

Life Group Notes 11/27/2022
Mark Warren John's Gospel Week 8

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...**)

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, 11/27, John 8. 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.** Do not be daunted by the number of pages. As an editorial decision, I include each of the passages mentioned in full to facilitate the enjoyment of these notes, rather than having you, the reader, look up each reference. If your Bible is open beside you, you can transfer and annotate from these pages with ease.

At the end of the message notes, pages 8 to 10, I have made footnotes (*) to help dig deeper into some of the people and events in this passage. *These notes are offered to enhance understanding, and are not designed to complicate discussions in life group.* This week I covered:

1. On the woman caught *alone* in the act of adultery.
 2. On online Bible tools.
 3. On manuscripts and controversies.
 4. On legality.
 5. On the 7 "I am's" of chapter 8.
 6. On slaves to sin: verse 34
 7. On dwelling on/abiding in Jesus' word
-

Pastor Mark begins by saying we are called to love the sinner and hate the sin. "And I think that can be very hard to do, if we're honest." **Do you agree? Do you have a testimony? Have you ever been hard to forgive?** He says, "If you come face to face with someone who is very blatantly sinning, we want to put an arm out and keep that person at a distance. But I don't think that is the response Jesus would have from us. Or the other thing would be to say, I'll turn a blind eye to that, and pretend that the sin doesn't exist." He speaks of the rule follower, who tends to be very religious, setting up a standard to be ready to tell people what they should and shouldn't do, or the people-pleaser, the peacemaker who pretends not to see the sin in their life, just hoping to get along. **Do you fit into either of these? Do you have a testimony? How does this provide an introduction to the story below?**

The Woman Caught in Adultery

¹But Jesus went to the Mount of Olives.
²Early in the morning He went back into the temple courts. All the people came to Him, and He sat down to teach them. ³The scribes and Pharisees, however, brought to Him a woman caught in adultery. They made her stand before them ⁴and said, "Teacher, this woman was caught in the act of adultery. ⁵In the Law Moses commanded us to stone such a woman. So what do You say?"
⁶They said this to test Him, in order to have a basis for accusing Him. But Jesus bent down and began to write on the ground with His finger.
⁷When they continued to question Him, He straightened up and said to them, "**Let him who is without sin among you be the first to cast a stone at her.**" ⁸And again He bent down and wrote on the ground.
⁹When they heard this *and were convicted by their conscience*, they began to go away one by one, beginning with the older ones, until only Jesus was left, with the woman standing there. ¹⁰Then Jesus straightened up *and saw no one but the woman* and asked her, "**Woman, where are your accusers? Has no one condemned you?**"
¹¹"No one, Lord," she answered.

"Then neither do I condemn you," Jesus declared. **"Now go and sin no more."**

1. Describe the incident. Remember last chapter: Why did Jesus sit down? Did he stand up to speak to the Pharisees? Why is that significant?
2. If the woman was "caught in the act," what happened to the man? (See the footnote for further details.)
3. What accusation are the Jews seeking to pin on Jesus?
4. Why does Jesus hesitate? Why is waiting a good principle to follow?
5. What is the difference between the Word of Wisdom Jesus speaks here, and the Word of Knowledge Jesus spoke to the woman at the well?
6. Look at Jesus' final words to the woman. At what moment was the woman forgiven?
7. What happens if she sins again? Remember the man at the pool, John 5:14 *Afterward Jesus found him in the temple, and said to him, "See, you have*

been made well. Sin no more, lest a worse thing come upon you.” Why are these words significant? What misfortunes does sin cause?

8. Remember, Jesus only does what He sees the Father do. How encouraging is this story for you?

Mark applies this story to the dilemma that we have as to how we receive people from the LGBTQ community. What do you think? Is there an application? He asks, “If a queer man with pink hair and wearing a dress came into the church, how would you respond?” **Answer his question.** Mark answers that charge that he’s always highlighting the topic by saying, “The culture is highlighting it. A Hallmark movie now shows two men kissing.” **What would you suggest?** He says, “We push back on the culture, but in return, the very people God calls us to reach are put off by our stance against sin.” He says, “People who are living in those lifestyles have typically been hurt by people, and the very last thing they need in their life is to be more hurt. They need love and acceptance,” **Do you have a strategy?** Mark points out that we talk about this, and ignore the one with a tendency toward gluttony who walks into this church. Or the one who has lust in their eyes, who spent last night watching inappropriate material, and walks into church. “But the reality is, sin is still sin today. And we tend to highlight the sin we don’t have a problem with, or the sins that are done openly and leave in secret the sins that are done in secret. It’s easier to point a finger at someone else, and forget that we still have a lot of stuff that Jesus is still working out of us in our own lives.” He continues, “We like to judge. Judgment is making a determination based on what we see, and by the law, we made a judgment against someone.” **React to this. What do you think?**

Jesus the Light of the World

[\(1 John 1:5–10\)](#)

12Once again, Jesus spoke to the people and said, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows Me will never walk in the darkness, but will have the light of life.”

