

A Thankful Ministry

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[0 : 00] Take your Bibles this morning toward the book of 1 Thessalonians, 1 Thessalonians this morning.! Looking at a thankful ministry.

Paul was thankful for many things that took place there at Thessalonica. Even though he was there just a short time, just a few days really, not even a full month he was there.

But the impact was great. And it had such a change in people's lives and what took place. And we saw though that the believers there at Thessalonica had faced opposition as soon as they trusted Christ.

You know, we know from Acts chapter 17 that persecution arrived on the doorstep of a man by the name of Jason, his house. And he was assaulted by both Jews and his fellow citizens of the city.

And we understand that even though that had happened, it didn't stop them from continuing to serve the Lord. It didn't hold them back from what God had called them to do.

[1 : 28] They didn't stop in their tracks and turn around. Instead, the Bible tells us that they turned to the Lord and they turned away from idols. They turned away from that which was before to what they have now in Christ.

And Paul tells us and reminds us that he's thankful for that. And the example that was witnessed through those things of enduring the provocation.

You know, I want you to understand, we're going to look at it a little bit today. But I want you to know that if you stand with the Lord, there's going to be opposition. Because this world, there's only two sides that take place in this world.

You're either with the Lord or against the Lord. There's not an option of saying, I'm in the middle. You know, we like to have that idea today. Why? I'm in the middle. You hear a lot about, you know, even people politically.

You know, why I'm in the middle? It's like, well, there's certain things you can't be in the middle on. You know, that you have to take a stand on one side or the other. And when it comes to eternity, the reality is you must be on the Lord's side or you're not.

[2 : 37] When we understand that division that takes place, it's going to cause conflict. Division always causes conflict. And we're going to see as Paul does that, talks about that here today.

I want you to see though that he's thankful because when conflict, when persecution, when challenges come, how we respond to that, what we look to, what we put our faith in is important.

To say, what am I going to trust? You know, what am I going to put my faith in? And so we're going to look here this morning and see something that caused Paul and Silas to be thankful and express their gratitude for what took place.

So if you found 1 Thessalonians chapter 2 this morning, let's stand together in honor of the reading of the word of God here today as we read through here. And in verse 13, the Bible says this, it says, For this cause also we thank God without ceasing, because when ye received the word of God which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God which effectually worketh also in you that believe.

For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God which are in Judea, are in Christ Jesus. For ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the Jews, who both killed the Lord Jesus and their own prophets and have persecuted us.

[4 : 04] And they please not God and are contrary to all men, forbidding us to speak to the Gentiles that they might be saved, to fill up their sins always, for the wrath has come upon them to the uttermost.

Let's pray. Heavenly Father, as we come before you this morning, Lord, we're thankful for your word. Lord, as we just take a few moments here today to look at the realities of your word.

Lord, the salvation that it provides, the sanctification, the steadfastness that we can rely upon. Lord, as we look today, help us to see the necessity of holding on to the truth of your word.

Lord, even in the face of opposition. Lord, things we can be thankful for. And Lord, we just give you all the praise in Jesus' name. Amen. You may be seated. You know, as we see here this morning, Paul, we know, encouraged the believers there at Thessalonica to walk worthy, you know, of the one that saved them, placing them into his kingdom and his glory.

We found that at the end of chapter one there. And when they received the Lord Jesus through the power of his word and the joy of the Holy Ghost, they had been delivered from the wrath to come.

[5 : 20] You know, we see that God delivered them from the wrath to come. And we see there was a change that took place, not only presently, but also in eternity. There's a dynamic that took place.

And this happens when one's life, when the gospel is received and is something which we are thankful. And Jesus declares, you know, when somebody gets saved, we got to rejoice.

When somebody comes to know the Lord, you know, Luke chapter 15, Jesus tells us this. He says, Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.

You know, I want you to understand when somebody, that word repent means to turn. You know, when we understand you must turn from our sin and turn to the Savior. To know the necessity of that.

The gospel is something that is important. Notice what Paul tells us here. Look at our text. Look how he starts out here. And you'll see this first word many times here.

[6 : 21] If you read the first Thessalonians, for. In other words, because of. In other words, he's saying, here's all the things attached to this. And we see, he says, for this cause, I'm what?

He says, I'm thankful. What's the cause? Because you received the word of God. You received it as it was truth. For this cause, the word of God that was preached was received.

Now that word received means to take it to yourself. The dynamic here is very simple. It's to make it personal. The personal connection to the gospel is essential.

