**Series: Strengthening your Core?  
Scripture and Background Information for September 05-11.**

To prepare for your group discussion each week**,** group members should use the **Community Group Discussion Guide** to complete the **GOD’S WORDS** and **MY WORDS** columns using the scripture below.

This week we finish up the series, “*Strengthening your Core*?” With this series, we focused on strengthening the core to enhance and improve all other muscles. We focused on the mission of our church and how we can accomplish that mission. Today, we will look at **1Thess 1:8-10** and talk about “*Engaging your World*.”

**Background for 1Thess 1:8-10**  
Although the church in Thessalonica faced persecution and tribulation, the church flourished. Paul wrote the letter to the church, encouraging them to continue pressing on in their faith. After reflecting on their core (Christ), Paul praised God for the church’s transformation in community. By receiving the Word of God with joy, the church became an example for many other believers. Today, Paul praises God for the church’s investment into the world. They did not keep the word for themselves, but they brought it into their world. Also, by bringing the Word of God into their world, the Thessalonians brought faith into their world.

Questions to engage with the text:

1. There are different types of “moving” going on in the text. What is moving in the text? From what are things moving? Toward what are things moving? In what ways are the Thessalonians an example for us with those “moves?”
2. Strengthening the core starts with a Christ-driven life. Christ needs to be at the center. The Holy Spirit helps us as church-family to be transformed together. Our faith in God is the message with which we engage the world. Note, Paul praises God for the faith of the Thessalonians, that was not only *evident in talk, but also walk* (1:5)!   
   Considering our text, how can we as a church, you as a community group, or you as individuals engage in our world?
3. The church in Thessalonica was a serving church. They stopped serving their idols and started serving the living God. By serving the living God, they engaged in their world. How do you understand the connection between serving God and engaging our world?

*Note: The church of Thessalonica found itself in tribulation. Nevertheless, they had a hope that drove them to receive the Word of God in great joy. The same hope drove them to live out their faith, to bring others into the same hope of eternal salvation, apart from God’s wrath. The church became an example for enduring persecution with joy, but it also became an example of reaching the world although facing persecution.*