

A rural landscape featuring a wooden barn, a metal silo, and several trees in the middle ground. The foreground is a field of tall grass. The sky is filled with large, dark, dramatic clouds, suggesting an approaching storm or late afternoon light. The overall mood is contemplative and serene.

Giving Thanks in Uncertain Times

A Thanksgiving Message

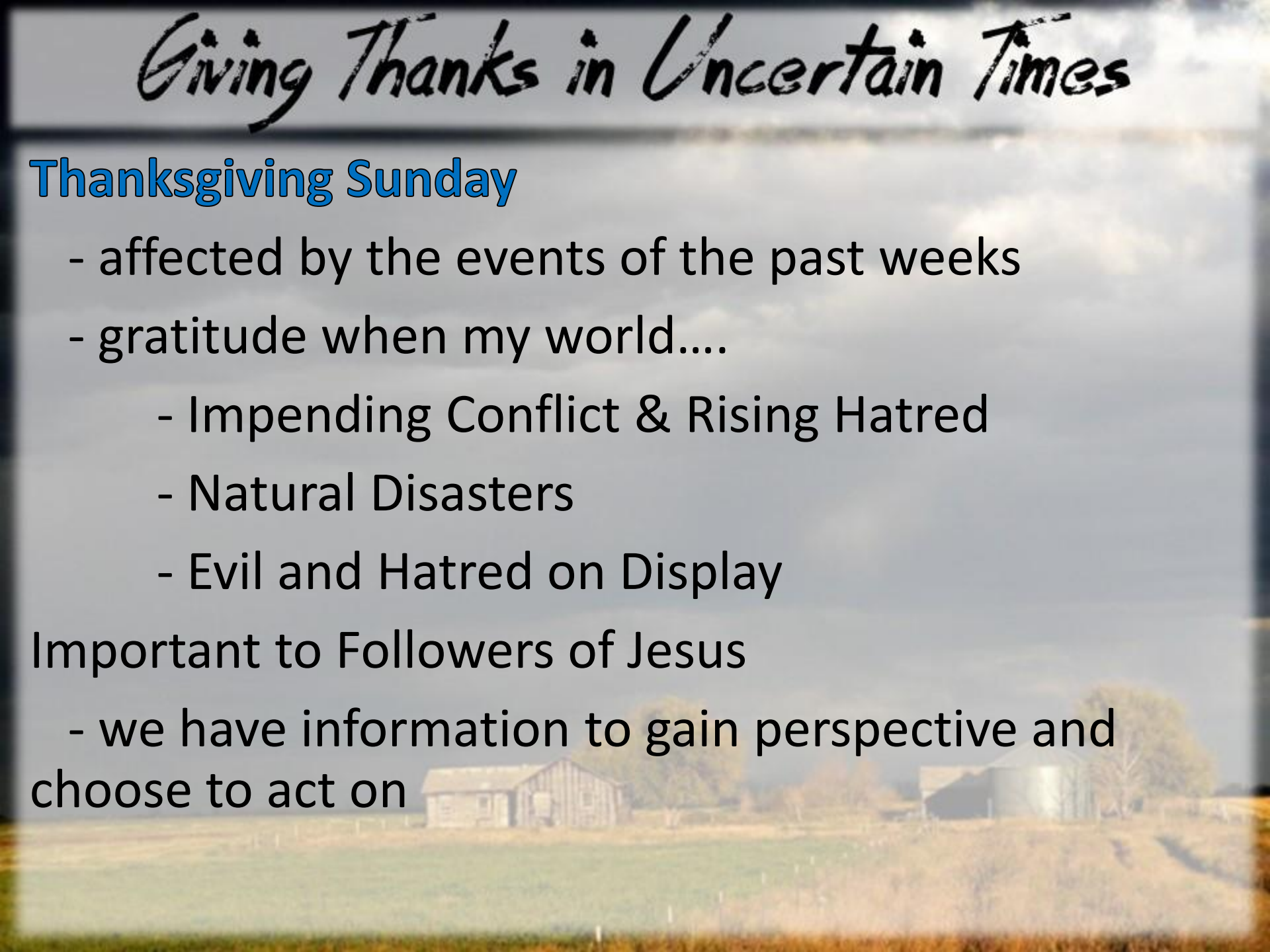
Giving Thanks in Uncertain Times

Thanksgiving Sunday

- affected by the events of the past weeks
- gratitude when my world....
 - Impending Conflict & Rising Hatred
 - Natural Disasters
 - Evil and Hatred on Display

