

Life Group Notes 8/28/2022
Mark Warren Peter's Epistles Week 5

If these notes are useful to you, and you've enjoyed them, or if you have observations or questions feel free send me an email with your comment or observations at tbeachhead@comcast.net.—Pete Mehegan, the Scribe.

(This is written to give you good things to enjoy, because look again at what Paul told Timothy (1 Tim 6:17-18)! I think he was thinking of us at the time: **17 Instruct those who are rich in the present age not to be conceited and not to put their hope in the uncertainty of wealth, but in God, WHO RICHLY PROVIDES ALL THINGS TO ENJOY. 18 Instruct them to do good, to be rich in good works, and to be generous and ready to share...**)

The following ice breaker is just a starter for your group. The message comes after the bar. Please be obedient and enjoy!

CROWD BREAKER What is the difference between an older believer, with years behind his salvation, and a new believer? Do you have a testimony of something you've done with folks in prison, or newly released?

Note: Be good to one another. Be sensitive and kind. Let God heal our hearts...and guide our discussions. **PLEASE PRE-READ THESE NOTES AND CHOOSE THE DIRECTION THAT IS APPROPRIATE FOR YOUR GROUP. The purpose is to unite, not divide; to proclaim fearlessly the freedom the gospel brings. Any part of these notes might be appropriate as a crowd breaker for your own group. The goal is to create memories from Sunday that will serve for a long time. BE COGNIZANT OF YOUR GROUP'S TIME AND BE SENSITIVE! Some groups would like to dwell on a single idea. Let the Spirit be your guide. Never feel obligated to complete this study. This study is also a great devotion, taken slowly through the week.**

Note: I have highlighted suggested discussion questions Pastor Mark has raised this week, 8/28. Let's allow the Holy Spirit to guide all our discussions, using the highlights as trail blazes. **The purpose is to minister to one another.**

Mark's three leading points:

- Peter's instruction to you who are "older" in your faith.
- Peter's encouragement to you who are "younger" in your faith
- Should you be concerned about Satan and what he is trying to do to you?

What do you remember?

Instructions to Elders

(1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9) (Scribes note: These refer to the qualities requisite in an elder.)

1As a fellow elder, (See scribe's note on elder below.) a witness of Christ's sufferings, and a partaker of the glory to be revealed, I appeal to the elders among you: **What is Peter saying when he calls himself a "fellow elder?" Why doesn't he pull the "apostle card?" Did you notice he mentions Christ's sufferings again? And he calls himself an eyewitness. Why? How does Peter's being an eyewitness enhance his testimony and his exhortation? When Jesus told us in Matthew 28 and Mark 16 that WE would be His witnesses, how does us actually SEEING add to our own credibility when we testify? What do you think: Can an elder just be someone who has seen more than others?**

Mark says your job as a believer with more experience is to "exercise oversight for the newer, younger believers." **What does this make you think? Mark asks, "Why haven't you identified yourself as an elder? Answer his question. Is it a fair question? What do you think holds us back?**

What is "the glory to be revealed?" Flashback: Look up 1 Peter 1:5. **5who through faith are shielded by God's power for the salvation that is ready to be revealed in the last time. **Do you remember? What stands ready to be revealed? What have we NOT YET SEEN?** **2**Be shepherds of God's flock that is among you, watching over them not out of compulsion, but because it is God's will; not out of greed, but out of eagerness; **3**not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock. **What does being an example involve? Whose interests come first? Look at what Paul tells the Philippians in chapter 2: **2**then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being united in spirit and purpose. **3**Do nothing out of selfish ambition or empty pride, but in humility consider others more important than yourselves. **4**Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others....What kind of Christian is Paul seeking to raise up? Explain. How are these qualities of an elder?** Peter continues: **4**And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away. **Why? What brings the reward? If you know you are actually influencing the future elders of the church, that is, the elders to come, does that change your attitude? Your sense of urgency?****

Cast Your Cares on Him

5Young men, in the same way, submit yourselves to your elders. **Mark says, "Younger not in age, but younger in the faith." Does that make sense in this context? Why? What can one younger in the faith gain from the experiences of their "elders" in the faith?**

And all of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because,

"God opposes the proud,

but gives grace to the humble.” **Read again what Paul said to the Philippians above. What does it mean to “clothe yourself?” When Peter says, “All of you,” to whom is he speaking? Why does this work so well?**

Has God ever opposed you? Has he ever given you grace? Do you have a testimony?

Peter goes one step further:

6Humble yourselves, therefore, under God’s mighty hand, so that in due time He may exalt you. **What does this remind you of? Look at what Jesus said in Luke 14:** **8**“When you are invited to a wedding banquet, do not sit in the place of honor, in case someone more distinguished than you has been invited. **9**Then the host who invited both of you will come and tell you, ‘Give this man your seat.’ And in humiliation, you will have to take the last place.

