

The Condition of Your Faith

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[0 : 0 0] All right, go ahead and take your Bibles this morning, turn to the book of 1 Thessalonians.! I'm getting here this morning as we continue on with our series going through Thessalonians! here. I'll just ask you a question this morning. How's your faith? What's the condition of your faith?

That's really an important question to consider because oftentimes we think faith is generic. Faith is simplistic. Or just the concept of faith we'll talk about and we want to have faith in this, but the reality is the Bible talks about the conditions of our faith. The conditions of our faith being strong, being weak, being wavering, being grounded, established. You'll find all sorts of descriptions of faith. And understanding the condition of our faith is important in what we do to build that because faith is the essential element of a Christian life. You know, the Bible tells us the just shall live by what? Faith. Faith is essential. It's the practical application of what you believe because faith is not just abstract. Faith is practical in what we do.

Faith is part of our life. You know, if we're going to walk by faith, we need to understand the importance of it. And here the believers at Thessalonica, we looked and saw that they had received the gospel wholeheartedly by faith, which changed their life. You know, when you come to know the Lord as your Savior, your faith at the moment of salvation changes everything. It ought to alter. If you say you have faith in Christ and you're not having a different life from the people of the world, it ought to make you question what's going on. Because a faith changes us because we look at the world differently and it's evident that a change took place in the lives of those at Thessalonica. It talks about that they moved from idols to worship the living God. It was a change that wasn't only internalized, but it was realized practically in their life. In other words, it wasn't something they did on Sunday.

It was something that they lived on Monday through Saturday. And they honored it on Sunday, you might say. That's the way a Christian ought to live, is our faith ought not to be a Sunday thing.

And we know that those here at Thessalonica, it was not just a one-day-a-week faith. Because Paul notes that transition of how they turned to the living God from their idols to serve him with truth and with some vigor behind it, it wasn't just half-heartedly, it was wholeheartedly.

[3 : 0 4] It was their work of faith, their labor of love, and the patience of hope in Christ that revealed their faith. Because we're going to look here today to realize that real faith is more than just reciting facts about Christ or the Bible. You know, oftentimes people know a lot of information.

They know information about their faith. But we're going to see here, Paul's worried about today the condition of their faith. Because our faith, in our walking faith, not the saving faith, because I want you to understand, we're talking about two different dynamics. There's a faith that says, I believe Christ is the one. And then there's faith to say, I'm going to walk with him.

And to make that walk with him is important. And we're going to see that because Paul was concerned about the condition of their faith. Had they remained steadfast to live in light of eternity?

Knowing that while this life was going to be filled with troubles and trials, you know, but to understand and remind ourselves we're also delivered from the wrath to come. You know, we're going to look here as we go through Thessalonians here in a few weeks of all the different things that are going to be looked at. But it all focuses on the future. It focuses on eternity.

And knowing that Paul says, he knew that they were going to face challenges because even his sudden departure to Athens and the apostle writes back to them because he had gotten a report from Timothy.

[4 : 39] And we're going to talk about that report this morning and why he sent Timothy to them, not only to bring back a report, but what Timothy was supposed to do, why he was there, because Paul sent Timothy because he's concerned about the condition of their faith.

The condition of their faith. So if you found 1 Thessalonians this morning, let's stand together as we'll read chapter 2 here. We'll pick up in verse 17 and read down through a little bit here in the chapter 3 here this morning. But it says this, but we, brother, being taken from you for a short time in presence, not in heart, endeavoring the more abundantly to see your face with great desire. Wherefore, we would come unto you, even I, Paul, once again, but Satan hindered us.

For what is our hope or joy or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ it is coming? For ye are our glory and joy.

Wherefore, when we could no longer forbear, we thought it good to be left at Athens alone, and sent Timotheus, our brother and minister of God and our fellow laborer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you and to comfort you concerning your faith.

That no man should be moved by these afflictions. For yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto. For verily, when we were with you, we told you before that we should suffer tribulation, even as it came to pass.

[6 : 06] And ye know, for this cause, when I would no longer forbear, I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter hath tempted you, and our labor be in vain.

Heavenly Fathers, we come before you this morning. Lord, we just thank you for your word. Lord, we just lift up each one here today, Lord, as we even consider an important question, the reality of the condition of our faith.

Because, Lord, we understand you've told us that there's going to be challenges, and there's going to be things, there's going to be pressures in this life, that the impact of whether our faith is going to stand strong, or whether it's going to waver.

