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- [0 : 0 0] The first version of the psalm, Psalm 145.
- I'll thee extol my God, O King. I'll bless thy name always. Thee will I bless each day and will thy name forever praise.
- Great is the Lord, much to be praised. His greatness such exceeds. Race into race shall praise thy works and show thy mighty deeds. I of thy glorious majesty the honour will record.
- I'll speak of all thy mighty works which wondrous are, O Lord. Men of thine acts, the might shall show thine acts that dreadful are.
- And I thy glory to advance, thy greatness will declare. The memory of thy goodness great the Lord shall express. With songs of praise they shall extol thy perfect righteousness.
- [1 : 0 2] The Lord is very gracious. In him compassions flow. In mercy he is very great. And is to anger slow. I shall sing these verses to the Lord's praise.
- From Psalm 145, verse 1 to 8. I'll thee extol my God, O King. I'll bless thy name always. I'll thee extol my God, O King.
- I'll bless thy name always. Be where thy blessed exceed, and will thine name forever praise.
- Greatest the Lord must do thee, Christ. His greatness search exceeds.
- Praise, Lord, to rest shall praise thy works. And show thy mighty deeds.
- [2 : 3 2] I owe thy glorious majesty. The honor will report.
- I'll speak of all thy mighty works. Which wonders are, O Lord.
- Many of thy gnats the might shall show.
- Thy gnats the dreadful night. And I, thy glory to advance.
- Thy greatness will declare. The memory of thy goodness great.
- [3 : 4 5] The glory of thy goodness great. Their art we shall express. With songs of praise.
- And I, his mercy of God. Ajito! You shall flex lord, thy death, thy righteousness.
- Vole thou please rise. By praise, you shall destroy. Ashes flow In everything Is very great And is to angels Let us unite together in prayer. Let us pray.

Eternal and ever Blessed Lord As we come together this evening in this act of worship we pray O Lord that we would be mindful into whose presence we come the one who is high and lifted up the one who inhabiteth eternity the one who is from everlasting to everlasting and the one who is of purer eye than to look upon sin and so we seek the grace O Lord to humble ourselves and to take that place that belongeth to us at thine own footstool and acknowledgement of what is true of us all that by nature we are sinners and that we do sin against thee in thought in word and in deed but blessed be thy name that thou art the God who is full of compassion that thou art a God who is full of mercy that thou art a God of love and we give thanks that in thy grace in thy mercy and in thy love that thou hast made provision for us as sinners in and through thy son the Lord Jesus Christ that thou didst send him into this world that he took of nature unto himself and in that nature that he died bearing in his own body what our sins deserved so that we could have life we give thanks unto thee that he came and died and that he was buried and that he rose again on the third day triumphant over death and the grave and that he ascended to thine own right hand and there that he ministers on behalf of all those who will commit themselves to him by faith and we give thanks

O Lord for his ministry at thy right hand and for the great promise that thou hast given to thy people that he shall return again not to offer himself again as a sacrifice for sin but to engather his own people and to bring them in body and soul into the inheritance that he has prepared for them we give thanks that we can have that living hope through the gospel and so we pray O Lord for thy spirit to come and to be poured out upon us as a people so that our ears may be unstopped so that we may hear and the veil taken from our hearts so that we may understand and that through thy spirit that there would be a people who would be made willing in a day of thine own power to embrace by faith the salvation that thou hast brought out for sinners such as we are through thy son we pray Lord that thou would bless the gospel not only among ourselves but to the ends of the earth that wherever

[8 : 56] Christ and him crucified is being proclaimed and declared among a people that there may be the power and demonstration of thy spirit evident so that a people would be drawn to embrace thy salvation and to come to know thy salvation and the joy of thy salvation so we pray O Lord that thou would bless all those who are preaching thy gospel this night O Lord may they have the unction of thy Lord's spirit upon them may thou O Lord grant to them boldness and confidence in proclaiming thy truth knowing that thy word shall not return unto thee void but that thou shall accomplish that for which thou hast sent it forth we pray Lord that thou would bless every home and family that belongs to the congregation with their own particular needs we give thanks that thou art the God who out of the riches of thy grace can meet with all our needs remember our young people and our children we pray that thou would raise up a generation that would fear thine own name bless those who are unable to be with us this evening because of the infirmities of the flesh or for other duties that are set upon them we pray that thou wouldst be near to them remember those who are ill may thy healing hand be upon them and those who have been bereft of loved ones may thy comfort be their portion remember with compassion those who are indifferent and careless to the claims of thy word o lord have mercy upon them we pray thee and draw them by the cords of thy spirit o lord we pray that thou would bless thy people here those who have committed themselves to thee that they may be lights that would shine out in the midst of the darkness of the world that is around us we pray o lord that thou would bless thy church to the ends of the earth we remember particularly those who are persecuted for their faith and we pray that thou wouldst be near to them we give thanks to thee o lord for the relative peace that we have in our own nation to come and to worship thee although we see those who are hostile to the gospel and those who would desire that those things were trodden under foot but we pray o lord that as long as we are able to proclaim thy truth that it will please thee to bless it we acknowledge o lord that as a nation that we have gone far away from thee as days of repentance days of turning back unto thee days of seeking the lord while he is to be found and calling upon him while he is near we pray lord that thou would grant wisdom to those who have been set up in authority over us o lord we pray for all nations of the earth whether it's war whether it's poverty whether it's chaos where there is great devastation all as a consequence of man's fall we pray o lord that thou would meet with them all at their own particular

