

Advancing and Growing in the Essential Gospel

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[0 : 00] Let's take our Bibles, or you can take your devices, and turn to the book of Acts, chapter 15, Acts 15.

If you're visiting with us, if you pull that black Bible out in the chair in front of you, go towards the back, find page 106, 106.

Acts chapter 15, we're going to start verse 36, and then we'll go into chapter 16 as well, through verse 10.

So 1536, we'll finish chapter 15, and then we'll go into chapter 16 through verse 10. Again, page 106 in that black Bible.

I'm going to read the passage, then we'll begin our study. And after some days, Paul said to Barnabas, Let's return and visit the brethren in every city, in which we proclaim the word of the Lord, and see how they are.

[1 : 15] And Barnabas was desirous of taking John, called Mark, along with them also. But Paul kept insisting that they should not take him along, and deserted them in Pamphylia, and not gone with them to the work.

And there arose such a sharp disagreement that they separated from one another. And Barnabas took Mark with him, and sailed away to Cyprus. But Paul chose Silas and departed, being committed by the brethren to the grace of the Lord.

And he was traveling through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches. Chapter 16. And he came also to Derbe and to Lystra. And behold, a certain disciple was there named Timothy, the son of a Jewish woman who was a believer.

But his father was a Greek. And he was well spoken of by the brethren who were in Lystra and Iconium. Paul wanted this man to go with them. And he took him and circumcised him, because of the Jews who were in those parts.

For they all knew that his father was a Greek. Now while they were passing through the cities, they were delivering the decrees, which had been decided upon by the apostles and elders who were in Jerusalem, for them to observe.

[2 : 18] So the churches were being strengthened in the faith. And were increasing in number daily. And they passed through the Phrygian and Galatian region, having been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia.

And when they had come to Mysia, they were trying to go in Mithynia. And the Spirit of Jesus did not permit them. And passing by Mysia, they came down to Troas.

And a vision appeared to Paul in the night. A certain man of Macedonia was standing and appealing to him and saying, Come over to Macedonia and help us. And when he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go into Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.

Western Union. Did you know that Western Union dominated the telegraph industry in the late 19th century? Actually, it's the first communications empire.

It was the first communications empire. And it set a pattern for American style communications businesses as they are known today. Now most people may know some of those facts.

[3 : 32] But most people probably are more familiar with Western Union today. Because they think of the cash advance, right? Their business that they provide for their customers.

And most people probably remember the little commercials that they have on TV of getting the cash advance from a grandma. Grandma, I need money. Please advance it to me. You know, the first question.

Only pay \$5. You can send up to this amount of money, right? That's what people know Western Union for that. The idea is that the customer presents the funds, they give the recipient's name, and then they give the destination.

Then they actually give them a control number. The recipient gives that number, a photo ID, and the money is just to sit there and pay it out. Unless it's over a certain amount, then they give them a check. Simple to advance money to somebody like that.

Advance means to move forward. Advance means to go forward. Advance. To make progress. We make progress.

[4 : 33] Or to advance forward money. How does that work itself into the church? Does it work itself in the church? How do we move forward?

In what do we move forward? What should be progressing? What do we want to advance? What do we want to move forward?

What do we want to continue to make progress in the church? Well, really, there's only two things. Actually, one. As we look at this part in the book of Acts, just do it.

Be who you are. Let God use you to fulfill His mission. We see in our text this morning, advancing and growing in the essential gospel.

The gospel. The gospel. It's the gospel. We want to advance the gospel and we want to grow in the gospel. That's what we want to do.

[5 : 29] That's what we want to advance. That's what God wants to do. That's what God wants to advance. That's what God wants a church to grow in. The gospel. I'll give you a few statements.

Advancing and growing in the essential gospel. God wants gospel advancing and gospel growing churches. That's what He wants. So how can we sum up this text?

God wants gospel advancing and gospel growing churches. A bit longer statement. God wants churches to advance the gospel. And be strengthened in the gospel.

He does whatever it takes to bring the progress of His word and the growth of His people. He'll do whatever it takes to do that. Because the church, the local church, is the primary way God displays His glory in the world.

It's in the church. Because we are the reflection of Jesus Christ. So of course God wants the advancement of the gospel to spread throughout the whole earth.