But, Lord, I pray just have your hand upon each one today, Lord, that we might honestly look at the condition of our faith, knowing that we need to come and rest upon you.

It needs to be firmly grounded in you and your word. And, Lord, we just thank you and praise you. In Jesus' name, amen. You may be seated. You know, even though Paul here is writing back after Timothy returned, he returned with a report about the steadfast condition of their faith, because he wanted them to know what was going on.

[7 : 25] He wanted to know if they were going to be encouraged and equipped to continue. And it's important to keep in mind that there's some things when we talk about faith, you know, we talked about a saving faith.

You know, the good part is your faith to salvation isn't dependent upon you at all. Your faith is set because when you trust Christ as Savior from that moment, you're not the one holding on.

You're not the one doing anything. You are the one that has placed yourself wholeheartedly into the hands of the one that saved you. You know, our faith may waver, but his promise never will.

His promise is steadfast. His promise will not fail. Hebrews tells us this in chapter 10 and verse 23. It says, Let us hold the profession of our faith without wavering, for he is faithful that promised.

You know what? Christ promised that whosoever shall call upon him will be saved. They shall be saved. It's not an option. He said he will do it.

[8 : 34] And we rest in that. Because, you know, I'll know about you, but I'm glad that my salvation isn't based in what I can do or where my faith is. Because I want to be honest with you, you know, our faith goes like this in life sometimes.

Because we're going to look at some things that Paul talks about this morning that impact that. Because we have a lot of outside things impacting internally in our life when it comes to our faith.

And that's what Paul, we're going to see here, was worried about because we have a saving faith, but also we have a faith that we walk. You know, the Bible tells us we walk by faith and not by sight.

And it's faith that connects our hope to eternity, to live in light of eternity. Because our faith is when Christ is going to accomplish and finish when he comes again.

He finished our salvation on the cross, but he's going to complete our redemption. We're going to be transformed into his image. We're going to be changed, the Bible tells us, when he comes again.

[9 : 40] You know, when we understand that picture of what's happening and we see the connection of faith, because faith ties people together also.

You know, Paul was concerned about those at Thessalonica because their faith tied them not only to one another, but to all believers. You know, a common faith.

Jude talks about that common salvation. You know, when we realize the importance of a common connection and believe that we'll be connected in this life, but also in the one to come.

You know, Paul wasn't concerned about right now. He was also looking to the future. He was ministering to them, a bond with them, as you might say.

Look at our verse here in our text here in chapter 2 and verse 17. He says, but we, brethren, being taken from you for a short time in presence, not in heart, endeavoring more abundantly to see your face with great desire.

[10 : 42] You know, think about what Paul's saying here. He says that salvation connects us. We become a family together. Salvation connects every believer.

Because there's only one way to salvation. In other words, we have a common point that connects everybody who's called upon the name of the Lord. It's a common connection.

There's no dynamic of difference because you're only saved one way. You know, I want you to understand there's not a Baptist salvation, a Methodist salvation, a Catholic salvation, or whatever salvation.

It's only Christ's salvation. You know, when we realize that that's the common point, salvation is essential. But we need to understand that when we walk, and by faith, that's saying I want to connect with what the Bible says and want to connect with what God has declared that we ought to do.

Now that's where you get some variation. Because there's some people that want to waver in what they believe. Because your faith is also in what you believe and how you steadfastly hold to it.

[11 : 50] To what is a priority. What is there. And we see here Paul's connection to their faith. He was concerned about it. Because look at verse 19. He says this, For what is our hope or joy or crown of rejoicing?

Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ? It is coming. For ye are our glory and joy. You know what Paul said? He said, One day, With a great desire that since you've been transformed, Paul knew that they were going to stand one day before the Lord.

They were going to stand before the Lord. He knew that was the ultimate dynamic. That was the ultimate thing that was going to take place. And it brought joy in his life.

And that's the reason he was concerned about the condition of their faith. Because he knew one day they would stand before their Savior also. You know, I want you to understand that we're all going to stand before Christ one day.

There's nobody gets out of this life without standing before Christ. The only question is, which place are you going to stand? Because if you've called upon the Lord as Savior, the Bible makes it clear you're going to stand before what they call the Bema Seat or Judgment Seat of Christ.

[13 : 01] Now, as soon as we mention judgment, everybody, I want you to understand, it's like judging for reward. It's talking about, as you see people receive reward, it's a judgment that says a race will run.

As a believer, that's where you're going to be. When you stand before Christ, it's going to be a judgment seat of reward to say, what have you done in this life for me?

God says, I'm going to recognize those things. You know, God is just, he's not just saves us and just lets us wander. He says, I want to walk with you. I want you to grow.

I want you to mature in the faith. And we're going to see here that he's concerned about this because he says, for him, it's a great joy to see what's taking place.

They've been saved. He says, one day you're going to stand with me before Christ. It said it brought joy to his heart. You know, when somebody gets saved, it's a joyful event.

[14 : 05] It's something we can rejoice, that we can celebrate. Because, you know, I want you to understand that there's no doubt when you read through, especially 1 Thessalonians, the theme on every chapter is a glimpse of Christ's return.

A glimpse of eternity, what's ahead? And notice here, he talks about this judgment seat of Christ. You are my glory and joy. And he talks about our hope, our joy, our crown of rejoicing.

Are you not? Ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ, it is coming. You know, there's many today, I think, doubt whether Christ is going to come again. But your faith is this.

Think about what Jesus told his disciples in John 14. He made it clear. He says, if I go to prepare a place for you, I will do what? Come again. And do what?

Receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be what? Also. Jesus said clearly he's coming again.

[15 : 08] Paul's writing to the church at Thessalonica, those believers, and said, I want to encourage you in your faith to keep light of eternity. This life will pass away one day. The trials, the struggles.

I mean, it's very easy to get caught up in the cloud of chaos of this life that puts pressure upon our faith. Because when we see these things taking place, it challenges our faith and it tests our faith.

But when the Lord's return, we're going to stand before the Lord for reward for those that are there also. And we understand that it's going to be a time of a crown of rejoicing.

You know, 2 Timothy chapter 4 and verse 8, Paul told Timothy a little later, he says, You know, as a believer, our hope isn't in this life.

Our hope is in what is to come. This life's going to be filled with troubles. You don't have to look for trouble. You know that? You say, you go out and look for trouble, you don't have to look for trouble. It finds you. You know?

[16 : 20] If you're going to look for something, look how to avoid trouble and not try to run into it because you don't have to. You can be sitting there and get in trouble. Life happens.

You know, when we understand that this is that dynamic that he's talking about, this same hope connects every believer. It's something that brings rejoicing now and even later before the Lord.

And so this is Paul's concern. This is what reason he was concerned about the condition of their faith. Are they serving to be ready and prepared to stand before the Lord?

They're going to stand before one day. We ought to be concerned with the condition of our faith. And Paul was not hindered or not fazed by the hindrances to see them again.

Notice here in verse 18, notice what Paul says. He says, wherefore we would have come unto you, even I, Paul, once and again. But notice this, Satan hindered us.

[17 : 18] You know, I want you to understand why he was joyful. He understood that there was going to be hindrances. There was going to be challenges. There were going to be troubles.

There were going to be things. He says, even your adversary, the devil, is going to cause havoc in your life. Those things are going to be hindered. He's out to hinder those things.

And our faith is a dynamic. And we understand our faith here and how it works and what we have and to keep our eyes on that which is to come. Because notice in chapter 3 as it kicks off here, he has some concerns of their faith.

He says, wherefore, you know, wherefore when we could no longer forbear, we thought it good to be left at Athens alone and sent Timothy as our brother and minister of God, our fellow laborer in the gospel of Christ.

And notice he has two things that are going to help the condition of your faith. He says that you need to be established and to comfort. And in that order. I think a problem is sometimes people try to find comfort without being established.

[18 : 25] We'll talk about that just a little bit. You know, Paul needed to see them, not just to catch up. But he said, I wanted to see them to see if they were established and were comforted that they had what it needed to survive the onslaught of things of this life.

He wanted them to be able to continue in the face, in the midst of opposition. And he said, when our faith is established, we focus on the right things. Because we're going to look here in just a moment.

Life is filled with pressures that distract us, that deceive us. That draw us away. He wanted them to be able to continue in their faith.

A strong faith is something that just doesn't happen. Because remember, Paul just made note of how strong their faith was at the beginning. How they withstood opposition and they did those things.

And now he's writing back. How is it doing? What's the condition of it? Because we can start out strong and kind of fade out. You know, there's a lot of times in life you start strong and begin to fade.

[19 : 35] I want you to look at it like this. In the Christian walk, our faith, our goal ought to be to finish strong. To finish on a firm foundation.

To finish the right way. Because I want to let you know, it's not, it's our faith and our growth in faith is not one of these. It's not just this curve of a constant up.

As you go through this life, there's going to be moments your faith is going to go like this. Because there's going to be situations or things happen in life that just rattle you to the core. It doesn't make sense to us.

And notice here as Paul is describing these things to him. It says that they need a strong faith. It needs to be maintained. It needs the right context in which to grow and to flourish.

And the first task that he gave to Timothy was to build them up in the faith. That personal faith in Jesus Christ. And he was concerned about the foundation and the support that is in their faith.

[20 : 33] To establish it. Notice what he says here as we look here. He says to establish you. In verse 2. He said, now think about this. Paul's writing back to say I'm going to establish you.

But he's already said you have a strong faith. What's he talking about there? How is your faith established? That's a good question, isn't it? We're going to look here because Paul, I believe, lays out some things of a solid faith.

And the things we need because what established means is to continue to be set in place. Because situations in life cause disruption. We have to put things back in place.

We have to firmly get it secured where it needs to be. That when the next storm comes, it doesn't get shuffled around. You know, that our faith is locked down.

It's strapped down. It's ready to endure. But I want you to understand that it's not something that you just maintain on your own. It needs to be established. It needs to continue to be set in place.

[21 : 34] Unwavering. With our eyes on the right things. It's essential that we continue to build faith. To build our faith. To keep looking and growing.

You know, think about what Jude says. Look over to Jude there. It tells us in verse 20. Notice what it says. But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith.

Praying in the Holy Ghost. Keep yourselves in the love of God. Looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. To build up yourselves. Establish.

Because your faith isn't built on just Sunday morning. Your faith is built day by day. As you grow and you build and you put things and you understand and you keep things in light of the scripture.

In light of God's return. You know, to understand that we need a strong faith. Every believer needs to build their faith. A faith that honestly knows Christ.

[22 : 39] And knows what it is to walk with Him. It's a faith that stands fast. It's unmovable. Unmovable. But also able to abound in the face of opposition and conflict.

Because, you know, your faith is easy to put together until it's tested. You know, we have... In the Midwest, you have tornadoes.

You know, people build a lot of buildings and, oh, this will be standing strong. You know what the test is when the storm comes by? When it's still standing after the storm, you know what you say? That was properly built.

Why? Because it was tested. It didn't just look good. It worked good. Our faith is not just to look good.

Our faith needs to work good. It needs to be functional in our life. It has to have a foundation that moves forward. And we see this.

[23 : 35] Think about how Jesus described this. Look over to Luke chapter 6 for a moment. Because Jesus talked about this very element. And he describes it this way in Luke chapter 6 in verse 48.

He says, He is like a man that built his house and digged deep and laid the foundation where? On a rock. I want you to understand, Jesus is making clear that if you're going to have a firm foundation, it takes work.

It takes intention. Because it's easy to build. The guy that built the house on the sand, he didn't have that much work to do to build. But the one who built it upon the rock, what did it require?

For him to dig. To effort. It took energy. It took intention to dig down. And notice what it says. And when the flood rose and the streams beat vehemently upon that house that could not shake it, for it was founded upon the rock.

We're going to see here, Paul was concerned about the things that were going to test their faith. He says, I want the condition of your faith strong because it's going to be tested.

[24 : 38] There's going to be things in life that are going to rattle completely everything about life. And that first concern of faith that has a foundation that will not move.

An established faith precedes a faith that comforts. We don't get comfort in the scripture until we're grounded in the scripture. Because in other words, it's just platitudes. When we understand, look over Colossians for a moment.

Colossians chapter 1, verse 23. The Bible says, If ye continue in the faith. Now, this isn't talking about salvation. This is talking about daily life.

This is talking about our walk. As a believer. This is our part. The decision that we make is how close are we going to walk with our Savior.

Salvation is secured, but our walk with Him is a choice. It says, If ye continue in the faith. Notice this. Grounded and settled. And be not moved away from the hope of the gospel which ye heard.

[25 : 40] And which was preached to every creature which is under heaven. Whereof I, Paul, am made a minister. I want you to see here. If you what? Continue. If you're grounded and you're settled.

And move not away from the hope of the gospel. Now, we don't have time to develop that this morning. But I want you to understand, there's things out there that are going to deviate your thought process away from the truth of scripture.

Paul talks about false teachers. Peter talks about false teachers. John talks about false teachers. There's going to be some that are going to make and draw your faith away from the scripture.

What the scripture says. What God has taught. But I want you to see here a strong faith that's established. That it's built. It has a solid foundation.

He says, I want you to be solid and then to be comforted. Because when we trust Christ, when we build that, we have comfort in the midst of the storm. Now, let's go back to that house that withstood the tornado.

[26 : 45] If you have a big storm coming, do you want to go on an untested shelter or a tested one? I know we got some from Oklahoma down here. So, they're like, yeah, we understand. Tornado alley.

I mean, they want something that's tested. When you get in there, when the storm comes, you know what? You have comfort. Because it's survived the storm. We know that it's going to hold.

That's what establishing our faith does. And it gets tested and it holds. And it builds comfort in our life knowing we can trust what God has said. That he is there with us.

He's going to maintain us. He's going to allow those things to take place in our life. And as we see these things come together, we get comfort.

It's an encouragement. It is a faith that will keep you focused on the right things. A coming Lord. And that is a need that's needed as we walk through this life.

[27 : 39] Just as it was needed for those who faced affliction and tribulation. And would cause a conflict of their faith. Because I want you to see here, Paul talks about next, what is going to move them.

Look at verse 3 of our text. He says that no man should be moved by these afflictions. This is the test. When our faith, the condition of our faith is strong and it's grounded.

When the storms come, when the storms rage, we grab a hold of the comfort we have in a strong faith.

Knowing it's going to hold through the storm. It's not going to remove the storm, but it will hold through the storm. You know that you have something that's far greater.

He says that no man should be moved by these afflictions. Look over to Psalm 112 for a moment.

[28 : 39] Psalm 112 in verse 7. The Bible tells us this. And God makes it clear. He says, he's talking about their faith. He says, he shall not be afraid of evil tidings.

You know what? Things are going to happen in life that we just don't want to have happen. But notice what he says. I shall not be afraid of evil tidings. His heart is fixed. Trusting in the Lord.

You know, the context of affliction is pressure. And that has the potential to move or alter direction. We can be swayed by the pressures of life. Pressures that will move us if we're not steadfast in our faith.

A faith that's fixed and trusts the Lord. You know, look over to Romans chapter 8 for a moment. You know, consider that dynamic. Romans chapter 8. It says, who shall separate us from the love of Christ.

I want you to think about these things. To separate you from the love of Christ. Look at the list. Shall tribulation. You know, the word tribulation here literally means pressure or trouble.

[29 : 41] You know, troubles put pressure on our life to say, what are we going to do? How are we going to overcome? What are we going to trust in? Where are we going to look to?

You know, distress. That's calamity or anguish. You know what? Life is filled with tribulation. Life is filled with distress. There's pressures. There's calamity. There's persecution.

That's harassment. Or needs. It says famine or nakedness. That's just the needs of life. You know what? There's going to be time. There's going to be need. Paul spoke about that. Peter speaks about it.

I want you to understand that there's going to be time. That there's going to be sometimes not everything that you think you need. But a strong faith looks and says, Jesus said, I'll never leave you or forsake you.

Even in the midst when it looks like everything's cut loose, he's still there. A solid faith. A solid foundation. Peril.

[30 : 39] That's just dangers all around us. I mean, we definitely live in a world that's filled with peril. I mean, when you read the news, there's peril all around. Yes, even in Lincoln, there's peril.

There's dangers that lurk. Or you have the sword. The sword here is talking about the authority of government. All around the world, believers. In America, I want you to understand that we got to count our blessings.

It's a weekend of Thanksgiving. We can be thankful we have a nation that we have the liberty to openly worship our Savior.

Now, we might have some trials or tribulations or struggles or all the other things that are on this list. But you know what? We don't have a government yet that just directly opposes our worship of the Lord.

We ought to be thankful for that. Because that's a blessing. Because there's a lot of places that's not true. Think about even Paul, as he went to Thessalonica, when we read there in Acts chapter 17, think about what happened when he left.

[31 : 44] Those that accepted Christ, Jason and his household, got drugged before the magistrates, drugged before the government, and fined for believing. You know, it would be interesting today, how many people would pay a fine to be able to come to church?

How many in America would risk a rest to gather together to worship the Lord? You know what it reveals? It reveals a condition of faith. Is it strong?

Is it grounded? Are they comforted because they know Christ is above all else? That I'm living not in light of the present alone, but in light of eternity.

To keep our eyes upon the right things. You know, the necessity of knowing that we'll have things that will attempt to move us from a solid walk with Christ.

Matter of fact, we are appointed to them. You know, notice verse 3. It says, There no man should be moved by these afflictions.

[32 : 42] For yourselves know that ye are what? Appointed thereunto. In other words, Paul says, Guys at Thessalonica, the believers there, and even for us today, he says know that these troubles are going to come.

They're appointed to happen. Now I want you to understand what that means. It just means it's coming. In other words, you're not going to avoid all the problems and trials and struggles of life.

You're not going to just coast through. There's going to be times that you need a grounded, solid faith, that the condition of your faith is grounded and solid in the Word of God, so when the storms come, we can have the comfort that we have something that's been tested and that we can hold on to.

We need to hold on to those things because notice Paul reminds them here. Look down in verse 5. He says, For this cause, when I can no longer forbear, I sent to know your faith, lest by some means the tempter have tempted you, and our labor be in vain.

You know, the tempter here is the same one Paul talks about that Satan hindered him. You know what Paul said? I wasn't able to come because Satan was causing conflict and dynamics were happening that I couldn't come, but Paul says it didn't move my faith.

[34 : 02] He says, I'm going to continue to stand. You need to continue to stand. We see here he's coming. As you see, he's hindered from coming to see them personally, but he's concerned about the condition of their faith.

Their believers had faced the pressure of a personal attacks upon themselves and the apostle. Remember in chapter 1, it talked about, and early in chapter 2 here, Paul's writing about the lies that were told about him.

You know, hey, don't follow Paul because he's just in it for the money. You know, Paul's just trying to make a name for himself. You know what? When you read through things today, it's amazing how these same tactics get used.

The attacks that get made. They try to tell, oh, you can't trust that. But you know what? God gives us something greater than just our thoughts, or our opinions, or other people's opinions.

He gives us his word. His word is there. We know what he has. That we can withstand the pressure, even trying to convince them that what they received was an error.

[35 : 08] You know, Paul said that they wanted to, had attempted to deceive them, to draw them away, to say, hey, what Paul's telling you about Christ is not true.

You know what? There's a lot of people today do the same thing. They try to convince people, well, you can't trust God's word. You can't trust what God said. You can't trust what is happening.

And we see here that they face this dynamic, and they were trying to convince them the ridicule and the attacks of others. Even they used the civil authorities to find them.

You know what? Today is no different. You know, every believer faces the pressure to be moved from the faith. The security of their salvation in Christ, and to be moved away from the sound doctrines of Christ, replacing them with more palatable things.

You know, our faith needs to stand strong. It needs to be firmly established that it might comfort us. That we know that we're not tossed around by the pressures and the tribulations and the trials that are appointed to this life.

[36 : 25] You know, look over to Ephesians chapter 4 for a moment this morning. Ephesians 4 down in verse 14. That we henceforth be no more what? Children. You know what children?

Children blow around a lot. You know, have you ever watched kids? I mean, their attention span's pretty limited. You know, as we call today squirrel, you know the problem is, is that oftentimes people in their faith operates the same way.

Every time something new or something different or something that catches their attention, they chase it. They're tossed to and fro. They're tossed around and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the slight of men, the cunning craftiness, whereby they lie and wait to deceive.

And he tells us, but speak the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ. You know, Paul was concerned about the condition of their faith.

Today we ought to be concerned about the condition of our faith. Is it grounded? Is it settled? Is it established? That it might comfort us when the pressures and trials and the tribulations of this life come, that it'll stand firm in light of eternity.

[37 : 44] You know, this morning, what's the condition of your faith? Is it a sure faith in Jesus Christ as your Savior? You know, there's a lot of people that have a faith that they trust all sorts of things.

They trust religion. They trust themselves. Say, preacher, how do people trust it? Oh, I'm a good person. You know what you're doing? You're trusting yourself for salvation. Look at what I do.

I want you to understand salvation is not what we do. It's what's already been done in Christ. We place our faith in what he has accomplished. And we need to understand that we need a sure faith.

You know, is your faith sure in Jesus Christ as your Savior today? Do you need to trust him today? If you know Christ as Savior, is your faith being firmly established that it might comfort you, give you the confidence to continue to stand strong when the pressures of life barrel in?

To put pressure to move us, is your faith weak or wavering? Or is it strong and sure in truth of the Word of God?

[38 : 55] Because the reality is you're only going to have one or the other. What's the condition of your faith? As heads are bowed this morning, as we take just a moment to even consider among ourselves, what each one, what's the condition of your faith?

Is it strong? Is it weak? Is it wavering? Or is it grounded and settled? The only one that knows that is you. As we have an opportunity to respond this morning, as the piano plays, what about you today?

Maybe you just need to spend a few moments with the Lord and say, Lord, I want a strong faith. I want a faith that stands. What about you today? I want a gift for you.