You know, many people today have this knowledge, but it's not personal. Now you can have all the right information and miss out. You know, we see that dynamic all the time.

You can know what you ought to do, but if you choose not to do it, it's not going to be beneficial. And we see that Paul says they did something. They didn't just hear it.

[7 : 21] They received it. And they received it not just as information either. They received it as personal. And that it was the word of God. And so we're going to see here this morning, the gospel has to be taken personally to be effective.

You know, it's not effective if it's just information. You know, we see here, notice that Paul says he's thankful for salvation, thankful for their salvation, because the gospel is God's provision to rescue a sinful person that stands responsible for their sins.

You know, Paul was thankful for the work of the gospel, a work that transforms lives. It was the preaching of the gospel through which they received what was effective to reconcile them to God.

You know, it was by hearing the word of God. You know, we can see here that the ministry is gospel-centered. You know, the gospel is not the end of things, it's the beginning.

Because it's where lives are changed and transformed. The road in which we're on is changed. Jesus said there's a wide path and a narrow path. You know, when you're on two different paths, they take you different directions.

[8 : 35] You can't be on different paths going opposite directions and expect to end up at the same destination. You know, it's illogical to understand, but sometimes people think that.

You know, and we can see here that the gospel here is, the ministry is gospel-centered. It's centered also because the gospel is centered on the word of God.

You know, notice how Paul here has gratitude as a result of what they received. Look here at verse 13. He says this, When you received the word of God which ye heard of us.

Received after it was heard. Paul clearly connects the proclamation of the gospel, the words that are there as an essential product to produce salvation.

I want you to understand that people need to know before they can respond. You know, you can't respond to something you have no clue about. You know, I mean, those are simple realities.

[9 : 36] But oftentimes we forget that that's essential. That essential dynamic. Because notice here, he says this word that was heard of us. You know, a little later, Paul wrote in the book of Romans, in Romans chapter 10 and verse 17.

He says this, So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by what? The word of God. Paul in Romans wasn't just writing abstract or theological discussion stuff.

He was writing practicality. He says, This is what took place. This is what took place at Thessalonica when I was there. When I preached the word of God, it changed lives.

It wasn't just Paul's words. You know, I want you to understand, sometimes people think it's the words of the preacher. I want you to understand, the preacher just needs to proclaim the book.

Because my words won't change your life. But God's word will change your life. God's word will change everything about you. If you take it, if you receive it as it is, and we see here that when the apostle, if you remember, when Paul and Silas and Timothy arrived in Thessalonica, I want you to know here, because at the beginning of this chapter, in chapter 1, chapter 2, you'll find that Paul is combating some things, saying Paul just came to promote himself.

[10 : 56] Paul just came to build himself up. Paul just came to pad his pockets. You know, there are people who use the gospel to try to pad their pockets and build themselves up. But Paul's saying, That wasn't the reason I was there.

His whole focus was on the word of God. Look back into Acts chapter 17 for a moment. Acts chapter 17, when Paul came to the people there at Thessalonica, he didn't come and say, Hey, listen to Paul.

I'm a chosen prophet of God. You know, what's interesting is, is the Bible makes it pretty clear. Paul was an apostle. He was one called by the Lord. He had some authority. But the one thing you find is Paul never came in as a promotion of himself.

Look here in Acts chapter 17. Look at verse 2. The word of God tells us this. It says, And as his manner was, he went into them three Sabbath days, reasoning with them what?

Out of where? The Scripture. Now notice, what was he doing with the Scripture? He wasn't building himself up. He was building Christ up. Notice what it says that he did.

[12 : 04] He says, Opening and alleging. In other words, he's introducing them to the fact of who Jesus Christ is. He says, He says, I want you to understand that God in the Old Testament had had a plan and a purpose and a direction that he had set.

And he brought forth those things to us. And he said that he wants us to know. Because notice, what was he opening and alleging? That Christ must needs have suffered and risen again from the dead.

And that this Jesus whom I preach unto you is Christ. I want you to understand that it's interesting because as you read through this and you read the rest of Thessalonians, I think one of Paul's key passages was Isaiah 53.

Because you'll see a lot of references back to Isaiah 53 in this passage. That he makes a reference back. You know, one of them is heard.

You know, Who hath believed our report? That's Isaiah 53 verse 1. Who hath believed our report? To whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? You know, what's Paul saying?

[13 : 08] I came to you to proclaim Christ. I came to you to tell you who Christ is. The message that was presented was not something new. But the fulfillment of God's plan revealed in his word.