point of need we ask o lord that thou would protect us the moments that we are together this evening that thou would not allow our mind to wander here and there our thoughts to wander here and there but may we be focused upon thy word and hear what thou hast to say to us that our worship this evening may be acceptable to thee through the merits of thy son we pray for the office bearers and their respective duties for the one who leads us in the praise and we pray o lord that thou would grant to us the listening ear and the understanding heart and that everything that we endeavour to do in thy name would be to the glory of thy name and all that we ask with the forgiveness of our many sins is in Jesus name and for his sake amen let us now sing to the lord's praise from psalm 65 and at verse 4 blessed is the man whom thou didst choose and makes approach to thee that he within thy courts o lord may still a dweller be we surely shall be satisfied with thy abundant grace and with the goodness of thy house even of thy holy place o god of our salvation thou in thy righteousness by fearful works and toward prayers thine answer does express therefore the ends of all the earth and those of father be upon the sea their confidence o lord will place in thee judging these verses to the lord's praise psalm 65 verse 4 to the end of the double verse marked 5 blessed is the man whom thou didst choose and makes approach to thee blessed is the man wise not can hear the works

And his approach to thee That he within thy courts, O Lord May still not wear him We surely shall be satisfied With thy abundant grace And with the goodness of thy heart In all thy holy grace

O God, love us and heaven Thou in thy righteousness I fear no works Under tout our view Thyário and ■■■■■ The darkness expressed Therefore the ends of all the earth And whose have heard that we Upon the sea their confidants

O Lord will present thee Let us now read the word of God As we find it in the New Testament In the Gospel according to Luke And chapter 5 Gospel of Luke And chapter 5 And it came to pass That as the people pressed upon him To hear the word of God He stood by the lake of Gennesaret And saw two ships standing by the lake But the fishermen were gone out of them And were washing their nets And he entered into one of the ships Which was Simon's And prayed to him that he would thrust out A little from the land And he sat down and taught the people Out of the ship Now when he had left speaking

[18 : 20] He said unto Simon Launch out into the deep And let down your nets for Antra And Simon answering said And to him Master We have toiled all the night And have taken nothing Nevertheless At thy word I will let down the net And when they had this done They enclosed a great multitude of fishes And their net break And they beckoned into their partners Which were in the other ship That they should come and help them And they came and filled both the ships So that they began to see When Simon Peter saw it He fell down at Jesus' knees Saying Depart from me For I am a sinful man, O Lord For he was astonished And all that were with him At the draught of the fishes That they had taken And so was also James and John The sons of Sibbadi Which were partners with Simon And Jesus said unto Simon Fear not

From henceforth Thou shalt catch men And when they had brought Their ships to land They forsook God And followed him And it came to pass When he was in a certain city Behold a man full of leprosy Who seeing Jesus Fell on his face And besought him saying Lord If thou wilt Thou canst make me clean And he put forth his hand And touched him saying I will Be thou clean And immediately The leprosy Departed from them And he charged him To tell no man But go and show thyself To the priest And offer for thy cleansing According as Moses commanded For a testimony unto them But so much the more Went there a fame And brought of him And great multitudes Came together to hear And to be healed By him of their infirmities And he withdrew himself Into the wilderness And prayed And it came to pass On a certain day As he was teaching That there were Pharisees

