

# Jesus: Our Firm Foundation

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] Well, a very good morning, everyone. I must say that John was very gracious to me in that whole press-ups thing. He said several takes. That was my second take. So I think I managed ten press-ups, so I need to get to the gym.

Why don't we turn in our Bibles to Hebrews chapter 3. It's where we are this morning in our series in Hebrews. And let's read Hebrews chapter 3 together. This is Hebrews chapter 3.

The author writes this, Therefore, holy brothers who share in the heavenly calling, fix your thoughts on Jesus, the apostle and high priest whom we confess.

He was faithful to the one who appointed him, just as Moses was faithful in all God's house. Jesus has been found worthy of greater honor than Moses, just as the builder of a house has greater honor than the house itself.

For every house is built by someone, but God is the builder of everything. Moses was faithful as a servant in all God's house, testifying to what would be said in the future.

[ 1 : 0 8 ] But Christ is faithful as a son over God's house. And we are his house if we hold onto our courage and the hope of which we boast.

So as the Holy Spirit says, Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion. During the time of testing in the desert where your fathers tested and tried me and for 40 years saw what I did.

That is why I was angry with that generation. And I said, their hearts are always going astray and they have not known my ways. So I declared an oath in my anger, they shall never enter my rest.

See to it, brothers, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness.

We have come to share in Christ if we hold firmly till the end the confidence we had at first. As has just been said, today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as you did in the rebellion.

[ 2 : 1 9 ] Who were they who heard and rebelled? Were they not all those Moses led out of Egypt? And with whom was he angry for 40 years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the desert?

And to whom did God swear that they would never enter his rest if not to those who disobeyed? So we see that they were not able to enter because of their unbelief.

This is God's holy and inspired word. Let's pray and just still our hearts as we come before it this morning. Father, we thank you so much for our time together today.

And gracious Father, we ask now as we turn to your words, that you would take center stage. That you would take the microphone.

That your voice would be the one that fills our minds. And your spirit would be the one that directs our thoughts. And so gracious Father, we ask that you would come and be with us now.

- [ 3 : 17 ] Speak to us in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. So put your hands up this morning if you've ever been up Carlton Hill. East end of Princes Street, Carlton Hill. Good.
- Majority. I remember last time I went for X Factor and there was no one. So I thought, safe bet. Carlton Hill. I always like to think at Carlton Hill. I love Carlton Hill. I always like to think you get the views of Arthur's seat without the effort of Arthur's seat.
- Is that fair to say? It's not very long to go up Arthur's seat. But what I always love about Carlton Hill is going up and seeing this national monument.
- I don't know if you know the story behind the monument. But it was built to commemorate those who lost their lives in the Napoleonic Wars. And they hired this architect called William Clayfair who decided it was a good idea to build a Greek monument.
- And turn Edinburgh into the Athens of the North. So they started building in 1826. Three years later, having only put up 12 columns, project abandoned.
- [ 4 : 22 ] Now why was the project abandoned? Well, I guess on a superficial level they ran out of money. And it was a lot more effort than I thought I think they bargained for. But the underlying reason for the abandonment of that project was that the enthusiasm completely died.
- A project that started with such passion and drive quickly became costly and stale. Now, locals among us will know what is that called?
- What do we know that as? That is Edinburgh's disgrace. Now imagine the scenario tomorrow morning. Monday morning we pick up our papers. And the headline is Edinburgh Council decide to build new Greek monument.
- Three months into the project, having made the plans, having got the permissions, having got the stone, having got the labourers, having found the site, having started half the project, the council decide to down tools and abandon.
- Question for us this morning, how would we respond to that? Scandalous. That's how I'd respond to that. That is absolutely scandalous. What a waste of public money.
- [ 5 : 33 ] Making exactly the same mistakes that a previous generation made. Surely we've got to learn the lessons, we've got to persevere, and we've got to see it home.
- See, that's a big idea for us this morning. Got to see it home. That monument is Edinburgh's disgrace. And this morning, Hebrews 3 is taking us on a journey back in time to see Israel's disgrace.
- So the moment in the life of that nation that stands as a permanent blot in their copy book. Now why, you might ask, is Mr. Hebrews going there? Well, the people that he's got in his mind as he's writing this letter, he's scared for them and he's worried for them.
- Because he looks at them and he looks at what they're contemplating doing with their lives and he sees history about to repeat itself. This is what we've seen.
- We've been in this book for the last three weeks. We saw in chapter 1 that Jesus is 100% God. He is superior above all others. He's superior than the angels.
- [ 6 : 40 ] Chapter 2, Jesus is 100% man. He is our king, he's our savior and he's our brother. That's a glorious truth. That Christ is 100% God, he's 100% man.
- And so, he is superior in every way. Therefore, writes the writer. The gospel is glorious. And don't you dare turn back from it.
- Really what he's telling them to do this morning, two things. He's telling them to heed. Love that word. Heed. And he's telling them to hold. Heed and hold. Firstly, heed Israel's disgrace.
- Now, have you got your Bibles there? Verses 7 to 11. Verses 7 to 11. Thinking about his generation, Mr. Hebrews quotes from Psalm 95.