Important to Followers of Jesus

- we have information to gain perspective and choose to act on



Giving Thanks in Uncertain Times

1. Gain Perspective

- gaining a big view of reality
- GPS – three points of triangulation

a) Gratitude – giving thanks

- biblical principle over and over
- begin with seeing blessings the small things
- something begins to shift in identifying what you have before focusing on what you don't make sense of.

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- 1 Thess. 5:16-18 "Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."

- Phil. 4:4-7 "Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

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b) Eternity

- tendency – all about here and now

- 2 Peter 3:7-10 *“But by the same word the heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly. But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.*

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But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed.”

- Jesus goes to prepare a place – John 14
- Returning and Judging – Matt 25, Rom 2
- Wrath of God a Scary Thing – Rom. 2, I Cor. 4
- Hearts revealed and judged – Matt. 25
- Eternal reward – heaven or conscious torment

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c) Authority and Rule of God

- God is able and accomplishing His will
 - Isaiah 46:8-11
- God's ways are not ours
 - Isaiah 55:8-9
- God is Active in our lives and world
 - Isaiah 64:4
- God warned us it would be difficult
 - 2 Tim. 3:12-15

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2 Timothy 3:12-15

¹² In fact, everyone who wants to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted, ¹³ while evildoers and impostors will go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived. ¹⁴ But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, ¹⁵ and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

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2. Aligning My Feelings

- gaining perspective, honest about feelings

a) Sense of Justice Offended - Angry

- reflection of God in us
- exercise of others free will brought pain and death
- someone needs to pay
- struggle to love my enemies, not seek to repay evil with evil

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- God will dispense justice and pour out his wrath on the unrighteous

- Rom. 12:19 *“Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.”*

- Heb. 10:30 *“For we know him who said, “Vengeance is mine; I will repay.” And again, “The Lord will judge his people.” It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.”*

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- Psalm 4:4 *“Be angry, and do not sin; ponder in your own hearts on your beds, and be silent. Offer right sacrifices, and put your trust in the LORD.”*
- Eph. 4:26 *“Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and give no opportunity to the devil.”*
- David – ‘yet this I call to mind’ – Choice
- release offenders to God
- check my speech & actions in my anger
- aware of my witness in tragedy

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b) Safety and Security

- shaken in feeling safe anywhere

- adjusting plans, worrying about others

- Isaiah 41:10 *“fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God; I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.”*