And doctors of the law Sitting by Which were come out Of every town Of Galilee And Judea And Jerusalem And the power of the Lord Was present to heal them And behold men And behold men brought in A bed A man Which was taken Without palsy And the sword Means to bring in him And to lay him Before him But when they could not Find by what way They might bring him In Because of the multitude They went upon the house And let down Through the tiling With his couch Into the midst Before Jesus And when he saw Their faith He said unto him Man thy sins Are forgiven thee And the scribes And the Pharisees Began to reason Saying Who is this That speaketh Well as men Who can forgive sins But God alone But when Jesus Perceived their thoughts He answering Said unto them What reason ye In your hearts For it is easier To say Thy sins Be forgiven thee Or to say Rise up and walk But that ye may know That the Son of Man

Hath power upon earth To forgive sins He said unto the Seeker of the palsy I say unto thee Arise And take up thy couch And go into Thine house And immediately He rose up Before them And took up That where on he lay And departed To his own house Glorifying God And they were all amazed And they glorified God And were filled with fear Saying We have seen Strange things today And after these things He went forth And saw a publican Named Levi Sitting at the receipt Of custom And he said unto him Follow me And he left all Rose up And followed him And Levi made him A great feast In his own house And there was a great Company of publicans And of others That sat down With them But their scribes And the Pharisees Murmured against His disciples Saying Why do ye eat And drink With publicans And sinners And Jesus answering Said unto them They that are holy Do not have a physician But they that are sick I came not to call The righteous But sinners

To repentance And they said unto him Why do the disciples Of John fast often And make prayers And likewise The disciples of the Pharisees But thine eat and drink And he said unto them Can ye make the children Of the bride Chamber fast While the bridegroom Is with them But the days will come For the bridegroom Shall be taken away From them And then shall they Fast in those days And he spake also A parable unto them No man putteth a piece Of a new garment Upon an old If otherwise Then both the new Maketh a rent And the piece That was taken Out of the new Agrieth not with the old And no man Putteth new wine Into old bottles Else the new wine Will burst the bottles And be spilt And the bottle Shall perish But new wine Must be put into new bottles And both are preserved No man also Having drunk old wine Straight away Decideth new For he saith The old is better May the Lord bless unto us The reading of that portion Of his word

[23 : 24] We shall now sing From Psalm 86 Psalm 86 at verse 9 All nations Whom thou maids Shall come and worship reverently Before thy face And they O Lord Thy name shall glorify Because thou art exceeding great And works by thee are done Which are to be admired And thou art God Thyself alone Teach me thy way And in thy truth O Lord Then walk will I In my heart And that I thy name May fear continually O Lord my God With all my heart To thee I will give praise And I the glory Will ascribe And to thy name always Because thy mercy Toward me In greatness Doth excel And thou delivered Hast my soul Out from the lowest hell Shall sing these verses To the Lord's praise Psalm 86 Verse 9 to 13 All nations Whom thou maids Shall come And worship reverently

All nations Women All nations Sam alam Freem O Lord, thy name shall glorify, because thou art exceeding it, and works by thee are done, which are to be admired and done, art God thyself alone.

Teach me thy way and in thy truth, O Lord, then walk with thy, unite my heart that I thy name.

They fear continually. O Lord, my God, with all my heart, to thee I will give praise, and I the glory will last die unto thy name always.

Because thy mercy for me, and greatness thou excel, and thou deliverest my soul, art from the lowest hell.

[27 : 11] Amen. Amen. Seeking the Lord's help and blessing, let us turn back to the portion of scripture that we read together, the gospel according to Luke, chapter 5, and at verse 27.

And after these things he went forth and saw a publican named Levi sitting at the receipt of custom, and he said unto him, Follow me.

And he left all, rose up, and followed him. And Levi made him a great feast in his own house, and there was a great company of publicans and of others that sat down with them.

But their scribes and Pharisees murmured against his disciples, saying, Why do you eat and drink with publicans and sinners? And Jesus answering said unto them, They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.

I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. In the early ministry of Jesus, he met all kinds of people.

[28 : 28] Some were poor, some were rich. And he met them in all kinds of circumstances. Some were sick, some were grieving, some were deceased, some were demon-possessed.

And he met them in all kinds of places, by the sea shore, sitting down at dinner, on the street, in the tombs, at the tax office, at the gate of the city, or even at a tree.

Now, as we come to this portion of the gospel of Luke, we find a man named Levi, or better known to us as Matthew.

Now, Matthew is mentioned only eight times in the New Testament. Three of those he is mentioned, as he is here, by the name of Levi.

Now, there are many opinions as to why Matthew bears the name of Levi. We know that Matthew was a Jew.

