

Life Group Notes 08/29/2021 Streamed Week 71

Mark Warren: Romans week 13 Chapter 13

(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 second bar. Please enjoy!)

CROWD BREAKER: What heroes of WWII have you heard of who resisted Germany and rescued Jews? Can you share the stories you've heard? What happened to them? Pray for the oppressed. Pray for the Christians under persecution. PRAY SPECIFICALLY FOR THE PERSECUTORS, that EVERY MEMBER OF ISIS OR THE TALIBAN BECOME A PAUL by visitation and revelation and begin to evangelize.

—The scribe

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 fearlessly proclaim 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 raised by Pastor Mark's message from this Sunday. 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.**

Submit to Government

¹Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God.

Explain this: Proverbs 29:2 ²When the righteous flourish, the people rejoice, but when the wicked rule, the people groan. How do the "wicked" come to "rule?" Does Paul's instruction change when the wicked rule?

(History tells us Nero was emperor when Romans was written, c. 57-58 AD. Nero was known for his brutal, deliberate persecution of Christians, so brutal, in fact, the historian Tacitus says that he aroused “a feeling of compassion for the Christians” to such an extent, that the empire began to turn to Christianity.) ([Nero's Persecution of Christians \(johnchristy.com\)](http://johnchristy.com)) **How does this put Paul's instruction into perspective.**

Now answer Mark's question: How did the holocaust come to happen? How did the Germans succumb to such a diabolical policy, and back it? Mark says the Germans were able to isolate and dehumanize groups of people so that Jews, homosexuals, the disabled were labeled a risk to everyone else, and so these were “euthanized”, mercilessly killed. In the book “Twisted Cross: The German Christian Movement in the Third Reich” author Doris Bergen states that 98% of Germans were Christian at the time of Hitler's Rule. **What happened that Germans Christians followed the Nazi policy?**

Talk about Rwanda 1994: What do you remember? What happened? How could that happen?

Is there a time to submit to government authorities? Is there a time and a place where we say, “No”?

²Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves. ³For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to evil. Do you want to be unafraid of the authority? Do what is good, and you will have praise from the same. ⁴For he is God's minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God's minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil. ⁵Therefore you must be subject, not only because of wrath but also for conscience' sake. ⁶For because of this you also pay taxes, for they are God's ministers attending continually to this very thing. ⁷Render therefore to all their due: taxes to whom taxes are due, customs to whom customs, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor. **What do we owe government, according to Paul? What do we not submit to government? What are OUR INALIENABLE RIGHTS, endowed unto us by our creator?**

Mark says, “We cannot just say, ‘Throw out the government,’ because God has instituted it. **So...what is our response? Look up 1 Peter 2:13-17** ¹³Submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human institution, whether to a king as the one in authority, ¹⁴or to governors as sent by him for the punishment of evildoers and the praise of those who do right. ¹⁵For such is the will of God that by doing right you may silence the ignorance of foolish men. ¹⁶Act as free men, and do not use your freedom as a covering for evil, but use it as bondslaves of God. ¹⁷Honor all people, love the brotherhood, fear God, honor the king. **How does this parallel what Paul said? So...what is our response?** (1 Peter was written 65-68 AD. Nero was emperor until 68.) **What is going on?**

How did God use Joseph? How did God use Daniel? What was their attitude toward Pharaoh and the Emperors of Babylon, the Medes and the Persians? How did they submit? How did they rebel? How does this instruct us?

Look up 1 Sam 15:22-23 ²²But Samuel declared: “Does the LORD delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obedience to His voice? Behold, obedience is better than sacrifice, and attentiveness is better than the fat of rams. ²³For rebellion is like the sin of

divination, and arrogance is like the wickedness of idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, He has rejected you as king.” ... ***How did Samuel get away with that?***

Look up 2 Kings 12:1-9 **1**Then the LORD sent Nathan to David, and when he arrived, he said, “There were two men in a certain city, one rich and the other poor. **2**The rich man had a great number of sheep and cattle, **3**but the poor man had nothing except one small ewe lamb that he had bought. He raised it, and it grew up with him and his children. It shared his food and drank from his cup; it slept in his arms and was like a daughter to him.

4Now a traveler came to the rich man, who refrained from taking one of his own sheep or cattle to prepare for the traveler who had come to him. Instead, he took the poor man’s lamb and prepared it for his guest.” **5**David burned with anger against the man and said to Nathan: “As surely as the LORD lives, the man who did this deserves to die! **6**Because he has done this thing and has shown no pity, he must pay for the lamb four times over.”

7Then Nathan said to David, “You are that man! This is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says: ‘I anointed you king over Israel, and I delivered you from the hand of Saul. **8**I gave your master’s house to you and your master’s wives into your arms. I gave you the house of Israel and Judah, and if that was not enough, I would have given you even more. **9**Why then have you despised the command of the LORD by doing evil in His sight? You put Uriah the Hittite to the sword and took his wife as your own, for you have slain him with the sword of the Ammonites.