Psalm 95 takes us directly to the heart of Israel's disgrace. These are the mistakes of the Exodus generation. So, let me just run you through it.

[ 7 : 43 ]     God's people are slaves in Egypt. Moses says, let my people go. Pharaoh says, not a chance. Don't tell me about your God.

Who's he to me? These Hebrew people here, they're my slaves. God's people have got no hope of rescuing themselves. But God rescues them out of Egypt.

And I guess the climax of that deliverance comes in the parting of the Red Sea. And Moses leads the people through to the other side. And these people have gone for being slaves to a free people.

Free to worship their God and to live for him. And God knows where he is taking his people. This isn't some kind of project that God's got on the go.

He knows exactly where he's taken them. He's not left them to fend for themselves. He's taken them to the land which he promised their forefathers. We were singing about that earlier.

[ 8 : 45 ]     And along this journey, God provides for them at every single stage of the journey. He provides them leadership in the form of Moses. He provides for them physically water from the rock, manna from the sky to eat.

He provides for them protection from outside enemies who would try and defeat them. All of this with the aim of teaching them that they need to look to him for absolutely everything.

He is the God who is all-powerful, who has rescued them from the hands of this oppressor. And he is the God who is all-sufficient, who is the one who daily provides for their needs.

And as they journey on towards this land, and as God continues to show them his faithfulness to them, that he is committed to this people, the question is, are this people committed to God?

What is really going on in the hearts of that generation? And time and time again as they journey, you get snippets of the posture of their hearts.

[ 9 : 51 ]     They complain. They whine. They gossip. They accuse. And with the people on the cusp of the land, right there, we probably get the clearest indication of the state of their hearts.

Now remember what these people have seen physically. They've seen God perform the miraculous. They've seen him part the Red Sea. They've seen the plagues. They've seen him provide in the desert. They've seen him conquer their enemies.

They've seen all this. And they know that God has promised them this land. The question is, are they going to go in and take it? And so at Kadesh Barnea, this is where they are in geography, with the people on the cusp of the land, 12 spies are sent out on God's command to spy out this land.

Two of the spies come back and say those guys are big. But our God's bigger. And he's told us that this land is ours. So let's do it. The other 10.

There's some scary people in that land. Scary people. They're big people. And they live in big cities. So can we take it? I'm not so sure. I'm not so sure.

[ 11 : 02 ]     The hearts of two say yes. The hearts of 10 say no. Can we trust God is the question for this generation. The answer, no. And Psalm 95 tells us what God thinks of that.

Here is God's pronouncement at verse 10. That is why I was angry with that generation. I said their hearts are always going astray and they have not known my ways.

So I declared an oath in my anger. They shall never enter my rest. So you see, this is no incidental thing according to God. This is rebellion and this is defiance against him.

And there's a real finality about the pronouncement, isn't there? The word never. They will never enter. So the Exodus generation, symptoms, hearts astray, lack of trust, bitterness, unbelief, underlying root cause, hard-heartedness, result, after seeing that everything that God did and having started so well, failed to enter God's rest.

And Mr. Hebrews says, do you see the parallel? Do you see the parallel? Do you see the parallel to his generation? The real life's experiences and mistakes of that generation?

[ 12 : 22 ] That's a bit like your Christian life's. God delivered them from slavery in Egypt. And similarly, in Jesus Christ, God has delivered you from the power and hold of sin and death.

God had a plan and a place where he was taking that generation. Verse 1, you'll see it there. God has a plan and a place where he's taking you. It's a heavenly calling.