[6 : 40] And He wants individual churches to grow in that gospel that they're proclaiming. Which I think is quite interesting. I thought about that yesterday. Going through my message.

And I went, oh, that's kind of neat. We're talking about advancing the gospel. We're talking about growing in the gospel. And the very thing that we celebrated yesterday. The reformation.

Is about the rediscovery of the gospel. That's really cool. That flows together in our passage. The timing on the calendar. Here's something I want to kind of expand.

What does it mean to advance the gospel? And what does it mean to grow in the gospel? Advance the gospel means that because of God's great grace given to us, we joyfully speak this news of grace to others out of love for the Lord Jesus and the people who don't trust Him.

So God's been so gracious to us. He's forgiven us. So we want to speak this news of grace. And we're so motivated by our love for Christ and our love for people who don't know Him.

[7 : 51] Our love for people who don't worship Him. That's what it means to advance the gospel. So we speak the good news. We speak the news of grace.

Now what does it mean to grow in the gospel? See, normally people think, well, the gospel is for non-believers. We're past that now. No.

What does it mean to grow in the gospel? Growing in the gospel means we remember we're saints. We still sin. But have an advocate through whom we have complete forgiveness.

We also know now we have freedom and power to live holy lives. And then we show that same grace and forgiveness that's been given to us in Jesus Christ.

We show that same grace and forgiveness towards each other. See, I always have the gospel in my mind. Because when I sin, Jim, you shouldn't have done that.

[8 : 54] Ward, you shouldn't have done that. Exactly. But praise God, Jesus Christ died for that sin. Right? And then I have the power, the transforming power for God to change me.

So I repent. I trust in Jesus. God changed me. And then when someone sins against me, I'm thinking about the gospel still because they sin against me. I'm like, oh, how could Daniel do that to me? But I'm forgiving him.

Because Jesus has forgiven me of all my sins. See, that's how you're growing in the gospel. The gospel is always, always coming to our minds as Christians. So if you're a Christian here and you say, well, the gospel is just for non-believers or new believers.

No, it's for you. That's the only thing that's going to motivate you to bring forgiveness. The only thing that's going to bring you to a place where you have motivation and you have the power to live how God's called us to live.

And you remember that the very thing you did wrong, the things you've done wrong just this morning, that's why Jesus had to die. We have an advocate, Jesus Christ, the righteous one, who is the propitiation for some of our sins.

[10 : 02] He's the propitiation for all of our sins. Past, present, future. That's what it means to advance the gospel. That's what it means to grow in the gospel.

And in our passage today, this is what we see happening. This is God's, He will do whatever it takes to bring this about. Even, even a disagreement between two very godly gifted men.

Interesting. Because you come to verse 36 and 40, we're talking about advancing the gospel, we're talking about growing the gospel. Well, how does this fit? Let's start at verse 36.

Some days, Paul said to Barnabas, Hey, let's go back and visit the brethren in the city which we proclaim the word of the Lord. Let's see how they're doing.

How they fare. How are these new converts doing in these new churches? And then we can deliver that gruesome letter where the gospel is essential. Everything else is non-essential.

[11 : 10] What's essential is the fact that God is just. We deserve His judgment. Jesus was sent to live, die. He resurrected from the dead.

Repent and trust Jesus alone. You'll be saved. That gospel is essential. So let's deliver that to these churches. And let's encourage them to see how they're doing.

Verse 37. Barnabas wanted to take John. Called Mark. 38. Paul kept insisting they should not take him along who deserted them in Phamphilia and had not gone with them to the work.

You remember that, right? From chapter 13 into 14. That first missionary journey. John Mark left. He went back to Jerusalem.

So Barnabas wanted to take him. Paul said, no way. Literally, he did not count it wise. Because he ditched us in Phamphilia. He wasn't sticking around for the work.

[12 : 13] Now, Barnabas didn't want to take John Mark just because he was his cousin. He was, John Mark was his cousin. Not just that. But Barnabas was just the son of encouragement, right? He was just an encouraging guy.

You don't have to be around Barnabas. That's the kind of guy he was. But as far as Paul was concerned, Mark could not be trusted. He didn't finish what he started. The stakes were too high. We're in leadership now.

This is important. By the way, reconciliation between Paul and Mark happened in Philemon verse 24. And even in 2 Timothy chapter 4, Paul said to Timothy, send John Mark because he's really helpful in my ministry.