[29 : 54] There are those that believe that he was of the tribe of Levi. Now, that tribe was a very important tribe in the history of Israel, for it is from them that the priesthood of Israel came.

If that is true, there is every possibility that Matthew was brought up in a very religious fashion.

He would know his Hebrew background. He would know all about the law. He would know all about the prophecies of the Old Testament.

And he would know all about the promises of the Old Testament. However, we also know from the Bible that in the New Testament, that it was not uncommon for people to have two names.

The best example is probably the Apostle Paul, who is also known as Saul. There is no recorded speech of Matthew in the Bible.

[31 : 09] Nevertheless, he has left plenty for us with his pen in his composition of the Gospel that is named after him, the Gospel of Matthew.

Now, the Gospel of Matthew was not the first Gospel to be written. Although it is first, in the order that we have in the New Testament, it was not the first Gospel to be written.

That belongs to the Gospel of Mark, which would have been written ten or so years before the Gospel of Matthew.

So you may ask, well, why is the Gospel of Matthew placed first in the New Testament? Well, the Gospel of Matthew has more Old Testament quotations than any of the other Gospels.

Therefore, it is a fitting transition from the Old Testament to the New Testament. All we know about the family of Matthew is that he was the son of Alphaeus.

[32 : 30] And before his conversion, Matthew was a publican. That is not one who serves alcohol. A publican in biblical times was a tax collector.

They were working for the Roman authorities. And in Palestine, there were three major tax districts. They were Capernaum, Caesarea, and Jericho.

And Matthew's tax office was in Capernaum. Now, the Roman authorities gave us some that they expected to be collected from each district.

But the tax collectors or the publicans very often overtaxed the people. And as long as the Roman authorities received the amount that they expected, they asked nothing about and closed their eyes to the overtaxing of the publicans of the people.

And the publicans, obviously, having overtaxed the people, they would pocket the rest of the money and give to the Roman authorities what was expected.

[33 : 52] And because they worked for the Romans and because of their crookedness, they were despised and looked down upon by the people. They were looked upon as traders who were willing to sell their own nation.

The people grouped them with harlots and with sinners. Sinners, they truly were.

Although the people thought that they were better than the tax collectors, and possibly outwardly, they were. but the plague of the heart was the same.

The plague of the heart was universal among all the people, including the publicans. They all had one basic spiritual need like me and you.

And that need could only be made by Jesus. for without him they were spiritually lost. Matthew could have possibly been rich as many of the tax collectors were and all because of his crookedness.

[35 : 15] He would have all the comforts that money could buy and usually they didn't care about anyone else. He was totally absorbed with the affairs of this world and of this life.

He spends all his time and exalts all his energy in one thing, what he could gain in the world. he has no time to consider the moral and spiritual condition of his own soul.

No vision for eternity. He is totally taken up with this particular moment with no purpose beyond the present and the immediate.

Jesus is in the vicinity of the tax booth but Matthew's only concern is to gather in the taxes and to gain more wealth for himself.

He gives little attention to Jesus. He cares not for him although he is in the vicinity of the tax booth.

[36 : 30] And that brings us to the only incident that we have recorded for us in the life of Matthew or Levi which is his conversion.

And this is our most important incident which is given to us in the gospel named after him and we have it in Matthew we also have it in Mark and we have it in Luke.

In verse 27 we read Matthew records the moment in this way he records this about himself and he says as Jesus passed forth from thence he saw a man named Matthew sitting at the receipt of custom and he saith unto him follow me and he arose and followed him.

Matthew was sitting in his tax booth when Jesus passed by. Now the tax booth was the most unlikely place to be converted.

For a person to be converted in the temple or in the synagogue would not be surprising but for a person to be converted of all places in the hated and despised tax booth was shocking but this goes to show us the great power of Jesus in converting sinners.

[38 : 20] The location of Matthew's conversion does not contradict or exclude the advantages to proclaiming the gospel message in churches but we must remember that in the matter of conversion God is able to effectually call a person from the very gutter of life.

We ought to see ourselves in Matthew for we are by nature all sitting in the tall booth of sin trying to get a smudge for ourselves and not caring much as to how it will affect others and stay in the tall booth of sin.

We will we will not move from it until Jesus intervenes and interrupts.

And here we find Matthew all happy in his tax booth cowed up his money and perhaps offering himself a handsome future with the wealth that he has accumulated at the cost of others and then suddenly Jesus interrupts.

We read he that is Jesus went forth and saw a publican named Levi. As Jesus went forth or as he passed by he saw Matthew or Levi.