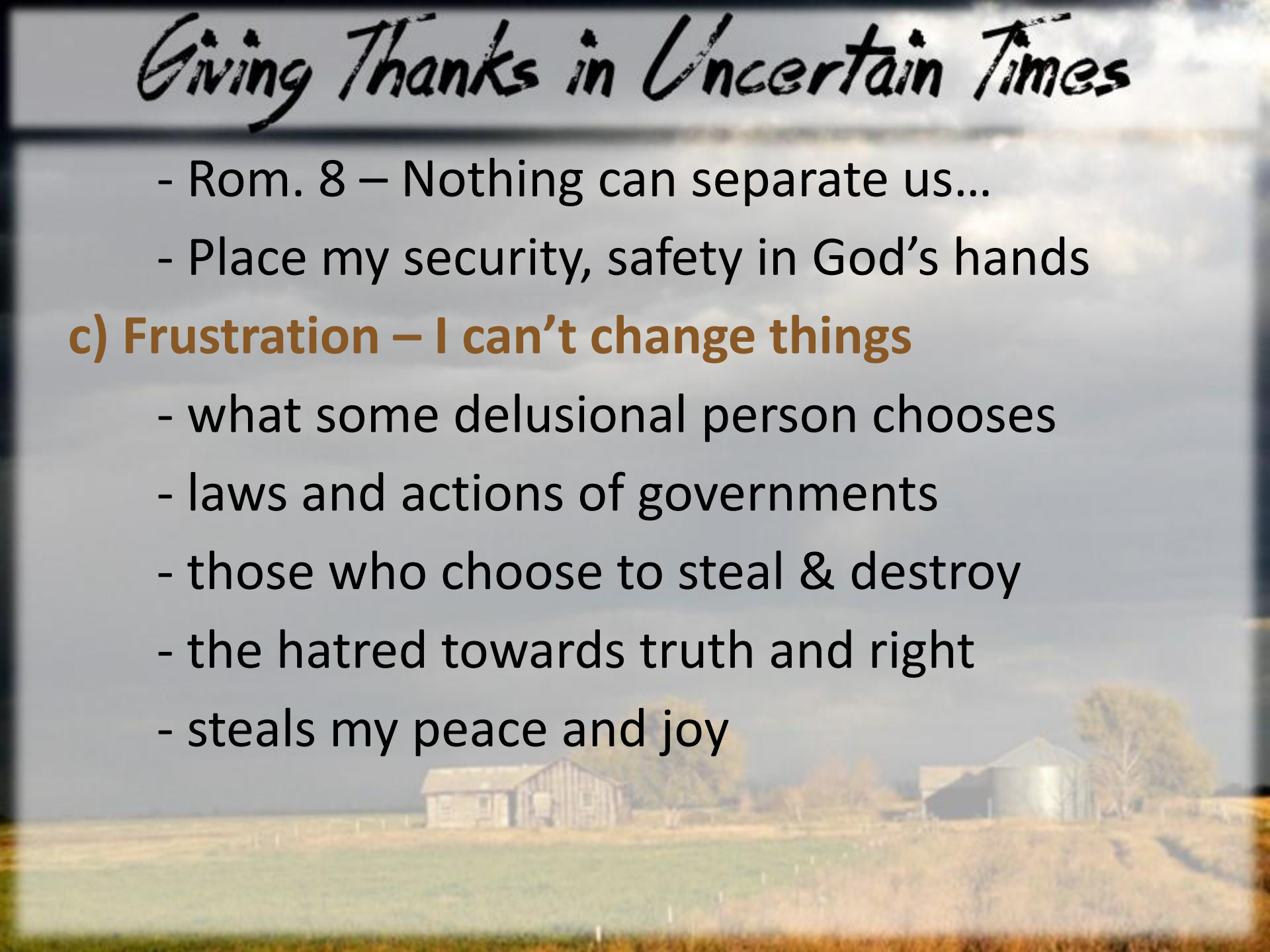
- 2 Cor. 4:7-9 *“But we have this treasure in jars of clay, to show that the surpassing power belongs to God and not to us. We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed”*

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- Rom. 8 – Nothing can separate us...
- Place my security, safety in God's hands

c) Frustration – I can't change things

- what some delusional person chooses
- laws and actions of governments
- those who choose to steal & destroy
- the hatred towards truth and right
- steals my peace and joy



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- Phil 4:4-7 "Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

- Proverbs 3:5-8 "Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. Be not wise in your own eyes; fear the LORD, and turn away from evil. It will be healing to your flesh and refreshment to your bones."