13So the Pharisees said to Him, “You are testifying about Yourself; Your testimony is not valid*.”

14Jesus replied, “Even if I testify about Myself, My testimony is valid, because I know where I came from and where I am going. But you do not know where I came from or where I am going. **15**You judge according to the flesh; I judge no one. **16**But even if I do judge, My judgment is true, because I am not alone; I am with the Father who sent Me. **17**Even in your own Law it is written that the testimony of two men is valid. **18**I am One who testifies about Myself, and the Father, who sent Me, also testifies about Me.”

19“Where is Your Father?” they asked Him.

“You do not know Me or My Father,” Jesus answered. “If you knew Me, you would know My Father as well.”

20He spoke these words while teaching in the temple courts, near the treasury. Yet no one seized Him because His hour had not yet come.

21 Again He said to them, "I am going away, and you will look for Me, but you will die in your sin. Where I am going, you cannot come."

22 So the Jews began to ask, "Will He kill Himself, since He says, 'Where I am going, you cannot come'?"

23 Then He told them, "You are from below; I am from above. You are of this world; I am not of this world. **24** That is why I told you that you would die in your sins. For unless you believe that I am He, you will die in your sins."

25 "Who are You?" they asked.

"Just what I have been telling you from the beginning," Jesus replied. **26** "I have much to say about you and much to judge. But the One who sent Me is truthful, and what I have heard from Him, I tell the world."

27 They did not understand that He was telling them about the Father. **28** So Jesus said, "When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He, and that I do nothing on My own, but speak exactly what the Father has taught Me. **29** He who sent Me is with Me. He has not left Me alone, because I always do what pleases Him."

1. Where was this theme, "Jesus the light of the world," first introduced in this gospel (Chapter 1:4 ff. *In Him was life, and that life was the light of men.*)? Why did people not come to the light? (John 3:19 *And this is the verdict: The Light has come into the world, but men loved the darkness rather than the Light because their deeds were evil. 20 Everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come into the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. 21 But whoever practices the truth comes into the Light, so that it may be seen clearly that what he has done has been accomplished in God.*" How do "life" and "light" interact?)
2. Can you explain what Jesus means by "following Him" and "having the light of life?" Look again at what He said in chapters 1 and 3 above.
3. The Pharisees begin a legal argument with Him. How does he shut it down?
4. Why is Jesus' testimony valid? Can a testimony be valid with only one witness? What makes a testimony valid in the end?
5. Why does knowing where you came from and where you are going help validate your testimony? How?
6. Jesus says, "I judge no one." Who/what does the judging? What does light have to do with judgment? He goes on to say, "But even if I do judge..." Explain what he means.
7. How do the Pharisees judge "according to the flesh?" Explain using the woman caught in adultery as an example? Was their judgement wrong? How? How does one judge according to the Spirit? What are you looking at if you're judging according to the Spirit? Mark says, "We make up a narrative in our own mind and then we judge according to that narrative." What do you look at? Mark says, "We affirm that everyone is made in the image of God. We affirm that how a person is living today does not define how that person will be living tomorrow, or how that life will be when they

interact with Jesus. We have to look beyond the flesh.” Why is this prophetic view the essence of judgment in the Spirit? Revelation says, “The testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of Prophecy.” If we could share the testimony of Jesus, share what Jesus would say to an adulteress with an adulteress, how would that recreate this chapter in that person’s life? Why is foreseeing our neighbors’ potential in Christ the spirit of prophecy?

