

Life Group Notes 1/28/2024
Pastor Mark Warren The Road to Freedom Week 3

[No doctrine is a given unless it has been found in the Word given by the Holy Spirit and received by you. If you have observations or questions, feel free to send me an email with your comment or observations at tbeachhead@comcast.net. Thank you for taking the time—Pete Mehegan, the Scribe.]

Remember: 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.** 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.**

Note: I have highlighted suggested discussion questions that Pastor Mark has raised this week, 1/28. 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.** Footnotes are not meant to distract. This week's footnotes include:

1. [On the name Moses.](#)
2. [On Mt. Sinai.](#)
3. [On the two-fold purpose of miracles.](#)

*****Important:** At the very [end of these notes](#), I've included passages that were mentioned in this week's message for deeper study using SOAP journaling to help further your study during the week. ***

Pastor Mark began by reviewing the "big ideas" from this series. What do you remember?

- Freedom begins when you choose to be free. This is the response to those who say, "I'm sick and tired of being sick and tired."
 - Freedom resides where the balance of power lives. He says, "Where we've given things power in our lives that shouldn't be there, we've transferred power to those things, and we put the power into those things that begin to control us. whether past hurts or addictions, these things begin to control us."
1. What do you remember?
 2. How are you doing?
 3. Do you have a testimony relating to what you've been thinking these last weeks?
 4. Today is day 21 of fasting with the church. Do you have a testimony?

Pastor begins by asking, "Have you ever wanted to be free from something and you couldn't do it? It didn't stick. It didn't stay." He says, "Maybe we've been trying the wrong thing."

After Pharaoh attempted to kill all the first-born male babies of the descendants of Israel, Moses, who was rescued from the Nile by Pharaoh's daughter and nursed by his own mother, grows up in Pharaoh's court as a prince. At the age of forty, he begins to witness the mistreatment of the Israelites and acts on his call to deliver his people from oppression. He murders the foreman who is mistreating the Israelite slave. The next day he sees two Israelites mistreating each other and tries to bring peace between them, when

the one looks at him and asks from the depth of ingratitude, "Are you going to kill me, like you killed the Egyptian yesterday?" Moses flees to the land of Midian.

After a forty-year exile, Moses, now eighty, has an encounter. Look up Exodus 3: **1**Meanwhile, Moses was shepherding the flock of his father-in-law Jethro, the priest of Midian. He led the flock to the far side of the wilderness and came to Horeb, the mountain of God. **2**There the angel of the LORD appeared to him in a blazing fire from within a bush. Moses saw the bush ablaze with fire, but it was not consumed. **3**So Moses thought, "I must go over and see this marvelous sight. Why is the bush not burning up?" **4**When the LORD saw that he had gone over to look, God called out to him from within the bush, "Moses, Moses!" "Here I am," he answered. **5**"Do not come any closer," God said. "Take off your sandals, for the place where you are standing is holy ground." **6**Then He said, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob."

1. What do you see?
2. Whom do you know in biblical history that went from princeling to shepherd? Who went from shepherd to Prince?
3. According to verse four, when did God call?
4. What would have happened had Moses not gone over to investigate?
5. Why "Take off your shoes?" What makes the ground holy?
6. Look at Mark 12: **26**But concerning the dead rising, have you not read about the burning bush in the Book of Moses, how God told him, 'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? **27**He is not the God of the dead, but of the living. You are badly mistaken! What is the significance of God's words here in verse 6?

6bAt this, Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God. **7**The LORD said, "I have indeed seen the affliction of My people in Egypt. I have heard them crying out because of their oppressors, and I am aware of their sufferings. **8**I have come down to rescue them from the hand of the Egyptians and to bring them up out of that land to a good and spacious land, a land flowing with milk and honey—the home of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites. **9**And now the cry of the Israelites has reached Me, and I have seen how severely the Egyptians are oppressing them. **10**Therefore, go! I am sending you to Pharaoh to bring My people the Israelites out of Egypt."

1. What is comforting in God's words?
2. What does, "I have seen..." imply? Whom does God see?
3. What does "I have heard..." imply? Whom does God hear? What does He hear?
4. Who brings God down? How? Why?
5. Why is it important to pray and not lose heart? See Luke 18: **1**Then Jesus told them a parable about their need to pray at all times and not lose heart: **2**"In a certain town there was a judge who neither feared God nor respected men. **3**And there was a widow in that town who kept appealing to him, 'Give me justice against my adversary.' **4**For a while he refused, but later he said to himself, 'Though I neither fear God nor respect men, **5**yet because this widow keeps pestering me, I will give her justice. Then she will stop wearing me out with her perpetual requests.'" **6**And the Lord said, "Listen to the words of the unjust judge. **7**Will not God bring about justice for His elect who cry out to Him day and night? Will He continue to defer their help? **8**I tell you, He will promptly carry out justice on their behalf. Nevertheless,

when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on earth?" Answer Jesus in verse 8, Yes or No.

6. Who decides if Jesus will or will not find faith on earth?

Pastor Mark says something shocking: "God is not too concerned with your sin."

1. Explain.

2. Is God concerned with your sin? What IS He concerned with?

3. If Paul says in Romans 7: **16**And if I do what I do not want to do, I admit that the law is good. **17**In that case, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it, what is God's concern? Define slavery.

4. What can set us free from this slavery to the sin in us?

Pastor continues, "God is far more concerned with what sin does to your life than he is about sin. You see, sin creates bondage." (Review James 1:**13**When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He tempt anyone. **14**But each one is tempted when by his own evil desires he is lured away and enticed. **15**Then after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.)

1. Where does temptation come from? Does the source of temptation concern God?

2. How does sin lead to bondage?

3. Why did Jesus teach us to pray, "Lead us NOT into temptation?"

James continues, **16**Do not be deceived, my beloved brothers. **17**Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, with whom there is no change or shifting shadow. **18**He chose to give us birth through the word of truth, that we would be a kind of firstfruits of His creation.)

1. How do you distinguish God's gift from temptation?

2. Is this distinction easy to discern? Where does God's gift always lead?

3. Where does new birth come from according to James?

4. Where does faith come from according to Paul in Romans 10?

5. What does sin bring with it?

6. In the case of abuse, what impact does that abuse have on the victim?

7. Explain why God's eye is on the oppressed and His ear attentive to their cries.

8. Look at Luke 17: **1**Jesus said to His disciples, "It is inevitable that stumbling blocks will come, but woe to the one through whom they come! **2**It would be better for him to have a millstone hung around his neck and to be thrown into the sea than to cause one of these little ones to stumble. **3**Watch yourselves. If your brother sins, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him. **4**Even if he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times returns to say, 'I repent,' you must forgive him." What happens to the abuser?

9. Who becomes the oppressor if we do not forgive? Explain.

Mark says, "God sees the affliction. He says, 'I see the addiction. I see what causes bondage.' He has set us upon ways to free us from that addiction." He says, "All that addiction is becomes our substitute to finding peace. You get yourself caught in this trap, and God says, 'I see your affliction. I am setting you on the path to freedom.'" He says, "We have the power..." and he opens today's theme:

Freedom's POWER Comes from the POWER of the Holy Spirit.

Mark sets up our dilemma:

We're feeling this way so

- We're going to bury it and not address it.
- We're going to maintain these addictions that make us feel better
- We're going to live in chaos.

"...and then we realize we've tried to get free, and it didn't work, so therefore we settle with the thing...we're just going to live with it.

1. What does this make you think?
2. Have you ever given up on yourself?
3. Explain why James says in verse 15 above, "Sin leads to death."

Mark says, "We've tried, and we've failed because we've tried in the wrong way. And we've tried in the wrong way because we've tried in our own strength, and we were never meant to do this in our own strength. It's meant to be done in the strength of the Holy Spirit." Look up the promise of Micah 7: [7But as for me, I will look to the LORD; I will wait for the God of my salvation. My God will hear me.](#) [8Do not gloat over me, my enemy! Though I have fallen, I will arise; though I sit in darkness, the LORD will be my light.](#) [9Because I have sinned against Him, I must endure the rage of the LORD, until He argues my case and executes justice for me. He will bring me into the light; I will see His righteousness.](#)

1. What do you see? How long should we wait? What will that look like?
2. Have you given up?
3. Do you see any hope in these words? Who argues your case?

Look at John 16: [5Now, however, I am going to Him who sent Me; yet none of you asks Me, 'Where are You going?'](#) [6Instead, your hearts are filled with sorrow because I have told you these things.](#) [7But I tell you the truth, it is for your benefit \(συμφέρω *symphero*—to your advantage/profitable to you\) that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you.](#)

1. What do you see?
2. Who is the advocate?
3. Has He come?
4. What can He accomplish? What happens when He takes up our cause?
5. What can He not do? (Can He lie?)
6. What's HIS task? How is that working for you? (Who brought you to church today?)
7. Given His task and His skill at fulfilling it, what is ahead for you?

Pastor lays out four points to consider from the account of Israel's journey to freedom. Moses goes back to Egypt and God works miracles in the form of ten plagues. Even before he went, Mark points out, Moses had a battle to fight with his own nature. Moses had lost the feeling that he had a call, and laid out reasons why he didn't deserve this mission. Mark says, "A lot of us don't even feel like we deserve freedom. We're not good enough. We deserve what we're dealing with."

1. Do you relate? Do you feel like you "deserve" what you're dealing with?
2. Do you deserve freedom? Do you deserve God taking up your cause?
3. Who deserves freedom? Can you name anyone?
4. How does grace change what you receive, despite what you deserve?
5. How did grace work in Moses' life?

Pastor Mark says, "That feeling of hopelessness is such a lie. You have to understand that you are sons and daughters of Jesus Christ. As sons and daughters of the Most High, you have an inheritance with all the saints. You are called to have a full life, not this semi-just-getting-by life, but the abundant life full of peace. Here are the four points:

- God sees you. God sees your affliction. Mark points out, "This is comforting, and not a reason for shame." *Yes or no? Explain where the comfort is? Does God condemn you or provide for you the way of escape?* (Mark related his path to freedom as the Holy Spirit led him from repentance through confession and to deliverance. He said, "I've wronged you. Can you forgive me?" Do you remember? He says, "That only came from the power of the Holy Spirit, and when I walked in that walk there was so much power and so much freedom on the other side. When you suddenly realize you've been burying things, and you've never brought them to light, the power of the Holy Spirit is come to help you to bring this to light." He says, "Satan wants to hold you in darkness. Darkness and isolation and kept secrets is one of his main games, to make you feel isolated and alone. You are in bondage, and he's trapped you." Do you relate?) God sees you, AND He will deliver you from bondage.
- Look for the miracle. "Moses was sent back to Egypt to carry out these miracles." Mark went on to talk of forgiveness as a tool for deliverance. He stressed, "Forgiveness might look like we're giving the oppressor license to oppress. We are not. What they did is not OK. But forgiveness is actually setting yourself free. If you have bitterness in your life, you have bondage in your life. The person you're forgiving and the incident you're forgiving no longer have that control over your emotions or your life. You are free to think and act freely, uninfluenced by your past hurt." *Does this make sense? What does an unoffendable life look like?* "So, looking for the miracle, you're saying, 'God I need to be free...I want to be free,' and God will send miracles in front of you on your journey to freedom. God cares more about your freedom than He does about your sin."
- Don't wait for permission. "Pharaoh did not want to set the captives free. He's saying, 'Ok...you can go. No you can't go.' Captors do not want to set captives that they profit from free." Mark continues, "No one is going to give you permission to get free. You have to determine for yourself that you want to be free. Moses did not wait for Pharaoh's permission. It took Moses appearing before Pharaoh ten times, and it got harder each time, but Moses never awaited Pharaoh's permission to appear before him. Moses knew God's promise was to set the people free. Even so, you do not give up. As difficult as it seems, you don't give up. God will provide the miracle that will set you free." Mark warns, "Freedom will come at a cost. Remember Jesus has already paid the highest price when He hung on the cost, but the cost of freedom is not free for us either. You must be freed from the power that sin has over you. This is when the power of the Holy Spirit comes in."
- Prepare for change. The price you are required to pay is the changes that repentance will demand. When the Holy Spirit comes in, you will need to make changes. *What changes can you think of? Friends? Habits? Triggers you are aware of that you do not avoid.* Pastor says, "Change is really hard, because it will feel like loss." *Explain how giving up something that you know will kill you is "loss."* The Israelites were required to pack up everything they owned and move away from where they had lived for four hundred years. *Why is that hard? Have you ever had to leave your home and move to a new land? What did that involve? What's it like to be*

a stranger in a strange land? Pastor says, "It will be really hard. But you don't have to do it alone. You have the Holy Spirit Who is there with you."

1. How does that help?
2. What does He do that I cannot do?
3. Explain, now, this saying, "Freedom's power comes from the power of the Holy Spirit."
4. Look up Romans 8: [26](#)*In the same way, the Spirit helps* (Note: *συναντιλαμβάνεται*—*sunantilambanetai*—properly, to give assistance with *full initiative* (aggressively) being *closely-identified* – supplying help that *exactly corresponds* to the need.) *us in our weakness. For we do not know how we ought to pray, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groans too deep for words.* [27](#)*And He who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.* Do you have a testimony?
5. What is the Spirit praying for you right now?
6. How vital is the Spirit to your freedom?
7. How aggressively does He fight on your behalf?
8. What does the end look like?
9. Are you really committed to that change? Is there evidence of your commitment?
10. Look at verse 27. How do you know the Spirit has all the evidence He needs to act on your behalf, though you might not be able to show it? Why does the Spirit want you free more than even you do?
11. Review Philippians. What does this verse mean in this context, "Work out your salvation with fear and trembling, because God is at work in you, both to will and to work out His good pleasure?"
12. Why is complacency not an option?

The Follow-up Application

1. Use the [SOAP journal studies](#) below throughout the week.
2. Write down a list of what you are hiding from others.
3. Think what it will take for you to be honest and transparent.
4. List the steps to freedom at this level and take the first step.

Take the time to pray.

Scribe's Notes:

1. **On the name Moses**—The name of Moses is mentioned 600 times in the Old Testament. God's name YHWH alone gets mentioned more, by ten times. One of the most remarkable proofs of the authenticity of the Biblical record and the nature, history and origins of the Jewish people lies in the fact that their most central hero of the faith is a man whose name was chosen by an Egyptian woman. There is very strong evidence, in fact, that name Moses is a Hebrew transliteration of an Egyptian name that means "saved from/drawn from the waters."

2. **On Mt. Sinai**—Mount Sinai represents one of the most tantalizing mysteries in ancient biblical archaeology. Tradition places Mount Sinai on the Sinai Peninsula, north of the Red Sea. More recent investigations have argued strongly on a site within the borders of Saudi Arabia, east of the Gulf of Aqaba. Several facts bring this site into view, not the least of which is the Red Sea itself. Historians who want to assist God in his deliverance by discounting the miracles will place Mt. Sinai in a way that the Israelites can avoid crossing a sea, so they miraculously cross a marshland capable of drowning an entire Egyptian army. Placing Mt. Sinai in Saudi Arabia demands the full-scale parting of an ocean where the water is as two walls on each side of the passage. This mountain, called Jebel-al-Maqla, has features that are most intriguing. The peak and only that peak is blackened as if burned by fire. That blackness is only on the surface. Near the base is a tall stone that has been clearly split in two from which proceeds the clear signs of water erosion, as if it once produced water sufficient to water a nation. Here is one of the most entertaining videos I've found on this discovery. I don't link it as an end to an argument, but as the intriguing invitation to discover for yourself the evidence of the Exodus that God has left us: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8y-uiccliSY&t=16s>
3. **On the two-fold purpose of miracles**—One of the most important threads in the Bible is that of God's intervention in the lives of Adam's offspring. When we discuss His miracles it is vital to notice the two-edged nature of this sword. On the one-hand, God brought judgment to the pride of Egypt, whom He had delivered from the famine through the wisdom of Joseph. Egypt forgot to acknowledge the Lord, and He gave them over to judgment. But the other edge is even more important. The testimony of God's deliverance is a weapon against despair, discouragement and forgetfulness. He will never leave us or forsake us. We have the proof.

For further study:

Take a moment each day this week to apply the **SOAP**... (**S**cripture—Copy the scripture. / **O**bservation—Write what you see. / **A**pplication—What is God saying? / **P**ray—What is your response?) ...method to some of the scripture we looked at this week:

Monday: Exodus 3:1-9
Tuesday: Galatians 5:1-3
Wednesday: Galatians 4:8-12
Thursday: Galatians 5:13-14
Friday: Micah 7:7-9
Saturday: Luke 18:1-8 Answer 8.
Sunday: Luke 17:1-4