You know, It had been set in place from the foundation of the world. You know, 1 Peter chapter 1 tells us this in verse 20. Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, But was manifest in these last times for you.

You know, Jesus came for you. Jesus came for me. He made it clear of what was taking place. It was the word of God that was proclaimed.

The fact that it was proclaimed and bearing witness to the word of God is God's way to reach the world for Christ. Because when they hear the word of God, they have a choice to make. You know, Oftentimes we forget the reality that when you're confronted with something that says, You're at an intersection in life.

The gospel puts you at an intersection in life. You have to make a choice which direction you're going to go. You're either going to obey the gospel or you're going to disobey the gospel.

[14 : 18] There's no in between. There's no way of saying, Well, What about tomorrow? Well, Guess what? There is no, Tomorrow may be another opportunity, But the opportunity today is gone. You have a choice.

Are you going to believe or not to believe? You know, Acts 17 reveals to us in the late, After those verses where Paul said he proclaimed the scripture. Verse 4 says, And some believed.

Some believed. And they associated with Paul and Silas. And they wanted to know more about what God had to say. They associated them not with this, The apostle.

I want you to understand, They associated themselves with the word of God. With the doctrine of Christ, They associated with the right things. They believed the report.

You know, As Isaiah proclaimed, You know, Who hath believed our report? They believed. The report that Paul gave from scripture. It wasn't, Well, Paul said, Let me tell you about my miraculous conversion.

[15 : 19] You know, When you read in Acts chapter 9 of Paul's conversion, It was a miraculous conversion. Have you ever noticed that Paul, Sometimes he shared his testimony, But his testimony about how miraculously God worked in his life, Isn't the forefront of the gospel message.

The forefront of the gospel message is, This is what Christ has done. You know, How you got saved, I think is important. Your testimony is important. It's a tool that can be used. But I want you to understand, The most important thing is what Christ has done.

And others need to know what Christ has done, Because it's how they received it, Because others believe not. You know, Verse 5 of Acts chapter 17, Puts very simply, Verse 4 says, And some believed, And verse 5 says, And some believe not.

That's the reality. The word of God, Either is true, Or it isn't. They were at a crossroads. Because it was how they received it, That was, Paul takes note of.

Because the word of God is only effective, If you mix it with faith. I want you to understand, Look over to Ephesians chapter 1 this morning. Ephesians chapter 1.

[16 : 31] Now this is important to understand what takes place. Because I want you to see here, That God doesn't make anybody get saved. It's not loving to force somebody to do something.

God says, The door is open, The opportunity is there, The invitation is given. Now what are you going to do with it? You have a choice to make. What am I going to do with it? Notice what it says, That we should be first, To be the praise of his glory, Who what?

First what? Trusted in Christ, In whom ye also trusted, After, Notice this, When ye heard the word of truth, The gospel of your salvation, In whom after that ye believed, Ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.

I want you to understand, Paul makes it clear, That you're not forced to be saved. God doesn't just grab you and say, Okay, You're going to be saved, And you're not going to be saved. God says, Here it is, You have a choice to make.

Here's what has separated us. This is what I did to bring it back together. This is what I provided. You know, If we don't use what's provided, And we notice here, That's after they heard the word of truth, The gospel of your salvation.

[17 : 38] And they had to believe, That word believe, Is associated very directly back there, With that idea of receive. It's tied with the word trust. All those are dynamics, That describe what takes place, When one calls upon the Lord to save them.

Because I want you to understand, You don't receive God, By taking something physical, You receive God by believing, The word of God, And what it says about Jesus Christ. And when we understand that, It's critical because, It alters our entire understanding, Of how we get right with God.

Because faith, I want you to understand, Is not just a man devised tale. You know, It's not just words of men. Notice what Paul tells them here, In verse 13. He says, You received it not as the word of men, But as it is in truth, The word of God, Which effectually worketh also in you, That believe.

I want you to understand, Here's the key, That Paul lays out. The key to being right with God, Is to believe, The gospel of Jesus Christ.

To believe, The dynamics, The truth of what scripture, Has said about us. How do you receive, The word of God? You know, Because some treat scripture, Just as the thoughts, Or conclusions of people.

[19 : 00] You know, Oftentimes people will read the Bible, You can read the Bible, And miss out, On what God said. You can have all the information, Let me put it this way, You can memorize the word of God, And go to hell.

That's hard for people to grab a hold of, Because it's only effectual, Only effective, If you believe it. Think about how many books you read, Or at least I hope you read a few. I hope you at least read this one.