8. Pastor Mark says, “We must judge in a way that allows freedom to take place.” Explain. He says, “Jesus turned a death sentence into a life sentence...a life with Jesus.” What makes this a good offer?
9. “We must judge according to their potential, and not according to the flesh.” Why is Mark’s emphasis on this theme paramount to the gospel itself? He continues, “While we are putting up walls, we are saying, ‘You are not invited.’ When we judge according to the Spirit, we begin recognizing their potential as they start walking into the light.” Is this the message that first drew you? Explain?
10. How is it that what the Pharisees sought to do was contrary to the Law? Can you think of anyone in the Old Testament who was caught in the act of adultery, survived and produced kings of Israel? What does this mean, “I desire mercy and not sacrifice.” Why would God say that?
11. How does the Father testify with Jesus? How do you know the Father is with Him? How is knowing Jesus the same as knowing the Father? What are the consequences of not knowing Jesus?
12. Why do they ask Him where the Father is? Why do they ask Him Who He is?
13. Look at verse 23. Was Nicodemus of this world? Explain. What do these Pharisees need in order to be saved?
14. What does Jesus mean when He says, “When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am He...?” Who does He mean by “He”?

The Truth Will Set You Free

[\(2 John 1:4–6\)](#)

[30](#)As Jesus spoke these things, many believed in Him. [31](#)So He said to the Jews who had believed Him, “If you dwell on My word, you are truly My disciples. [32](#)Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”

[33](#)“We are Abraham’s descendants,” they answered. “We have never been slaves to anyone. How can You say we will be set free?”

[34](#)Jesus replied, “Truly, truly, I tell you, everyone who *sins is a slave to sin. [35](#)A slave is not a permanent member of the family, but a son belongs to it forever. [36](#)So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.

[37](#)I know you are Abraham’s descendants, but you are trying to kill Me because My word has no place within you. [38](#)I speak of what I have seen in the presence of the Father, and you do what you have heard from your father.”

[39](#)“Abraham is our father,” they replied.

“If you were children of Abraham,” said Jesus, “you would do the works of Abraham. [40](#)But now you are trying to kill Me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. Abraham never did such a thing. [41](#)You are doing the works of your father.”

“We are not illegitimate children,” they declared. “Our only Father is God Himself.”

[42](#)Jesus said to them, “If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I have come here from God. I have not come on My own, but He sent Me.

[43](#)Why do you not understand what I am saying? It is because you are unable to accept My message. [44](#)You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out his desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, refusing to uphold the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, because he is a liar and the father of lies. [45](#)But because I speak the truth, you do not believe Me!

[46](#)Which of you can prove Me guilty of sin? If I speak the truth, why do you not believe Me? [47](#)Whoever belongs to God hears the words of God. The reason you do not hear is that you do not belong to God.”

1. Read this passage again. What caused “many to believe” in Jesus (Romans 10: “Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God)?
2. What, for you, represents its most encouraging promise?
3. Is everyone a slave to sin? Who has sinned and fallen short of the Glory of God?
4. What is the difference between “descendants of Abraham” and “children of Abraham?” Did you notice that Jesus made this distinction?
5. Why did the believers have such a struggle believing this? Why would believers argue with Jesus? Is this a caution to us?
6. We sing, “Whom the Son sets free, Oh! He’s free indeed...” That chorus is drawn from these verses...what are the means the Son uses to set us free. Describe what it takes. What is required of you? Do you work out on His Word? Or do you hang out in His Word? How are you doing?
7. What does it mean to be truly free? Is there any remaining sin if you are truly free from sin? Are *you* truly free, yet? Why does understanding this principle help you talk to others who are slaves to sin?
8. How can you distinguish a believer from an unbeliever? Whom do believers love? Did those who believed have issues with what they were willing to believe?
9. How does this passage buttress Mark’s comments in his message to us? What kind of strategy does it offer? How can you tell who is seeking Jesus, even if they don’t acknowledge it themselves? (Review chapter 3 again: Why was Nicodemus seeking Jesus?)
10. Mark says, “We do the catching, but Jesus does the cleaning.” Explain. (Who does the inner work in your life? Have you grown by others’ nagging

you until you came around? How does "...the goodness of God lead to repentance?"(Romans 2))

11. Look carefully: How can you tell whose father is who? Who is the Pharisees' father? How can we know that? Have you ever thought that the devil has a native language? What do we know of those who believe and repeat "the lies?" What is the remedy?

Wrapping it up: How does one "Love the sinner and hate the sin."