[40 : 04] and the synthesis of Jesus going forth or passing by is a concept that we often find across as we come across in the gospels.

We read in the gospel of Luke chapter 19 of another tax collector. He was actually the chief among the tax collectors whose name was Zacchaeus. And somehow he had heard that Jesus was passing through Jericho and there was planted in him a desire to see who Jesus was.

He is so unlike Matthew who had no desire whatsoever to see Jesus. At least Zacchaeus had a desire in his heart to see Jesus.

Maybe he had heard what had happened to Matthew in Capernaum. he left his tax booth and made his way but because he was a small man little of stature he climbed up a tree in order to see Jesus.

And it is recorded for us that after Jesus came to the place you know this gives us does it not a sense of appointment.

[41 : 28] Jesus came to the place and as we go through the Gospels and as we read of the stories that are narrated for us in the Gospels we cannot but see the sovereignty of God.

We'll talk about that in the morning regarding Naomi and Ruth and Boaz. It was no accident.

It wasn't by chance. It wasn't because it was their lucky day. no it was the sovereign hand of God. And we must always lay stress on the sovereignty of God.

It is the sovereignty of God that was there regarding Zacchaeus on that day. Jesus came to the place.

It gives us a sense of appointment and truly it was an appointment with Jesus in grace and in mercy. And so it is also true in the story of Matthew's conversion.

[42 : 47] Although Matthew did not leave the tax booth, there was this fixed appointment for him and for Jesus to meet. And it is the same for me and you tonight again as we stress that in the morning.

it is God's sovereignty that has made me and you meet here tonight. It is God's sovereignty that has made you come to sit here tonight under the sound of the gospel.

It is God's sovereignty that tonight we are reflecting upon this man called Matthew. That's not by accident. It is not by chance.

It is not because we are lucky tonight that we are talking and reflecting upon the conversion of Matthew. It is God's sovereignty. God's sovereignty.

You are here tonight and I am here tonight by God's sovereignty. And we are reflecting tonight on the conversion of Matthew.

[44 : 04] And our hope is that we are here in this appointment with Jesus in the gospel, with Jesus in grace and in mercy.

There is a very special sense in which Jesus is passing by every time the gospel is being presented to you.

Because Jesus is at the heart of the gospel. It is Jesus and him crucified. That is the gospel. It is the gospel of God concerning his son, Jesus Christ.

And every time that the gospel is being declared or proclaimed or preached among you, Jesus is passing by.

For the gospel is Jesus. The gospel is Christ. Now tonight may be the last time that he is passing by in your experience that I know not.

[45 : 19] Not even yourself. Know whether this is the last time that he is passing by in your experience. It has been true of many.

Many who have sat in the very pew where you are sitting and Jesus has passed by in their experience for the last time.

In the case of Zacchaeus if we may just take that up for a moment. Jesus was passing through Jericho. Where was he going? He was going to Golgotha. He was going to the cross.

That was the last time he would pass through Jericho. And Zacchaeus had a desire in his heart to go and see Jesus. So he climbed up the seeking more tree in order to see him.

And by God's sovereign hand they met. They met and Zacchaeus was converted and saved.

[46 : 29] Think of it. If Christ had gone through Jericho and Zacchaeus would have just remained at the tax birth what would have happened.

But he had a desire in his heart to see Jesus. Maybe that is how you are tonight. Maybe you are here and what motivated you to come here you know and the Lord knows.

But maybe and we are hoping that it was a desire to see Jesus. A desire to learn more about Jesus.

A desire to hear the gospel. To hear the gospel. Maybe an expectation has driven you here tonight that you would meet with Jesus in the gospel.

Well that is how it was with Zacchaeus. But what about Matthew? Well he had come and he had no desire whatsoever to see Jesus. Maybe that's you tonight. Maybe you have come to this place with no desire whatsoever to see Jesus.

[47 : 46] With no expectation that the gospel would change your life, your habits. Maybe that is you tonight. Just like Matthew.

Just like Matthew. Matthew. But for Matthew and for Zacchaeus, this was an experience that would change their life.

This was a time of opportunity for Matthew. But the words passing forth or passing by sets before us the sense of urgency and haste that there is concerning the gospel and concerning salvation.

And this is one thing that we might have forgotten. This is one thing that we might have to arouse and stir up ourselves to impress upon people the urgency and the haste that is with the gospel.

This is a matter of great urgency. We are all passing through this world. We don't need to be told that.