You know, A normal book that we read, We make a decision with. If it's a book about anything of substance, You know, Sometimes it's a kind of fluff sometimes, But you know, Even fictional stuff, Affects our belief system.

What do we accept as truth? What's our standard of truth? You know, There's a lot of things that people get caught up in, Because they read something, And they accept it as truth, Without having any substance, Is it true?

And so as we see here, Paul makes note, He's thankful, Why? That they didn't just treat it, As the conclusions of men, And you know, They didn't just give credence to it, When it fit their narrative, Or they didn't look at it, And say one of the things, Well, Well this book just contains the word of God, I want you to see, Look at the text again, As we go back there, Notice what Paul tells them here, In verse 13, He says, But as it is, In truth, As it is, Now for some of you that are old enough, This isn't a discussion with Bill Clinton, Is is pretty simple, Some of your younger ones might not remember that, Is is very direct, When we understand, What he's telling them, As it is in truth, When you hear the truth, What the word of God has to say, You know, The problem isn't that the truth is preached, The problem is, Is what the true truth reveals, Because the truth of the word of God, Reveals things about us,

[20 : 51] It reveals things about God, And when those things aren't, Don't seem compatible, There becomes a conflict, Because you know what, People don't like what God's word, Has to say about us, That's really where the problem is, They don't like what God has to say, They don't like what it says about God, That God created the heaven and the earth, They don't like the statement, They don't like the declaration, They don't like the reality of that, But they can argue that, But their real problem is, Is when it turns a mirror on them, And says, Hey, Let's take a look, And let me tell you about your heart, Where Jeremiah said, The heart is desperately wicked, Who can know it?

You know what, That's when people get upset, What did you just call me? I didn't call you anything, But God knows your heart, He knows what's in you, There's no question, He puts a reflection, Like a mirror that reveals, Who you are, What you violated, What the price of that is, The Bible tells us, The wages of sin is death, People don't like the reality, That it reveals, They want to put it off, You know, Because when a sinner must turn to God, You know, You have to, You can trust in what he has done for you, Taking note of your sin, That he took upon himself, The innocent for the guilty, Paying the wages of your sin, When Jesus died on the cross, He paid the price for every sin, That would ever be committed, The sufficiency of what he did, Isn't the problem, The problem comes, In the effectualness of it, How effective is it, Is dependent upon, Whether you believe it or not, Look at the end of verse 13,

There in our text, Notice what he tells him there, In back in 1 Thessalonians, He makes it very clear, This he says, Which, Effectually worketh, Also in you that what, Believe, You know, All this hangs on how you take, The word of God, Is it true?

If so, What's your response? Do you believe it? Do you really believe it? Because there's a difference, Between saying I believe something, And really believing something, Because one is verbal, The other is active, If I really believe something to be true, I'm going to take action accordingly, I'm going to put energy, And effort into it, When we understand that dynamic, Not everyone receives it though, As the word of God, Therefore it's not effective, If you don't receive it as truth, It's not going to be effectual, There's nothing going to take place, Because it's just mental gymnastics, Instead of understanding, The impact it has on you, As an individual, Look over the book of Hebrews for a moment, Hebrews chapter 4 and verse 2, The word of God tells us this, It says, For unto us was the gospel preached, As well as unto them, But the word preached did not profit them,

Not being mixed with faith in them that heard it, You know what faith is in the word of God, Saying I don't have to fully understand it, But I'm going to trust what God said is true, I'm going to trust what God has declared, Is the fact, Because when we mix it with faith, It saves us, But also changes us from the inside out, We begin a new path, We follow a different path, It's a path with Christ, Identified with him, As we're going to see here, Also that idea of being identified with other believers, Notice what he says, He's thankful for their steadfastness, Look at verse 14, It says, For ye, brethren, Became followers of the churches of God, Which in Judea are in Christ Jesus, For ye also have suffered like things of your countrymen, Even as they have of the Jews, I want you to see here, That the believers steadfastly believed the word of God, It took priority in the situations and circumstances of their life, Because I want you to understand,

[25 : 01] That day when they were meeting, Or they were there, It doesn't tell us what all was going on at Jason's house there in Acts chapter 17, But it does tell us there was a group of individuals, It says the Jews that believed not, And some lewd fellows, You can fill in the blank of who the lewd fellows were, You know, They didn't go down here and pick up the outstanding citizens, But they came and they beat on his door, And they called him out into the front of the city, And it said they had a choice to make of what they were going to do, You know, They had a choice, Is what I, Did I really believe, Do I really trust the word of God is true, Or don't I?