Mark's suggestions:

1. We have to see our neighbor the way God does. Not look at them in the flesh, but look at them in the spiritual, letting compassion overwhelm our own misgivings.
2. When you feel that "nudge" of judgment come, turn the eye toward yourself. Realize your own sin. Say, "I know they have stuff going on, on the outside, but I know that what is going on on the inside has the potential I want to address." Don't be hasty in judging by appearance.
3. We have to understand and have a sense of compassion for the deceived. There are children of the devil, who have exchanged the truth for a lie, and enforce the darkness. There are those who deceive people into thinking that what they are doing is right, and there is no need to repent. They claim to be "more accepting of everyone," but they never address what God's Word says. This is a lie because they are calling good evil and evil good. We must know that satan is a deceiver, and, yet the people who are walking in darkness do not know.
4. Bring people to Jesus. Since Jesus dwells in you, bring Jesus to people. If "hanging out in His Word" sets captives free, what kind of "hangout" is your own home inclined to be? The lost are not going to see the light until you bring them in to Jesus like Phillip brought Nathanael. When your own speech is full of grace and seasoned with salt, you let the scripture do the work of turning on the lights. The Word will take the scales off the eyes. Mark says, "You can start the conversation by asking, 'Do you want to experience more freedom?'" As the world seeks to bind them, how does this strategy work? Mark points out that this can begin a conversation that Jesus Himself picks up later on. **Has this happened to you? Do you have a testimony? How does this apply, "While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us?"**

Take the time to pray.

The rest of the story: Before ever Abraham Was, I Am

48The Jews answered Him, "Are we not right to say that You are a Samaritan and You have a demon?"

49"I do not have a demon," Jesus replied, "but I honor My Father, and you dishonor Me. **50**I do not seek My own glory. There is One who seeks it, and He is

the Judge. [51](#) Truly, truly, I tell you, if anyone keeps My word, he will never see death.”

[52](#) “Now we know that You have a demon!” declared the Jews. “Abraham died, and so did the prophets, yet You say that anyone who keeps Your word will never taste death. [53](#) Are You greater than our father Abraham? He died, as did the prophets. Who do You claim to be?”

[54](#) Jesus answered, “If I glorify Myself, My glory means nothing. The One who glorifies Me is My Father, of whom you say, ‘He is our God.’ [55](#) You do not know Him, but I know Him. If I said I did not know Him, I would be a liar like you. But I do know Him, and I keep His word. [56](#) Your father Abraham rejoiced that he would see My day. He saw it and was glad.”

[57](#) Then the Jews said to Him, “You are not yet fifty years old, and You have seen Abraham?”

[58](#) “Truly, truly, I tell you,” Jesus declared, “before Abraham ever was, I am!”

[59](#) At this, they picked up stones to throw at Him. But Jesus was hidden and went out of the temple area.

1. Remember this whole portion of this chapter continues the conversation Jesus had with *believing* Jews. Have you ever had conversations like this with “believing Christians?” How did that go? What did you learn? Can you consider a better strategy than the one Jesus demonstrates here?
2. Outline Jesus’ strategy.
3. How does Jesus honor the Father? How do the Jews dishonor Jesus? How does one “keep” Jesus’ Word?
4. Did Abraham die? Is God the God of the dead? What are the Jews missing?
5. How does Jesus glorify God? How does God glorify Jesus?
6. Did Jesus slip when He said, “*Your* father Abraham...” Who is their father? How can that change, so they become legitimate children of Abraham? How can one be born again?
7. Talk about Jesus’ final response...it’s classic.
8. How can Jesus just walk away? How cool is that? Why were the Pharisees so intent on stoning someone that day?

Scribe’s notes:

1. **On the woman caught *alone* in the act of adultery:** The Bible is clear that adultery is a capital crime. Leviticus 20:10 prescribes the punishment. ¹⁰ *The man who commits adultery with another man’s wife, he who commits adultery with his neighbor’s wife, the adulterer and the adulteress, shall surely be put to death.* There are provisions for the woman who was raped in the fields, where her screams could not be heard. In that case, the man alone bears the penalty. Here we have a case of a woman caught “*in the act*” of adultery, and the “Puritan” Pharisees bring her alone. ***Make a comment. What is clear? Are the Pharisees interested in the Law? What, then, is their purpose?*** Jesus

doesn't answer right away. Instead, he stoops and writes in the sand. When He does stand, He pronounces one of the most often quoted proverbs from the Bible. This is an example of the Holy Spirit's gift of the Word of Wisdom, where one of the principles of the Kingdom of Heaven is revealed in human terms. Proverbs 8 says the Universe is founded upon wisdom, and every aspect of knowledge flows from her.