Well, notice what happens. There arose a sharp disagreement that they separated from one another and Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed away to Cyprus.

But Paul chose Silas and departed. Things got pretty heated. The nuance of the words there, sharp disagreement, implies anger, irritation, exasperation.

[13 : 26] In the major disagreement. Now, they did agree on one thing. They split up. That's what they agreed on. Barnabas took Mark to Cyprus.

That was his hometown. And we don't hear about Barnabas again in the book of Acts. The friends separated. They agreed on the strategy of revisiting the churches.

The newly planted churches strengthened and encouraged them, but they disagreed on who to take. And we're going to see the churches were strengthened, encouraged, new churches planted, probably in Cyprus.

And there's something good. Instead of one missions team, now there's two. Church tradition says Barnabas stayed in Cyprus, dying there as an old man.

And as I said to you earlier, Mark was called by Paul to go to Rome. I guess things are not always peachy keen in a local church, eh? This refutes the charge that Luke was trying to portray a perfect church.

[14 : 31] Oh, glorious. Let's go on a mission trip. Okay. Locking arms down the yellow brick road. Doesn't happen that way, does it?

Sometimes, good comes out of sharp disagreements. And when it comes to leaders in ministry, there's a certain expectation for the gospel to be advanced and church to grow in the gospel.

God uses even a sharp disagreement among brothers to bring about the fulfillment of His mission of advancing the gospel and strengthening and encouraging local churches in the gospel.

He will even use this sharp disagreement to bring it about. Because that's what you'll see in the text. Notice actually verse 40.

Paul chose Silas, departed. It was committed by the brethren to the grace of the Lord. Now if I can say just a couple words about Silas, he was an important guy.

[15 : 32] He was a Roman citizen, a prophet, and he was one of the emissaries sent from Jerusalem to encourage the churches of Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia about the essential gospel.

So he was important. He was vital. He represented, Silas represented the unity of the church in the gospel to keep it essential and allowing other things to be non-essential. So he was vital in being able to be that person to be with Paul.

Interesting how God worked that out to show that there's one purpose between Jerusalem and the mission sending church of Antioch.

We're one together in the gospel, the essential gospel. Everything else is non-essential. Silas was important. So they were commended by the church in Antioch to go out again in the grace of God.

Was Barnabas commended? Was this bad on Paul's part? Was he just being pig-headed?

[16 : 41] Was Barnabas being pig-headed? The text doesn't say. The text just kind of gives you the facts of what happened.

It doesn't sway you, so to speak, either way. But this is what we do know. We do know the gospel advance anyways in spite of the major disagreement between these two very gifted leaders.

That's how this part fits. And it moves us into the second missionary journey of Paul. This is how it fits.

But what's most important between these two gifted leaders that had a disagreement, what's most important is that the gospel is advanced and churches grow in the gospel. Now let's move into that. Because that's what we end up seeing here first.

gospel advancement. Chapter 16, verses 1 through 3, and then we'll shoot over to verse 6 through verse 10. 1 through 3 came to Derbe, Lystra.

[17 : 45] A certain disciple was there named Timothy, son of a Jewish woman who was a believer, but his father was a Greek. He was well spoken of by the brethren who were Lystra and Iconian. So notice how Paul focuses upon Paul and Barnabas here on their missionary journey.

They meet Timothy. good reputation among the believers. Paul wanted to take him along, but notice his father was a Greek. His mom was actually a Jew, but she was a Jewish Christian.

But he wasn't circumcised. So it means his father was not just Jewish, but he was also not a believer. So notice verse 3, Paul wanted this man to go with him and he took him and circumcised him because the Jews were in those parts where they all knew what?

Hold on a second. Paul had him circumcised. I thought we just were talking about the essence of the gospel. I thought we were just talking about how the gospel was essential.

I thought we were just talking about how Paul thought that the gospel was very essential and was the essential part of the church and everything else was non-essential like circumcision. What's going on?

[18 : 55] This is confusing. Didn't Paul agree with the Jerusalem conference in chapter 15? Yeah, of course he did.

He knew salvation was by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone. He knew that. And he was sensitive to the mixed community. He was sensitive to the mixed community of Jews and Gentiles.