Do I really trust what Christ did, Was declared that Christ did, Is it effectual for me, Do I really believe and hang on to the truth of what Christ has done?

Do I trust the word of God against the word of men? Do I trust the word of God against opposition? Do I trust the word of God when it's uncomfortable? Do I trust the word of God when it costs me something?

You know, There's a lot of people are comfortable following God when it doesn't cost them anything, As long as it's a God of convenience. But you know what the word of God tells us, That that's not the reality. I want you to understand that if you believe the word of God is true, You call upon the Lord Jesus to save you, You're going to face opposition.

There'll be those that question your faith. There'll be those that say, You can't trust that book. There'll be people who put up all sorts of arguments and things, And sometimes it's from those closest to us, Our friends and family.

[26 : 37] They don't like or agree because it makes me uncomfortable. Or if that's true, There's a lot of problems. And it's not the problem with other people, It's the problem with ourselves. When we understand what's taking place, And we see here that Paul's talking to them very clearly.

When they face the opposition, They stood with others who faced opposition because of their faith in Christ.

That brotherhood together in Christ. Because notice this, You became followers of the churches of God, Which in Judea are in Christ Jesus.

It was a testimony of their steadfastness That connected them with the believers in Judea. I want you to know that the Ugean churches, The ones there in Jerusalem and the surrounding areas, Face great opposition.

When you consider that Paul wasn't mentioning that in abstract, Paul used to be one of the persecutors. And he said, You know, They stood strong. They didn't stand strong out of their own volition.

[27 : 44] They didn't stand strong because, You know, We can overcome this. You know what? They understood they could overcome it only with Christ. That I'm going to hold on to the truth no matter what.

To say, If the truth goes down, I'm going down with it. They said, There's no other choice because, You know what? There's no name given among men whereby we must be saved.

Christ is where you cling to. The good news is, It may look like you're going down, But you're going to victory. He says, He has overcome.

You know, He tells, Paul a little later tells Timothy, In 2 Timothy chapter 3, In verse 12, He says, Yea, And all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

You know, Today, If you stand up for the truth of God's word, You're going to find there's people that oppose you. When you make declarative statements that a child in the womb is alive, That they're a person, And that if you intentionally take that life, It's murder.

[28 : 44] You know what? You get people all flared up. Think about the things today, Just simple things that are logical things. Oh, There's 155 genders. What kind of confusion are you?

Trust the science. Well, I am. I'm observationally science saying there's two. God said it. I observe it. I know it's true. I know. But people stand opposed to truth.

All sorts of things we could add to that list. If you stand, You're going to face opposition. It can come in many different areas. But it doesn't matter. Look over to John chapter 16. John chapter 16, The word of God says this.

Jesus here is speaking to his disciples. And I want you to understand, John 16 is where Jesus is getting ready to go to the cross. It's like, This is the most important sermon for you guys.

This is the finale before I go to the cross. In other words, He's saying, I'm giving you what you need here to understand. I'm reiterating all those years previous that I've taught you. And I'm giving you a big summary.

[29 : 42] And He says this. These things have I spoken unto you. That means in the past. That in me, You might have peace, But in the world, You shall have tribulation.

But be of good cheer. I have what? Overcome the world. Even in the midst of opposition, We can have peace because we're holding on to that which is true.

To say that's the priority. You know, The church at Thessalonica had withstood the storm that had come quickly upon them. They had not turned away from the trust placed in the word of God.

I want you to see here, The churches, The believers, That's a called out assembly of believers. Notice what it says. He says, Became followers. That's imitators.

Ones that are of like. Of the churches of God, Which are in Judea, Are in Christ Jesus. You know, I want you to understand today that it's not just a church.

[30 : 41] It's the churches of Jesus Christ. Because a church concept outside of what scripture says, Gets us down a truth path that leads away from Christ.

Because a true church is either in Christ or it's not. You're either promoting the doctrines of Christ, The doctrines of the word of God, Or you're not. You know, People love to add the doctrines of men, You know, Make things more palatable.

If we do this, And we make it religious or emotional, We can attract people. I want you to understand, The devil loves to motivate people by emotion.

Well, How do you feel about that? You know, The sad thing is, You know, That's one of those questions people ask today. Well, How do you feel about it? You know, Some things in life, No matter how you feel about it. Don't pay your property tax.

I don't feel like paying them. See what happens. When you stand before the judge and say, Judge, They can't take my property. But you didn't pay your property. I don't feel like you should. You know what the judge is going to do? He's basically going to laugh at you.