[49 : 01] We have the evidence of that. Of young people, old people, rich and poor. Whether we will be on a throne or whether we will be on the rubbish tip, whether we will be a beggar on the street or on the throne, we see that death comes.

to all. Death comes to all. Death equalises us all. Us all. This is a matter of urgency because this has to do with our eternal destination.

Where will I spend eternity? Have you ever asked yourself, where will I spend eternity? A very solemn question and a question that we all should ask ourselves.

Where will I spend eternity? eternity? Yes, we may look at the clock, we may look at our watches and wish that the time was over, or we may be counting the minutes until the service is over.

time is short. Eternity is long. This is a matter of urgency.

[50 : 27] It's a matter concerning your and my eternal destiny. eternity. The gospel always speaks to us with haste and urgency.

The gospel call is always in terms of today and now. Today and now.

Behold, now is a day of salvation. It was indeed a blessed day for Matthew, that day that Jesus met with him, that Jesus interrupted his life.

And dear friend, if you are graceless and Christless tonight, it would indeed be a blessed evening if like Matthew you would meet with Jesus tonight.

That he would come and that he would interrupt your life, that he would interrupt your plans and your thoughts, and would grant you salvation in him and the assurance of heaven after death.

[51 : 41] there is an appointment that we must all keep with Jesus when we shall meet him in judgment. But may it be true of us all that we meet with him before that sure appointment, and that we meet with him in grace and in mercy.

in the case of Zacchaeus, we are told that Jesus looked up and that he saw him and called out. Zacchaeus, make haste and come down for today I must abide at thy house.

In the case of Matthew, Jesus said, follow me. in both cases, it was a personal call.

And the gospel tonight is a personal call to you. It's a personal call to you. Don't think of the person next to you in the pew or the person in front or the person behind.

It is a personal call to you. The gospel is always a personal call. Repent and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.

[53 : 06] It is not merely a personal call but when it comes with power it is an effectual call. And we see here that Matthew did not let this opportunity pass by.

at all. What we read here is and he left all but rose up and followed him.

Three very important steps in his conversion and must be true in my conversion and in your conversion. He left all.

He rose up and he followed him. Oh how many opportunities do we let pass us by?

Perhaps you say well I am not ready. I am not ready. If one is going to get saved when he is or she is ready he or she will probably will never be saved.

[54 : 07] One gets saved when God is ready and he is ready now. for in the parable of the great supper Jesus says to those who are invited come for all things are now ready.

The readiness was executed worked out on the cross of Golgotha. There is the readiness of God displayed for us wherein he can say now all things are now ready.

You come. You come. Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest.

If Matthew wanted an excuse for not obeying the command to follow he could have. I am sure he could have found one.

How many excuses have you given to an invitation or the command of the gospel to follow Jesus. We'll read that Matthew arose and while this speaks of the physical arising of Matthew from this tax booth yet it symbolizes something much greater and that is a spiritual rising.

[55 : 35] For Matthew rose up to follow Jesus. In the parable of the prodigal son with which I hope most of us are familiar we read of all his resolutions.

The prodigal son made a lot of resolutions. He said I will arise and go to my father and will say to him father I have sinned against heaven and before thee I am no more worthy to be called thy son make me as one of thy higher servants.

And you know this he would have remained there if it wasn't for the fact that we read and he arose and came to his father.

Friend make sure that you are not lulling yourself into a false security of salvation and resting upon your resolutions. One day I'll think about it.

One day I might turn to the Lord. One day I might follow the Lord. It is not convenient for me tonight. It is not convenient for me at this time. but I will one day.

[56 : 40] I will one day. Many have sat where you are sitting and they made the same resolutions and they are lost tonight because they remain where they were.

You see salvation requires obedience. In the case of the prodigal he arose and came to his father. And so here we read in Matthew that he arose and that he followed Jesus.

As we already noted it was a personal call. It was an effectual call. What is an effectual call? Well let us hear how the catechism puts it. Effectual calling is the work of God's spirit whereby convincing us of our sin and misery enlightening our minds in the knowledge of Christ and renewing our wills he doth persuade and enable us to embrace Jesus Christ freely offered to us in the gospel.

Matthew became convinced that he needed Jesus. Have you come to that place where you are convinced that you need Jesus, that you need his salvation?

Luke records for us here that Matthew left all, he rose up and he followed him. Luke tells us that Matthew followed Jesus, he uses an active participle which indicates a continuous ongoing action.

[58 : 15] He kept on following Jesus. There is in the highlands a word there that when people are converted and committed to Christ we say they have begun to follow.