2. **On online Bible tools:** When preparing these study notes, I make frequent use of Biblehub at <https://www.biblehub.com> or <https://www.biblehub.org> . This site has been the go-to site, not just for the number of translations available, instant access to the concordance to find verses, but also for available languages. Included are interlinear versions of both the Old Testament and New, where you can see the original languages underscored by a word for word translation. (The Zondervan Greek interlinear Bible was my first step tool for learning Greek. Curiosity drove me.) Today, the site was down for a moment, and I turned to <https://www.biblegateway.com> another loaded site. For the smartphone, there is no app I've found like the "YouVersion" of the Bible also called the Bible app in the app store.
3. **On manuscripts and controversies:** If you're reading your Bible and come to this passage, you'll notice an enigmatic footnote in any modern translation covering the last verse of John 7 to John 8:11 and stating that "most 'scholars' agree that this passage was not in the 'original manuscript' and is a later addition to the gospel of John." Some translations, as the earlier Revised Standard Version, tried to eliminate it altogether, but the outrage was almost universal. Wikipedia covers the controversy pretty well, and is worth reading for the controversy. [Jesus and the woman taken in adultery - Wikipedia](#) The bottom line is simple, as I pointed out in earlier chapters. Traditional textual criticism is based on plurality of similar manuscripts, and not on antiquity. A single ancient manuscript that has no corroborating evidence in the majority textual copies loses its significance by virtue of its uniqueness. As a footnote to this: The claim that "most scholars agree..." to anything is a specious claim in scholarship, usually used to discourage further investigation. History is rife with the majority of "scholars" acquiescing without investigation to the claim of the "majority." Stalwart and courageous, true scholars, like Galileo, have proven to the world that skepticism, not democracy, is the principle of scientific theory.
4. **On Legality.** This passage, vv. 12-29 is like a legal pre-trial. Under Mosaic Law, truth is established by the testimony of at least two witnesses. The Pharisees are making a legal argument against Jesus' claims, because He is alone making them. ***What did the Jews miss? How does Jesus argue His case? Is it effective?***
5. **On the 7 "I AM's" of Chapter 8:** When Moses asked God His name in Exodus 3, God responds in verse 14, saying "I AM who I AM." From there God's name has become Yahweh, unpronounceable on Jewish lips. The Hebrew language has no future tense. Thus, God's name can correctly be translated, "I am [already] what I

will become" (I never change). It is important to note that *I AM*, in the Jewish mind, becomes that name. When Jesus pronounces it seven times and three times as the standalone ***I AM***, it's like a trigger to the Pharisees. Examine each time:

- a. **12** Once again, Jesus spoke to the people and said, "I am the light of the world."
 - b. **16** But even if I do judge, My judgment is true, because I am not alone...
 - c. I am with the Father who sent Me.
 - d. "You are from below; I am from above.
 - e. You are of this world; I am not of this world. **24** That is why I told you that you would die in your sins. For unless you believe that ***I am*** He, you will die in your sins."
 - f. **28** So Jesus said, "When you have lifted up the Son of Man, then you will know that ***I am*** [He, (added by the translator. Not in the original text)] and that I do nothing on My own, but speak exactly what the Father has taught Me.
 - g. **58** "Truly, truly, I tell you," Jesus declared, "before Abraham was, ***I am!***"
- 6. On "slaves to sin." Verse 34:** In verse thirty-four, the translation above quotes Jesus saying, "Truly, truly, I tell you. Everyone who sins is a slave to sin." The Greek phrase translated simply as "sins" is actually a present active participle of the verb "practice" with the Greek noun for sin. Accidents do not enslave, but practice does. With the participle, the better translation is, "Everyone who is making a practice of sin is a slave to sin..." Habitual sin and addiction are an indication of slavery. This passage is the Bible's best promise to the addict, and the measure of freedom we are being offered.
- 7. On dwelling on or abiding and remaining in His Word** The Greek word "abide" is packed with meaning. Jesus speaks to those who believed...and tells them how to stay free by dwelling on or dwelling in or abiding in His Word or *Logos*. **You have to answer this: what makes a true disciple. How does one dwell on a word?** Remember who is the Word/*Logos* (Chapter 1)? How much potential power is in Him? When you dwell on His Word in whom are you dwelling? Where is your dwelling?