asked what advice would you give to the people that are in the path of Hurricane Irma? She said do you know what I would tell them? Make sure that you remember what's really important. Your family, people are important. All of the rest of this is just stuff. well you know any of us can say that and we would like to think that we might. But I would suggest to you that when you're standing in water up to your knees in your home and stuff is floating by, it's not as easy to lay claim to those things as it is when we're here in the context that we are right now.

But you see, it's not just in that area of life. It's in every area of life that Jesus is going to come in the Sermon on the Mount and He's going to say you know what? If you want to impact the world around you for Christ, the most effective way to do that is not to run off to a monastery and be a monk. The best way to do that is to live separated from the world but in the world, with the perspective of life that is radically different. When we come under the rule and authority of Christ, my friend, when we recognize as Matthew sets forth that Jesus is the King, I want to say to you that He's ready to turn your life upside down. A lot of us are living in the world and we're living a lot like the world. It looks like were chasing the same stuff the world is chasing. Jesus has a different sermon for us to live life by.

What do we take away? Jesus takes on superficial religion and just turns it on its head. He intends for us to be different from the way the world lives. There is not a lot of comfort in that. This is going to be uncomfortable. At times we're going to be disturbed by the words of Jesus. He fully intends for us to be disturbed, I assure you. It's certainly not easy. But if you are a fully devoted follower of Christ, that's what you signed on for. Maybe you didn't know all that that entailed when you signed on. The Sermon on the Mount is going to bring that into focus. It's going to call us to a radical obedience that is going to stand on its head superficial religion.

Many many years ago Martin Lloyd Jones said this about this passage: “I do not think it is a harsh judgment to say that the most obvious feature of the Christian church today, alas, is its superficiality. The judgment is based not only on contemporary

observation, but in light of previous ethics and errors in the life of the church.” What if we started paying more attention to what God wants to do in our life and how He wants to change us, and less attention to all the stuff going on out there maybe the impact that God intends for us would rise to the level at which the superficiality was pushed down. Let’s ask God to do that.

Let’s pray. Father God, we thank you again for the life of our Lord. He lived His life the way you intended for life to be lived. He lived and He walked in the truth and in harmony and He did so, Father, in showing us and being an example for us. But that isn't all that He did. Lord, He went to the cross and He went to the cross for each person who would put their faith and trust in Him alone as their Savior. So, Lord, this morning we pray that if there is someone here that has been wrapped up in a superficial religion of self-effort and self-works that Your Spirit would open their eyes to see that it is only in Christ that we have the answer that we need to realize the righteousness that You require. Lord, for each one of us as your children, we are called repeatedly to count the cost of what it means to be a Christ follower. So use Your Word to use this sermon on the Mount, Father, this mountain of a sermon to show us how it is that we can have the greatest impact for the glory of God, how it is that we can press in more intensely to grow in our walk with You. Father, may we take that burden, that compassion and that desire to a world that desperately needs Christ. We ask in Jesus’s name. Amen.