[31 : 42] Why? Because how you felt about it meant nothing. When it comes to the truth and the declarations of God, How we feel about it, Ought not to be our driving factor. But the churches of God in Christ Jesus, A church is a called out assembly of the saints, Identified in the doctrines and teaching of Christ.

Notice, Look back over to Acts chapter 16 for a moment. Acts chapter 16 and verse 4, The word of God says, As they went throughout, Through the cities, They delivered them the decrees, For to keep, That were ordained to the apostles and elders, Which were at Jerusalem.

And notice verse 5, And so were the churches established in the faith, And increased in number daily. To be established in the faith, In the creeds, In their dynamics of the word of God.

Paul, On his first missionary journey, Made sure the churches had a foundation of Christ. Not a foundation of Paul, Not a foundation of Peter, But a foundation of Christ.

Every church that's in, That's in Christ. That's the reason it's in Christ. It's not in people. It's not in the preacher. It's not in a creed that's been written down. It's in the word of God.

[32 : 52] And you say, Preacher, I want you to understand, It says, The word became flesh. Jesus Christ is the living word. You cannot separate Jesus from the word of God.

If you do, You're saying the Bible's not true. Because the Bible says, Jesus and the word are one. To separate them is denying what the word of God says.

When you deny what the word of God says, You know what it is? I'm calling God a liar, And I'm the fact checker. There's a lot of people that try to fact check God. But you know, The reality is, Is we need to have God fact check us.

You know, Paul was not thankful that they were stubborn, But that they were steadfast in the doctrines of God. That the word of God was effective in their lives, Because they believed it.

You know, Let me give you a little example here. If God's word gives you a principle, Because God gives us all sorts of principles to live by. You know, He tells us to love one another.

[33 : 51] Let's use a big one. He tells us to love one another. You know, That's important to define. What does God mean by love? Because today, People redefine love by affirming somebody. Love is never disconnected from truth.

But you have a decision to make. Whose definition am I going to use? Am I going to use the definition that God gives, Or am I going to give man's definition? What do you believe in? That's practical because now I have to make a decision.

Who do I believe? Who do I believe to be true? How does this play out practically? And how does God design that? You know, God gives us principles about money, You know, That the borrower is slave to the lender.

Practicality tells us that's true. But you know, A lot of people today let debt skyrocket, Because they don't understand they're enslaving themselves. This isn't a lesson on finance, But the reality is that, Do you trust what God says or not?

How does that apply into your life? Is that true or not true? You know, Paul was thankful because it was effective. This morning, Are you thankful for the word of God? Are you thankful for what it's done in your life?

[34 : 59] You know, You can only be thankful if you believe it. Is it true? You know, This morning, If you're here today and understand What it means to believe in Christ Jesus as your savior, Is that something you ought to be thankful for?

You know, Have you believed the word of God? Are you thankful for the salvation of others? Are you thankful to stand fast in truth? You know, Have you ever thought it's a privilege for others to oppose you when you stand in truth?

Because our peace doesn't come from what's around us. It comes from what's within us. In Christ. And we understand that the dynamics, Are you thankful for the doctrines and the teachings of Christ?

Are you thankful for a church that stands on the truth of the word of God? You know, Are you thankful for the things that Paul says he's thankful for? That a church that took the word of God and said, It's not my, It's not Paul's word.

It's not Peter's word. It's not some preacher's word, But it's the word of God in our life. This morning, What have you done with the truth of the scripture? Have you believed on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ as your savior?

[36 : 04] Because that's the beginning point of belief. His heads are bowed and eyes are closed this morning. What about you today? Are you operating in the scope of saying, I'm going to operate my life according to the truth of the word of God?

Do you look at God's word and say, This is truth. This is going to be my direction. This is going to be what I'm going to trust in or not. What about you today?

Heavenly fathers, We come before you this morning. Lord, We just thank you and praise you for the day, For the opportunity. Lord, We're thankful for each one here today. Lord, I pray that we would look at your word, Not just as words of men, But Lord, The words from you.

The instruction from you. The truth about all things pertaining to this life. Lord, As we have an opportunity to respond this morning, Lord, We just ask you to work upon hearts and lives here today. Lord, I just pray that you would just stir hearts, That they wouldn't depart.

Without having settled, Because they're going to make a decision today. Is it true? Or is it not? Lord, We just leave those things with you today.

[37 : 08] And Lord, We ask it all in your precious name. As heads are bowed, And eyes are closed, As piano begins. As a button.