10But when you are invited, go and sit in the last place, so that your host will come and tell you, ‘Friend, move up to a better place.’ Then you will be honored in front of everyone at the table with you. **11**For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and the one who humbles himself will be exalted.” **Do you have a testimony? How does this parable speak to what Paul told the Philippians above? Mark asks, “When’ the last time you woke up and said, ‘God, not my will but yours be done?’” Answer his question.**

7Cast all your anxiety (cares) on Him, because He cares for you. (Scribe’s note: This is one of the most memorized promises of scripture. **What does it say to you?** The Greek expressions in this sentence exceed the English translation here in promise: “Casting” is what we think of when throw things definitively away: Judas “cast” the coins in the temple. Folks “cast” their cloaks and palms branches before Jesus on Palm Sunday; on Paul’s ship in the tempest, all the stores were “cast” into the sea. It’s a permanent toss. Your cares are all your worries, anxieties and doubts. But, notice, “he cares” could be translated, “You matter to Him. You are on His mind. He actually cares.”) Mark says, “He wants you close. You matter to Him... And why? Because He will take it.” You will bear those anxieties no more. He will take those cares away. **Now what does this promise say?**

8Be sober-minded and alert. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. **“Did you know you have an enemy?” Answer Mark’s question. How important, then, is it to be sober minded and alert? When is a good time to let our guard down? How does the devil find an inroad? What tools is he using these days?** **9**Resist him, standing firm in your faith and in the knowledge that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kinds of suffering. **Look at what James says in chapter 4:** **6***But He gives us more grace. This is why it says:*

*“God opposes the proud,
but gives grace to the humble.”*

7*Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. **8**Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands,*

you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. ⁹Grieve, mourn, and weep. Turn your laughter to mourning, and your joy to gloom. ¹⁰Humble yourselves before the Lord, and He will exalt you. **What themes does James take up that Peter has mentioned? What steps does James outline to resist the devil? What is involved in humbling yourself that Peter doesn't mention? What comes first before resisting the devil? Why?**

What have you done to resist Him lately? Has it worked? Can you share? Is it comforting to know that your family throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of suffering?

Pastor Mark says, "Do you know that you are a threat to the enemy?" **Answer him.** "Do you know that he's coming after you?" **What does this make you think?** Pastor Mark depicts a lion in the method of his stalking his prey. "He'll go after the one who is straying from the pack. If you're not with the pack, you are vulnerable, and if you're with the pack you're safe. He's going for the one who is vulnerable." **What does this make you think? Look up 2 Corinthians 11: 13** For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, masquerading as apostles of Christ. ¹⁴And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. ¹⁵It is not surprising, then, if his servants masquerade as servants of righteousness. Their end will correspond to their actions. **In what form can satan appear and lead the vulnerable astray? How easily is one led astray by false doctrines and "disinformation"? How has disinformation divided this country today? What do the apostles prescribe as a key to resisting the devil in this regard? (Don't make up your answers. Read again what James and Peter said.) Take a minute to look up Psalm 91: 1** He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High

will abide in the shadow of the Almighty.

²I will say to the LORD, "You are my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust."

³Surely He will deliver you from the snare of the fowler, **Mark points out who the fowler is. How safe is the one who makes God his refuge?**

and from the deadly plague.

⁴He will cover you with His feathers; under His wings you will find refuge; His faithfulness is a shield and rampart.

⁵You will not fear the terror of the night, nor the arrow that flies by day,

⁶nor the pestilence that stalks in the darkness, nor the calamity that destroys at noon.

⁷Though a thousand may fall at your side, and ten thousand at your right hand,

no harm will come near you.

8You will only see it with your eyes
and witness the punishment of the wicked.

9Because you have made the LORD your dwelling—
my refuge, the Most High—

10no evil will befall you,
no plague will approach your tent.

11For He will command His angels concerning you
to guard you in all your ways.

12They will lift you up in their hands,
so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.

13You will tread on the lion and cobra;
you will trample the young lion and serpent.

14“Because he loves Me, I will deliver him;
because he knows My name, I will protect him.

15When he calls out to Me,
I will answer him;

I will be with him in trouble.

I will deliver him and honor him.

16With long life I will satisfy him
and show him My salvation.”

How safe are we when we follow the steps Peter and James lay out? Why is a life group a safe place?)

Benediction and Farewell

10And after you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself restore you, secure you, strengthen you, and establish you. **Look at each of these promises. Now look again at Psalm 91. How biblical are these promises? What do they mean to you? What does “restore” mean? Look up Joel 2:** “So I will restore to you the years that the swarming locust has eaten, The crawling locust, The consuming locust, And the chewing locust, My great army which I sent among you. **What has been lost? Have you ever lost hope? Can you see it being restored? Is it worth the effort? Why? See these promises as enacted on you today? How well will you sleep tonight?** **11**To Him be the power forever and ever. Amen. **Can you say “Amen?” When the power is with Him, does it stay with Him? Where does He pour it out? Why? Why does He care for you?**

12Through Silvanus, whom I regard as a faithful brother, I have written to you briefly, encouraging you and testifying that this is the true grace of God. Stand firm in it. **How important is this exhortation? Why?**

13 The church in Babylon, chosen together with you, sends you greetings, as does my son Mark. **How significant is Peter's acknowledgement of Mark? (See scribes note on Mark below.)**

14 Greet one another with a kiss of love. **Talk about private space. Does a touch bring people closer?**

Peace to all of you who are in Christ. **Can you say "Amen?"**

Take the time to pray.

Scribe's notes:

On elders: The Greek word for "elder" πρεσβύτερος, **4245** *presbýteros* is translated "a *mature man* having seasoned judgment (experience); an *elder*." It's a state of being before it's an office in the church requiring, as Paul notes to both Timothy and Titus, a degree of maturity and self-control that is borne of the present-day actions and reputation. Older believers have an obligation to act like believers...and to pass on the meaning of maturity to new believers.

Scribe's note on Mark: Notice how our friend Mark returns now as a friend of Peter. Remember it was to Mark's mother's house that Peter first went to after James was beheaded, and he was released from prison by an angel (Acts 12). Barnabas' cousin and the cause of the first church split in Acts between Barnabas and Paul ends up as one of the four gospel writers, and as a friend in the end to both Peter and Paul. **How does this speak to restoration?**