How did Nathan get away with that? Talk about Esther. How did she resist Ahasuerus, when she is a woman, and a wife, limited in authority?

Talk about Daniel. Why was he placed in the lion’s den? Why were the three, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego thrown into the burning, fiery furnace? What were the consequences of these actions? What were the rewards?

When you do not submit, what are the consequences? When you obey God, what is the reward? Consider John the Baptist, who confronted the King who had married his brother’s wife? What were the consequences? What was the reward?

Go over the list in Hebrews 11. What are the consequences? What are the rewards?

How could we get to where Germany went? How do we avoid it?

What do you do under a Taliban government? How do you submit to such a government? How do you discern when to submit and when not to?

Mark’s answer: 1. “You need to know the Word of God and stay true to it.” How does that work? Why? How easy is it to be fooled, and believe something is true that is not true? Is that happening today? He continues, 2. “Ask to be filled with the Holy Spirit.” Why? How does that help? Whose thoughts will instruct you?

3. “...and ask for discernment of spirits” Why?

Quoting Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Lutheran pastor who died in Hitler's concentration camps, said "We must finally stop appealing to theology to justify our reserved silence to what the state is doing."

How do we do that? Does Romans 13 admonish us to "blindly obey" government authorities? Where do we learn from, to whom do we turn for guidance?

More Bonhoeffer: "For that is nothing but fear. Open your mouth for the one who is voiceless. For who in the church still remembers that that is the least of the Bible's demands in times such as these." ***What is "the least of the Bible's demands? What does James say is "true religion"? Why did Jesus separate the sheep from the goats?***

Mark speaks of the two groups that will hear this message: The rebel who says, "Don't tread on me. Live free or die," and the fearful, who say, I'm not comfortable turning against my government. ***Why are these two unhelpful extremes? What is the answer? What is the heart of Jesus' kingdom?***

Mark says, "If you have a neighbor that maybe needs some help, and you're blind to one of these, you've missed the mark." ***How does that work? Read the next verses:***

8Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law. ***9***For the commandments, "You shall not commit adultery," "You shall not murder," "You shall not steal," "You shall not bear false witness," "You shall not covet," and if *there is* any other commandment, are *all* summed up in this saying, namely, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." ***10***Love does no harm to a neighbor; therefore love *is* the fulfillment of the law. ***How have we missed the gospel of Jesus Christ if we put our own anger and rebellion before this one idea? What matters in these times more than government itself? Take a moment: Put taxes into perspective with what you owe your neighbor. Which do you pay most faithfully?***

Mark says superpowers rise and fall over a 250 year period, and it always ends with decadence: pride, fulness of bread and abundance of entertainment, cynicism in the culture, division and apathy all come before the fall. ***Mark asks, "Where are we? How do we keep what happened to the Germans from happening to us?" How well have we set our priorities?***

Look at the last verses of this chapter:

11And *do* this, knowing the time, that now *it is* high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation *is* nearer than when we *first* believed. ***12***The night is far spent; the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness and let us put on the armor of light. ***13***Let us walk ***[c]***properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy. ***14***But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to *fulfill its* lusts. ***Now put this in the perspective of honoring authority. How does this help? What does it say about our entertainment, as the day approaches? How do you stop "making provision for the flesh"? How much time does Paul say that we have?***

Mark says, "98% of Germany claimed they were Christian...and this happened." ***What does Paul say here that will prevent for us what happened in Germany? Why is***

Paul's admonition so easy to forget when there is so much evil happening? Look up Matthew 24:11-13 ¹¹and many false prophets will arise and mislead many. ¹² Because of the multiplication of wickedness, the love of most will grow cold. ¹³But the one who perseveres to the end will be saved.... **How have you witnessed the fulfillment in this day? How is your own love doing?**

Mark says, you're not going to go wrong if you do these three things: Love your neighbor as yourself. Know the Word of God. Pray to be continually filled with the Spirit of God and discernment. Do you agree? How do we help one another along this path? How will it change some of your habits? How will it change what you spend your time on?

Mark says, "If you are feeling fear, get closer to God so faith can rise up in you." **Where does faith come from? So, KNOW the word.**

What law can you resist? How do we know? (what's happening to your neighbor?)
Jesus said, "In this world you'll have struggles. Fear not, for I have overcome the world."
How does that help? Mark says, "Our future is bright." How does he know that?

In your own words explain: Why is "Love God. Love your neighbor." The fulfillment of all law, and the answer to when to resist?

What is your biggest takeaway? Take time to share. What is the next step? Take time to pray for one another. Be blessed.

Follow the Truth wherever He leads you. He has a Name: Jesus. What is your next step? —the scribe