And in that in-between stage, they were being tested and shaped and tried, coming under trials. And you, in this in-between stage, are being shaped and tested and coming under trials.

So we, like them, are called to live by faith and not by sight. We, like them, are called to be guided and led by what God has said, rather than what we can see around us.

And Jesus, in Jesus, we have a leader who is leading us to a far better place than Moses ever could.

[ 13 : 24 ] So don't, whatever you do, don't, whatever you do, repeat the mistakes of the Exodus generation. See it home. See it home.

Friends, do you not know that to be true in your Christian faith, in your walk with God? It's the life of faith. Do we not know that in our own walks with God, that we know times of trial, that we know times of difficulty, that we know times of questioning, and that we are living by faith and not by sight.

Now, why is that the case? Because we're not home yet. In the meantime, God is teaching us things about ourselves and about himself, and he's shaping us more into the likeness of his son, Jesus Christ, all for his glory and our good.

This is the Christian life. And the call in the in-between stage of life for us, in this wilderness time, is to persevere and to see it home.

See what he's saying here? Don't make the same mistakes that that generation made. Now, I'll be honest, I was preparing for this this week, and at this point, this is where I found this passage really tough.

[ 14 : 34 ] And it's really sensitive, I find anyway, because do we not all know people in our lives, people who we love?

Sons, daughters, brothers, sisters, mums, dads, close friends who you grew up with and went on SU camp with, who started so strong in their faith, but have since dwindled away.

For me, I find that the most discouraging thing and probably the most disheartening thing in my Christian work. When you see people who started off so strong and who just don't think it's worth it anymore.

So what are we to do with that? What do we do when we see that happening right in front of our eyes? Well, this is where I find what Jesus said in the parable of the sower so comforting.

And it was really cool that we saw Luke act out earlier. He did it last week, whatever it is they do in kids' church. What do we do when we see that happening in front of us? Well, Jesus gives his disciples this parable of the word being sown.

[ 15 : 45 ] The word is being sown. And what does he say? He says, some will instantly dismiss it. Some will hear it and instantly it will go out of their minds. The devil will snatch it away.

Some will hear it. Some will accept it. And for a time will love it before the cares of the world will get in, choke the plant, and cause that initial enthusiasm, love for the Lord to dwindle.

Because there is no root. And I find it massively comforting that when I see that happening in my own life, then I know that it doesn't take Jesus by surprise.

It doesn't take him by surprise. He knows about it and he wants me to know about it. That's why it's there. Does God know those who are his? Is he still in control?

Absolutely. Absolutely. And do we need to persevere real time in our faith as we're heading towards that heavenly city? Absolutely. What does he say?

[ 16 : 49 ] The proof of the fourth type of soil in that parable. It's in the crop. It's in the fruit that is produced. That's how you'll know if the word is doing its work in someone's life. It's not about relying on a prayer that we prayed 27 years ago to prove that we're right before God.

Even though the evidence in our lives would suggest something completely different. The real proof of the pudding says the writer to the Hebrews is in the real time, day-to-day, nitty-gritty perseverance, striving for Jesus in our faith.

Now, so what do we do with our friends who have fallen away? Well, firstly, we pray. And we pray incessantly. And we pray persistently for our friends that God would open their eyes, that we take our anxieties to God in prayer.

That's what he calls us to do. We take them to him and we know that he cares and that he knows. We pray and we pursue. We pursue first and foremost.

We pursue God ourselves. Because I know it's true in my life that one of the best things I can do is live out in front of people a living and active pursuit of Jesus Christ. That they see in my life that he isn't just something that I do.

[ 18 : 04 ] This isn't something that I'm part of and come to. This is real. This is who I am. We pursue Jesus Christ and we pursue our friends for relationship.

We take every opportunity to speak of him and how glorious he is. That's what he says, Mr. Hebrews, to his generation. Don't move on.

See at home. Persevere. There's a generation of God's people who didn't see at home. You need to heed the warning and be a generation that does see at home. It's a message to Mr. San 95's generation.

It's a message to Mr. Hebrews' generation. And it's the message to our generation. Persevere. See at home. Keep pursuing Jesus Christ.

Been tough, hasn't it? That first, however long that was. It's a game of two halves of the sermon. Don't worry, we're moving on here. So let's take a deep breath because that is a lot to take in. That's a lot to take in.