They are following. That's a phrase that was very common in the highlands and the islands. You know it's a lovely phrase because that is exactly what happens when a person is converted.

That person is following Jesus. Just like Matthew. And it is a continuous following. following. It is following for the rest of one's life.

Even in heaven it is following Jesus. Following the shepherd who is leading us to the fountains of living water.

It is a continuous following. This was not for a day or a week but for the rest of his life. And notice how Matthew was willing to give sacrificially for Jesus Christ.

[59 : 23] That's a very important thing. Notice what it says. He left all. He left the tax booth. With all that money that was there.

He had accumulated with his crookedness. It was all left there. All the money. He left all. He sacrificed everything to following Jesus.

Maybe that's your problem tonight. You are not willing to sacrifice anything for Jesus. You're saying, well, I'm living a good life.

I'm living a good life. I haven't got time. I'm so busy. My time is taken up with so many things. I just can't give time.

I can't give time. I can't give my time to this gospel and to this following Jesus. You're not willing to sacrifice. any amount of your time to follow Jesus.

[60 : 25] Matthew sacrificed all. He left the money. He left the tax booth. He left where he was accumulating so much wealth.

He left it all. Sacrificial. We must be willing to give sacrificially to Christ.

There was no holding back with Matthew. He went all the way for Jesus. How willing are we to give sacrificially to the Lord of our time. Of our time.

We're reading the gospel of John about a woman named Mary of Bethany. That she did what she could. She gave her best to the Lord.

There was no reluctance in Mary to give to the Lord that which had cost her so much which was precious to her when she anointed the head and the feet of our Lord.

[61 : 26] With that spagnard ointment. A very costly ointment. But she went and she broke it and she poured it upon Jesus. Oh how willing are we to give to the Lord that which is costly and precious to us.

In the day of Malachi the Lord complained for his people kept the best of their flock from offering it to the Lord. Instead they came with the torn and the lame and the sick and offered these things to the Lord.

Doesn't that leave me and you with some soul searching? Do we come with the torn and the lame and the sick and offer it to the Lord? Or do we give to the Lord what is costly and precious to us?

Do we give to the Lord the few minutes that is left of our time? Matthew left all behind.

He was a tax collector. He was a corrupt business man. But once he saw Jesus, he left all. That which would have made him extremely worthy, he left it all.

[62 : 36] Could he not have become an honest tax collector, you ask? Well, Jesus knew the plague that was in his heart. And he knows the plague that is in my heart, in your heart, in the heart of all men.

And he knew that the tax booth was a place of temptation. It would be a place of temptation for Matthew. So he called, follow me. And Matthew shunned it all.

And he followed to Jesus. Here is an example for us that all Christians here tonight know an experience, and that is irresistible grace.

Grace enables us to take Jesus and to follow Jesus as he is offered to us in the gospel. All resistance is broken down by irresistible grace.

Do you know that by experience? Well, there are some of us who do know it by experience. For a long time we resisted. For a long time we found our excuses.

[63 : 42] For a long time we weren't willing to sacrifice. But then grace touched us. Irresistible grace. And our resistance was broken down.

You know, it is not merely grace that is offered to us in the gospel. You know, it is a person. What I am offering you tonight is a person called Jesus. And it is Jesus that people resist when the gospel invitation is presented to them.

It is not the preacher that you resist, but it is Jesus that you resist. It is Jesus that you neglect.

It is Jesus that you shun. Not the preacher, but Jesus. That's how solemn the situation is. Oh, are you tonight, are you saying, I see no beauty in him, that I should decide him.

No beauty in him. So a sinner needs to be enabled and persuaded to come to Jesus. The problem is not that there is no beauty in Jesus.

[64 : 56] The problem is with the sinner in our inability to see the beauty and respond to it, to see the beauty that there is in Jesus. That's one of the consequences of our sin, our inability to see the beauty that there is in Jesus.

To see the beauty that there is in salvation. That is why we need the Holy Spirit, because the Holy Spirit is the only one that will convince us and show us the beauty in Christ.

It's not the gimmicks that we need that is so much presented with the gospel today. That's not what we need. What we need is the outpouring of the Holy Spirit to convict, to convince us, to enable us, to persuade us, to accept Jesus into our lives and to follow him.

To be relieved from the bondage that we are in, that the barriers should be removed, that our understanding may be enlightened, and that Jesus becomes irresistible to us.

We cannot go on without him. Matthew left all. He left the tax booth, left the door.