Mixed marriages were forbidden in Judaism. But when it did happen the children were to be raised as Jews but for some reason Timothy was not raised as a Jew because he wasn't circumcised. So actually he would be considered by Jews as apostate.

They wouldn't want anything to do with Timothy. So why does Paul have him circumcised? With a desire to reach out and evangelize Jews and out of respect for them Paul had Timothy circumcised.

See it's one thing to have disagreements among leaders it's another thing to do or not to do things on behalf of those who are weaker or immature. Paul did this so that the gospel can advance.

[20 : 06] He didn't want anything to get in the way. This gives us proof as well not to mention this. Paul didn't abandon his commitment to Judaism himself.

Nor did he insist that Jews should throw away the law of Moses. He just did not believe he should put that burden upon Gentiles that they should be saved by circumcision or saved by following the law of Moses.

See friends Paul was sensitive when it came to non-believers but strong when it came to leaders or with mature believers he was strong with that because he knew it was about advancing the gospel.

we should not do anything that's going to hamper the advancement of the gospel. We need God's wisdom to know which principles are worth standing for and which ones we should just let go.

Not every issue is worth fighting over. we should talk about this mountains versus molehills.

[21 : 20] What are the mountains? What is the mountain? The gospel. Now granted some molehills are bigger than others. I understand that. Some molehills are like that big.

Some molehills are like this big. But they're not big in comparison to mountains. anything that may or can hinder the gospel and the unity of the gospel in a local church that's worth fighting over.

That's worth fighting for. All other issues are debatable like circumcision. We want to see the gospel progress.

We want to see us grow in the gospel. And see notice if there's a legalistic standard that I have that you must abide by guess what I just kicked out the door?

The gospel. Because God has been so gracious to me and yet when we're judging someone else when I'm judging you or I'm judging you or I'm judging you guess what I'm doing?

[22 : 37] I'm not showing you grace. I just kicked the gospel out the door. See? That's how the gospel changes us.

That's how the gospel grows us. That's how we grow in the gospel. And that's how we also advance the gospel. what is most important to God when it comes to a local church?

Music. We should sing hymns. We should sing praise choruses. We should have a band. We should have a dorky guy who plays guitar.

That's how we play guitar. That's how we play guitar. What's most important to God when it comes to a local church? The advancement of the gospel growing in the gospel.

That's what's important to God. And God will do whatever it takes to have these two elements succeed in a local church where He is Lord.

[23 : 36] This is what He wants leaders to focus on. He wants leaders to focus on the gospel. And I'll tell you it's hard. It's not easy.

We're not talking about it being easy. The process is simple. It's not easy. That's where that stinking little flesh rears its ugly head, right?

Notice, now drop over to verse 6. Notice how God is so committed to this. It passed through the Phrygian and Galatian region. Have it been forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia?

Well, that's weird. I'm not exactly sure where this was. Seems like Asia, here's talking about the Roman province of Asia, not Asia.

When we think of Asia, we think of China, Japan. That's what we think of, right? You've got to think of actually the Roman province, Asia. If you're looking at a map, looking at Turkey today, kind of going east this way.

[24 : 40] Spirit forbid them to go that way. wherever this was, they're definitely prevented from doing this. Well, how did God do this?

Through Silas, as a prophet, a vision, the text doesn't say that, an audible voice, what are you doing? What's the matter with you?

We don't know. We don't know, we're not told, Luke doesn't tell us. Whatever happened, it's pretty clear. You can't do that.

You're not going that way, you're going this way. By the way, this is a side note. Can I graciously say this?

God does not audibly speak to people today. It's very dangerous when people say, God told me. I mean, you may think you're receiving like a prompting, a feeling.

[25 : 46] I think God's directing me to do this or that. But please, let's be careful. We don't say God told me. It's almost like pulling a card out.

Like I had somebody say, you know, God told me to plant this church. Oh, well, in that case, I guess we can't really do anything about it. That's what happens, right? Well, should we do this?

I don't know. Well, God told me we're supposed to do that. Oh, okay, well, then I guess we're supposed to do that. You see what I mean? I mean, that could be very dangerous. You want to know why? There's these people, part of this group, ISIS, you ever heard of them?

No, you probably haven't. They say the same thing about killing you. God told us to kill you. You see what I mean? It becomes kind of scary.