[ 19 : 06 ] But he says, heed the warning. Heed the warning. And then what does he say? He says, hold to your faith. Now you'll notice if you've got your Bibles there, the idea of holding appears three times in this chapter.

Look with me. Verse 1. Fix your thoughts on Jesus. Quite literally, hold your thoughts on Jesus. Verse 6.

Hold fast our confidence. Hold our confidence. Don't need to be a genius to work out what he's telling them to do. He's telling them to hold.

He wants them to hold. The question is, how are they going to hold? Well, he's given them the defense. That is what they are not to do.

He also gives them the offense. Tells them what they are to do. He wants them to do four things. And here's what you want. I want you to do them with me. I'll act it out for you and you can act it back. OK? He wants them to do four things.

[ 20 : 03 ] He wants them to grasp. He wants them to fix. He wants them to check. And he wants them to encourage. OK? Can you do it with me? Do it with me.

OK. Four things. He wants them to grasp. He wants them to fix. He wants them to check. And he wants them to encourage. Now I don't do that, okay, to trivialize this.

I do that because what he says here, I found in my life this is so practical. This is a timeless truth. So these are good things, okay? So let's do the first one.

Grasp. Do it with me. Grasp. And this is to do with identity. Now you've seen in the news this week that David Bowie died. I was watching on the BBC.

He was before my generation. Yeah, we've got that. Interviews with David Bowie. I didn't really know the guy. Watching an interview montage with him on the BBC website.

[ 21 : 04 ] What a fascinatingly strange, beautiful, talented man. My take on it. And this interviewer asked him in an interview.

He said, David, Mr. Bowie, I don't know how you address him. It was so difficult to get you to come and do an interview here. And it was so difficult because offstage, the David Bowie that we know is so shy, he's so nervous, he avoids people.

And yet the David Bowie that we see on stage is enthusiastic, he's passionate, he's going for it. How does that work out? And David Bowie said that he created this character, Ziggy Stardust.

And it was him that people were seeing perform on stage. The David Bowie behind the scenes, when he came off stage, was a completely different character. Really interesting, isn't it?

David Bowie had this split personality thing going on. Now let me ask you this morning, friends. Where and what is your identity?

[ 22 : 11 ] He's saying to these Jewish Christians that they need to grasp something about their identity. First hand grasp, they need to grasp who Jesus is. Verse 3. Jesus has been found worthy of greater honour than Moses.

So Jesus is greater than Moses, that's what he's saying. And he illustrates it in verses 1 to 6 by contrasting Jesus and Moses. And interestingly, you'll notice the language and picture of a house.

God's people, that's what it says, that's what the house is, God's people. Moses was building that house as a servant. Jesus builds that house as a son, that's what he writes.

There's a difference in relationship. There's a difference in status. Now what is it about the son that makes his relationship with the house different to a servant?

Well a servant has got no rights over the house, he just builds it on behalf of another. But the son, his relationship with the house is that the house is his to inherit.

[ 23 : 15 ] You see what he's saying? That Jesus is the heir of God's people. Moses doesn't have that relationship to God's people. Jesus alone is the heir of his people.

And continuing on with the house language, look at verse 6. This is the second thing they need to grasp. They need to grasp who Jesus is, they need to grasp who they are. And it tells us some wonderful things here about the identity of the Christian believer.

Look with me, verse 1. Holy brothers and sisters, that's how he addresses them. Holy brothers and sisters, a people who God has set apart, who he has saved and called to live for him.

That's who they are. Who share in the heavenly calling. That's where they're going. And that's what they have now. And in verse 6, what does he write? And we are his house.

If indeed we hold firmly to our confidence and the hope in which we glory. His house. That's what we are. His house. Not our house. We are his house. We are Jesus' house.

[ 24 : 18 ] Now I was thinking on it this week. What is it? Why does he use that house imagery? Why didn't he pick something different? Why house? Well Jesus is the owner and the inheritor of the house.

We've seen that. He bought it with his blood. He paid the price for the house, his people on the cross. But Jesus isn't running a buy to let scheme here with this house that he's bought.

Jesus bought the house to live in it. Jesus, by his spirit, lives in the hearts of his people. Not as a fleeting resident, but as a permanent dweller.