[66 : 27] He arose and he followed Jesus. And we read in verse 29, And Levi made him a great feast in his own house, and there was a great company of publicans and of others that sat down with him.

In following Jesus, Matthew's great concern was to reach others. So he gave him a feast. He made this feast for Jesus in his own home.

If there is one place that evidenced genuineness in salvation just in the home, a person can be one thing in public, but at home, the real you is where you are seen.

Matthew was not only following Jesus in public, but he was following Jesus in his home. He was no secret disciple of Jesus, for we read that there was a great company of publicans and others that sat down with them.

He wanted to share his faith openly for he knew many other tax collectors. So he invites them along to the feast as a way of introducing them to Jesus because he was obviously burdened for their souls.

[67 : 38] However, there were the critics. So we read, but the scribes and you eat and drink with publicans and sinners. Their criticism showed their opposition to the conversion of Matthew.

And wherever there is conversion, there is always opposition. If you decide to follow Jesus, there will be opposition. There will be opposition.

The criticism showed their opposition to the conversion of Matthew, but also to the outward with which Matthew was involved. And Jesus responded to and exposed these critics of what they were.

He said, they that are holy do not a position but they that are seen. I came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance. Jesus in being present at the feast, prepared by Matthew and eating and drinking with the kids was not sanctioning worldliness or lack of separation from the world.

what he was doing was he was not socializing or associating or mixing with sinners to enter in and encourage their sin.

[68 : 54] What he was doing was he was telling sinners about the gospel just as a physician has to deal with sick people to help them to get well.

To help them to get well. Well, Matthew's conversion from the tax book teaches us never to despair of our own or anyone else's salvation.

He is able to save to the uttermost. Matthew's response leads us with a great question of our response to the invitation of Jesus and also what we are doing to reach sinners outside the church.

Here we find Jesus that he reached out to the socially undesirable and he healed the spiritually unhealthy.

He left all. He arose and he followed him. Now, friend, this is a most urgent matter.

[70 : 06] Your eternal destiny is a most urgent matter. Where you will spend eternity, whether in heaven or in hell, depends totally upon your relationship with God.

God, whether you have been reconciled to God through the death of his son, Jesus Christ, whether you are at peace with God through the death of his son, Jesus Christ, at the judgment seat of God, of Jesus Christ, you cannot turn round and say, I never heard.

You cannot say, it was not enough. You have heard, you have been told, you have been invited, you have seen the work of God's grace in the lives of others.

You cannot blame God. if you die graceless, you cannot blame God.

You cannot say to God, it was not enough. God did the most precious thing and the greatest thing that any could ever do.

[71 : 40] He sent his son, the son of his bosom. He sent him into the world. And not only did he send his son, but the Bible tells us that he delivered him up to the cross of Golgotha.

And not only that, but the Bible tells us something else, that he laid on his own son, his beloved son, the son of his bosom, that he laid on him the iniquities of us all.

What does that mean? That he laid upon his own son what my sins and your sins deserve. And now he's asking us to commit ourselves to his son, to leave all, to rise up, and to follow Jesus.

us. Well, what are you going to do? Are you going to stay where you are? Or are you going to leave or rise up and follow Jesus?

us? I ask the question, you'll answer the question, and whatever your answer has been, I'll never know, but God knows.

[73 : 09] He knows how you have answered that question in your heart now. What has it been? You know, and he knows. May the Lord bless our thoughts let us pray.

eternal and ever blessed God, we thank thee for the gospel. We thank thee that tonight the great invitation has gone forth once again, and we pray that through the enabling of thine own Holy Spirit, that there would be those who would respond, who would leave all, rise up, and follow thee.

We ask, O Lord, that they would continue with us in the coming days, and forgive us for all our sins, in Jesus' name. Amen. We shall conclude by singing to the Lord's praise from Psalm 16 at verse 6.

Unto me happily the lions in pleasant places fell, yea, the inheritance I got in beauty doth excel. I bless the Lord because he doth by counsel me conduct, and in the season of the night my reins to me instruct.

We shall sing from verse 6 to verse 9 of Psalm 16 to the praise of God. Unto me happily the the lines in pleasant places fell. I am here as unto me happily the in pleasant I am blessed, the Lord, because he does.

[75 : 16] I counsel me, God, and in the cities of the night, I will be strong.

Behold me still, the Lord, I bless you.

It is all I am, the Lord, I will be strong.

But my right hand, I shall not give me the name.

Because of this, my heart is glad, and joy shall be expressed.

[76 : 43] Even by my glory and my flesh, in confidence shall rest.

Amen.