Giving Thanks in Uncertain Times

3. My Response Matters

a) Just words without practical action

- choosing to walk road
- asking Jesus for help to walk

b) Witness to the World

- redemptive work of God involves you

c) Peace impossible without this

- John 14 – not as the world leaves
- at rest in the storm

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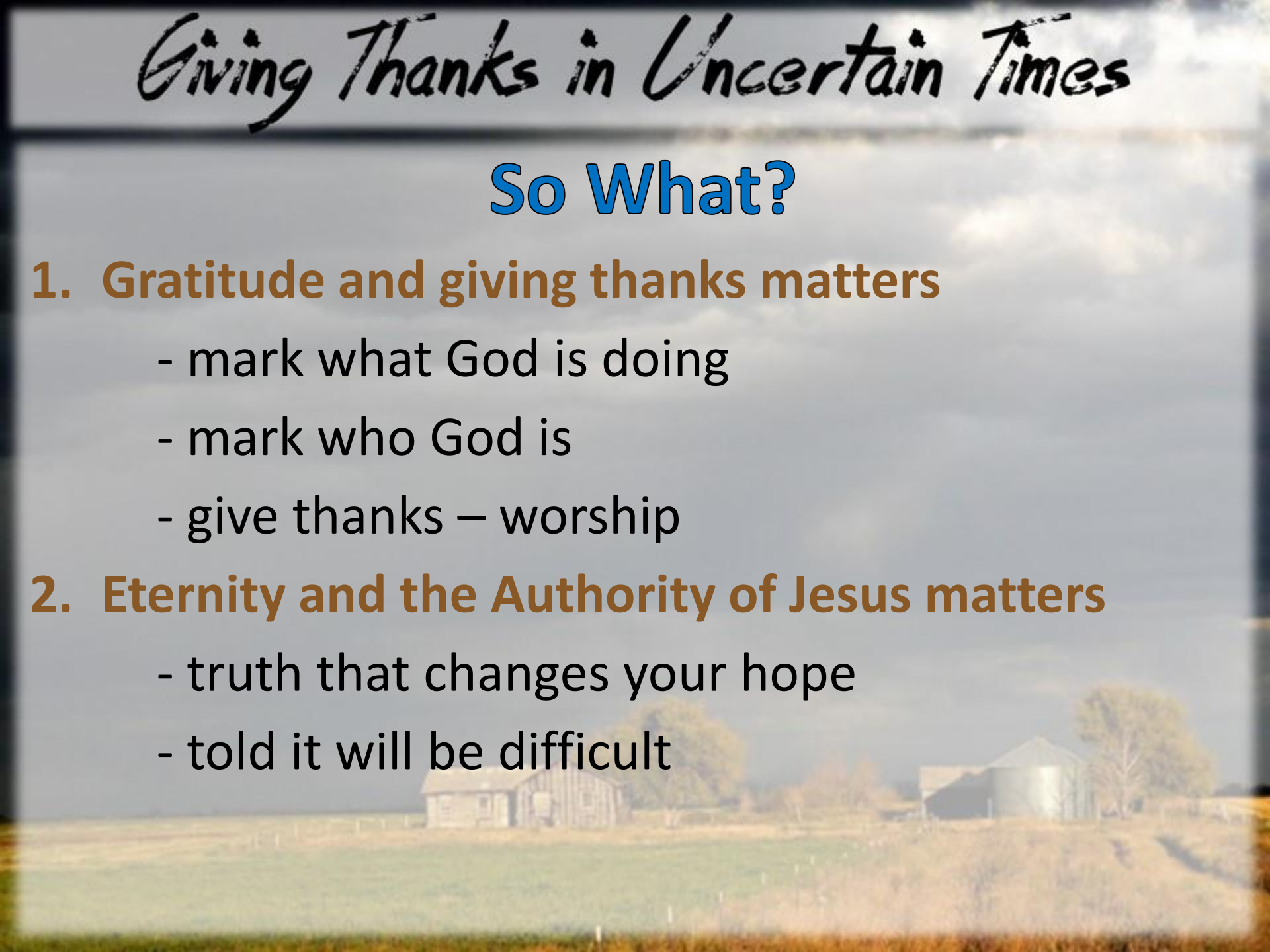
So What?

1. Gratitude and giving thanks matters

- mark what God is doing
- mark who God is
- give thanks – worship

2. Eternity and the Authority of Jesus matters

- truth that changes your hope
- told it will be difficult



Giving Thanks in Uncertain Times

3. Honesty with your Feelings

- acknowledge them
- hold them up to perspective
- check them with biblical truth
- choose with Jesus help to walk that road