Now maybe you're here this morning and you're not a Christian. Well let me ask you, having seen that, where do you get your identity from? You know we live in a world, doesn't it, that hits us with so many different things that we can get our identity from.

Our job, our degree, our school, the school our kids go to, the car that we drive, the street that we live in, our postcodes. Now whatever the blank is in your life, here is the identity that you were made for.

[ 25 : 30 ] Here is the identity, a relationship with the God who made you, your creator that you were made for. And here is the only destination that will last eternally.

And to those who walk by faith, well we are his house. That's our identity. Isn't that wonderful? That we are Christ's possession, we are his, he bought us.

He hasn't abandoned us, he hasn't said I'll see you when you get there. He lives with us. It's beautiful. Grasp who he is, grasp who you are. That's how firstly you're going to help yourself to hold.

Second thing they need to do is they need to fix. They need to fix their thoughts. Verse 1, look what he writes. Therefore, holy brothers and sisters who share in the heavenly calling, fix your thoughts on Jesus.

Fix your thoughts on Jesus. Now remember as a boy, every single summer we used to go on holidays to Fife. Fife and being in Fife and being Scottish, learning how to play golf, it seemed to be rude not to.

[ 26 : 44 ] And my dad spent hours teaching me how to play golf. And really the 101 about golf, if I can simplify it like this, is all about your swing. All about your swing. Put your hands up if there's some golfers in the room.

Brilliant. When you swing, where do your eyes need to be? Go on Jamie, help me out brother. On the ball. What happens if you take your eyes off the ball?

You miss it. Good. Any other words we want to go for there, golfing terms? A shank. Brilliant. See, growing up with the name shanks, playing golf. Beautiful. You need to have your eyes on the ball.

If you take your eyes off the ball for a single second, everything goes to pot. And this is what he's urging them to do here. Fix your eyes.

Hold your thoughts on Jesus. Do not take them off him. Now to fix requires effort, doesn't it? It doesn't just happen naturally.

[ 27 : 46 ] It requires focus and it requires discipline. And here's how this works out in my life. When it comes to fixing my thoughts on Jesus, the issue is not resources.

If ever there was a generation where lack of material is not an excuse, then it is our generation. We have the Bible in our language. In my office I have yearly Bible reading plans and prayer notes up to my eyeballs in there.

The issue is not resources. The issue is resolve. Will I take seriously the summons to fix my eyes on Jesus? Will I devote myself to his words?

Will I resolve myself to seeking his face in prayer? Will I live my life according to his word? Will I pull out all the stops in my life to fix my thoughts on Jesus?

Now he doesn't say that so that they'll take a box. He says that because he knows that if they do that, they'll come to know and love Jesus Christ more.

[ 28 : 53 ] And if they come to know and love Jesus more, if he becomes the sole focus in pursuit of their lives, then they'll love his people more. And they'll love the world around them more.

And they'll love the lost more. And they'll begin to see things according to how God sees things. Now you'll know that old hymn. Turn your eyes upon Jesus. Look full in his wonderful face.

And the things of earth will grow strangely dim in the light of his glory and grace. Fix your thoughts on Jesus. Third thing they need to do, they need to check their hearts.

Verse 12. See to it, brothers and sisters, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. See what he's writing here?

Examine the condition of your hearts. Let me ask you this morning. What is this condition of your heart before your maker this morning? And if you're struggling to think of that, then a good indication of that will be what do you see coming out of your life?

[ 30 : 02 ] An honest reflection. Do you see evidence of hard-heartedness? Is there coming out of you a complaining spirit? Is there deep down inside of you brewing bitterness at someone or something?

Is there a growing sense of discontentment about where God has you and what's going on in your life? Are you quick to be critical of others in your speech and in your thoughts?

Do you take pleasure from pointing out the speck in other people's eyes? All the while ignoring the plank in your own? Now the thing is, we all stumble in this respect, don't we?

We all fall short of this. But the evidence of a hard heart is one that has become numb. And it's one that has become callous and unreceptive to hearing God's voice in your life.

And seeing that that is not how God has told his people to live. And how does that happen? Well, he says it right here. We stop listening to his voice.

[ 31 : 07 ] We stop reading our Bibles. We stop meeting with others. And a distance becomes created between us and God. Friends, let me ask you this morning, what role does repentance play in your Christian life?