We should be careful when we're saying God told me. Maybe just the pizza didn't agree with you last night. You know what I mean? Maybe it's just that chocolate was just not good chocolate.

[26 : 48] That pizza was just not good pizza. Maybe something like that. Let's be careful when we're saying God told me. Anyways, we're not told how this happens.

Well, notice what takes place in verse 7 and 8. They had come to Mysia. They were trying to go to Bithynia. And the Spirit of Jesus did not permit them to do that either. Well, that's kind of a weird statement.

When was the last time you saw the Spirit of Jesus? Actually, it's in Romans chapter 8, which seems like he's talking another phrase used for the Holy Spirit. But again, how did he do that? Did a big old hand come out?

Don't do that. Whoa. How do you know? They hit it. There's a force field. We can't get by. I don't know. I know I'm silly. But seriously, how do we do that?

We don't know. What is apparent, though, is that the exalted Lord Jesus directed the progress of the gospel through his Spirit. Notice verse 8, passing by Mysia, it came down to Troas.

[27 : 54] And a vision appeared to Paul in the night. Troas, this is the northwestern tip of Asia Minor. It is near Troy, the historic city of Troy.

They're heading west. They're heading west, due west. So definitely notice there's a vision that happens, because the text says it. A vision appeared to Paul in the night.

A certain man in Macedonia was standing and appealing to him and saying, come over to Macedonia and help us. So Paul sees this vision, asking for help, i.e., bring the message of salvation to us.

Macedonia is like northern modern Greece area. This was God's clear direction through a vision given to Paul. And did you notice something here, verse 10, and when he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go into Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel.

Notice the we. First it's going they, now it's we. In other words, it seems like this time, Luke jumps on board. So now he's, I'm in it with him.

[29 : 02] Now we went to this place and we started to go to Macedonia. We took that as God wants to preach the gospel. So now Luke's in. Now these visions were rare, unexpected, unusual forms of God's guidance.

Unfortunately some people today expect God to give them a vision which is very unhealthy and abiblical, because we have God's completed canon of his word. God speaks to you here. But notice what's very crystal clear friends, God is giving direction to Paul and Silas where he wanted them to go and proclaim the gospel.

We make plans, but God may change those plans according to his will and purpose. And they eventually preached the gospel in Asia, but just not at that time. Notice it says in verse 10, concluding God called us to preach the gospel, they immediately obeyed the vision.

God wanted them to proclaim the gospel in Macedonia. So we make our strategies for evangelism and outreach, but we trust God's direction for most.

It was God's call for them to evangelize. It was God's direction for them to do this. God wanted his gospel to advance. And this is how he was doing it.

[30 : 21] Now a question for you. How does God want you to advance the gospel? a spouse, one of your kids, a neighbor, an in-law, a close relative, a dear friend, a co-worker?

How can you strategize that? How can you think about, God, how do you want me to advance the gospel? How do you want me to speak the gospel in this person's life? How do you want me to do this?

God's doing that for us in this church as we pray for the people of Jerome. God would plant a church in Jerome.

Please pray for us in Jerome. Please pray for Jerome. And are you here today? You're not a follower of the Lord Jesus. But maybe the gospel needs to advance in your life.

The gospel is God is a just God and he must judge us because we are sinners. We've broken his law. But God the Father sent God the Son, the eternal Son, who lived a perfect life, the perfect life, was crucified on the cross as a substitute for sinners and yet was resurrected from the dead for all those who turn away from their sin and put their trust in Jesus alone.

[31 : 46] That's the gospel. You can right now in your chair, you can even see your sin and say, Father, I turn from my sin, I put my trust in Jesus Christ.

You can even do that just right now and you would become a Christian, a follower of Jesus. So gospel advancement. Now let's move into our second point, which will be a little bit faster than this, yet still important.

Gospel growth. Gospel growth. 1541, just hitting that a little bit, he was traveling through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches. Now into verse 4 and 5, they're passing through the cities, they're delivering the decrees which had been decided upon by apostles and elders who were in Jerusalem for them to observe.

The decision from the Jerusalem conference is what Luke is talking about. The fact that you didn't have to become a Jew. to be a Christian. What a huge, huge relief it was not to have to become Jews to be a part of God's new community.

I mean, they brought strength to these churches, gave them such great joy. Verse 5, so the churches were being strengthened in the faith and were increasing in a number daily. They were strengthened in the faith. That is the truth of the gospel.

[33 : 08] It was by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone. This resolution brought renewed confidence to the churches, as well as a strong, gracious boldness in their evangelism.

Oh, what a relief! What a relief! This was huge. These churches were so encouraged that the gospel, the good news, is a salvation by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone.

So they were growing in the gospel. They were strengthened in the faith, strengthened in the gospel. So let's unpack that. What does that mean? We started talking about that earlier.

Growing in the gospel means, remember, we're saints who still sin but have an advocate through whom we have received complete forgiveness. We have the freedom and the power to live holy lives, and we can show that same grace and forgiveness towards each other.

So, specifically, Christians grow in and by the gospel, by repenting of that sin, and trusting in the person and finished work of Jesus Christ, knowing that God has given us a spirit through whom we can conquer sin in our lives, endure suffering, minister to God's people, as well as freely give that same forgiveness to others.

[34 : 29] That's how we grow in. That's how we grow by the gospel. Because we go back to the fact that, yes, I did that.

Yes, that was me, but that's why Jesus had to die. Praise God, I have the transforming power to change me and to be a different person, and God is working in me. And praise God that I'm given grace to show that same grace to others.

That's how I'm growing in the gospel. God's grace to God. So, friend, do you need to remind yourself of God's grace this morning?

Of His deep love for you and His eternal Son? Do you need the hope of His enduring grace in your struggle with sin? Your struggle with pain?

Or in ways you can serve others? Yes, you do. You need that reminder. As a matter of fact, we'll do even better. We'll give you a tangible reminder. Something that you can taste.

[35 : 32] Something that you can touch. We're going to partake of the Lord's Supper. That's why we do that. It points us to the gospel, which is the means of grace by which we grow.

Because I'm reminded that, I'm reminded of God's grace to me. I'm reminded of God's great love for me in the bread and the juice, which represents His body, or which represents His shed blood.

I'm reminded of that truth. I'm reminded of forgiveness. I'm reminded of His transforming power. I'm reminded of the fact that I can give that same grace to others. That's why we do it.

Look, if a true church is not focused upon these two elements, advancing the gospel and growing in the gospel, then God will discipline that church by just letting it do its own thing. Just kind of, or by shutting it down. He will not allow His name to be profaned. See, when doctrinal and practical issues are resolved in a local church, the gospel advances and the church grows.

[36 : 44] God will divinely guide His church so that the gospel advances and local churches grow in the faith and in their numbers. But in that order, you notice the order of the text.

The gospel is advancing. They're strengthened in the faith and then they're increasing in number. In that order. We must be ready to allow our own plans to be frustrated in order to discover the different opportunities God has in mind for us as His people.

Our strategies for missions are important, but they're limited. And don't worry, though God does not give us visions or dreams or things like that today, He will make it very clear where He wants us to go, what He wants us to do.

He just wants us to be obedient, right? And praise God, He gives us the grace to be obedient in the gospel. We must trust in God's sovereign overruling in our endeavors, intervening as much as He wants to, so He can bring the progress of His word and the growth of His people.

That's what He wants for you. Maybe that's why you're suffering. Maybe that's why you're struggling with that sin. Because He wants the growth.

[38 : 01] He wants you to struggle and to grow, so that way you cling to Christ and cling to the gospel even more. Because He wants the gospel to advance, and He wants you to grow in the gospel.

That's what's important to God. The gospel. Grace. It's important. So let's take initiatives for the gospel.

Plan wisely, and let His gracious love for us be our motivation to seek the lost, trusting God to open our closed roads as He sees fit. So He can advance the gospel in your life, advance the gospel in this church, and have you personally grow in the gospel, and have this church grow in the gospel.

That's important to God, the gospel of grace. Let's take a few moments of silence. Take a few moments of silence if you would, so you can ponder what we've seen in God's word.

You can remind yourself of the gospel of grace. Remind yourself of His forgiveness. Remind yourself of His reconciliation He's brought about into the Lord Jesus Christ. So take a few moments for have some time of silence.

[39 : 11] We'll have our time of giving. I think then at that point I'll give us some instructions for the Lord's Supper.

Then we'll sing a song in preparation for that. Let's sit, ponder, and think. Let's sit, ponder, and