As we turn, as we say no to ourselves, and as we say yes to God, as we repent, as we look to him, and lastly, fourth thing they need to do, they need to encourage.

I thought I had encourage. I don't. Here we go. Do your homework. Verse 13. So Mr. Hebrews moves from looking at the individual to looking at the collective.

And really, the idea here is that we need each other to see at home, to persevere. Now, I had this really awkward moment when I was out jogging this week on Wednesday before our small group came around.

And I'm jogging along beside Inverleaf Park. And a jogger comes right in beside me. And for about 800 meters, we jog at the same pace. Really awkward. And after a while, though, I noticed that he started getting a little bit ahead of me.



[ 32 : 25 ] A little bit ahead of me. Now, my question to you is, what do you think happened to my speed? Someone. It increased. Absolutely. Do we not know it to be true that when someone is running alongside us that it spurs on?

And I knew that was true in my experience because about a mile up the road, he turns into Inverleaf Park. What do you think happened to my speed? It decreased. Now, you're just saying it's your athletic pride group.

You're probably right. But do we not know that to be true in our Christian walks? That we need others alongside us to spur us on, to push us on, to encourage us?

Let me ask you this morning, have you slowed down in your race? Are you quietly withdrawing from the Christian life? Are other things becoming priorities in your life and distracting your pursuit of Jesus Christ?

Are you stepping back in your involvement in church life? Do you have others in your life who you are running alongside? You see his point here to a people who are tempted to turn back from Jesus.

[ 33 : 36 ] He says it will massively help you if you're encouraging one another and running alongside each other. We need to be spurring one another on. And how do we best do that?

It's about proximity. Closeness to one another. Let me challenge you this morning. Whatever age demographic you're at, however long you've been here. Have you settled in your life in the church?

Have you settled for living a life in the fringes? Have you settled for your church involvement being simply in the circumference of the thing? Have you withdrawn from the centre and are now out of the circumference?

If that's you this morning, then see the danger of what you're doing. And see that you're massively missing out from the encouragement that church is. Now this works out in a few ways, doesn't it?

Students, guys, have you been here for a while? Are you still on the fringes of church? Are you doing this church hopping thing that goes on? Are you going to come to the centre and be encouraged and be fed and be challenged and be changed?

[ 34 : 39 ] And go out and change the world for Jesus? Parents, young families, are we doing the same? Young workers, are we doing the same in our lives as well? Guys that are retired, maybe you've moved on.

Have you passed over the baton? Do you see how we cannot afford to do this? We need to be spurring one another on. Every single generation, interacting with one another. Spurring one another on.

Great opportunities coming up in the next few weeks. Small groups are on. You need to be part of a small group. Let's get involved. A smaller group where you can spur one another on. There will be several prayer meetings this week.

Chances to encourage one another in our prayer. Make the most of them. And as we do this thing on a Sunday morning, don't be so quick to run. Get involved in what's going on.

Speak to one another. Be encouraged. Encourage someone else. How are these Hebrews going to hold in their Christian walk? Well, they're going to grasp. Come on, do it one more time. They're going to grasp.

[ 35 : 36 ] They're going to fix. They're going to check. And they're going to encourage. Now we started by looking at Edinburgh's disgrace, Carlton Hill. Well, if you type in Greek monument into Google, other search engines are available.

So, not so far below Edinburgh comes Nashville. And 60 years or so after Edinburgh's failed attempt, botched attempt at this, the city of Nashville showed us how it's done.

And they built this magnificent full-scale replica to celebrate their state's 100th anniversary. And there's now a massive public park. You can't see it in that picture. Massive public park.

It's one of the centerpieces of their state. Just as costly and hard a project that they saw at home. Edinburgh's disgrace, Nashville's triumph.

That's the summons of Hebrews chapter 3. Learn the lessons of the past. Persevere, pursue Christ. And let's see it home. Let's pray together as we close. And just in the silence now, if you need to do business with God, if you need to pray, then just use this time of silence to do that.

[ 36 : 42 ] Amen. So, Father, as we close, we would ask for your help. Lord, to be those who wholeheartedly follow and pursue you.

That we be those who hold tight to you, who hold our thoughts on your son, Jesus Christ. And so we ask for your spirit's help this week as we live in this world, as we interact with different people in different places.

That we would live for you and for your glory. And we pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen.