

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, 12/11 The Third Week of Advent. 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 3 to 4, 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 "Mighty God," Isaiah's choice of words.
 2. On "the Fear of the Lord."
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Isaiah 9: 6 For unto us a child is born,
unto us a son is given,
and the government will be upon His shoulders.
And He will be called
Wonderful Counselor, ***Mighty God**,

Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

⁷Of the increase of His government and peace
there will be no end.

He will reign on the throne of David
and over his kingdom,
to establish and sustain it
with justice and righteousness
from that time and forevermore.

1. **From last week's notes: What were the Jews expecting in their Messiah, reading this passage? What did they not see? What DID they see**
2. **Pastor Mark contrasts "Wonderful Counselor" with "Almighty God." What do you see in terms of contrast**
3. **Look up Proverbs 9:10** ¹⁰The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding. **What do you see? Why is it only the beginning? Why is it a good thing to start somewhere? Which is better: the fear of the Lord or knowledge of the Holy One? Why? Look up Proverbs 1:7** The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and discipline. **What else begins with the fear of the Lord?**
4. In the Bible trivia game before the service today, one slide asked, "How many times does the Bible say, 'Do not fear?'" **Do you remember the answer? If we're told not to fear 365 times in the Bible, how is it good to remember that fear is ONLY the beginning, and not the end and the goal? What is the end and the goal? (You can peek at the footnotes.)**
5. **What is the difference between "Jesus as our home boy/counselor, and Jesus is Almighty God" who called all things into being?**
6. **List the things Almighty God has done. You can stop if it is past midnight...**

Mark describes how he learned the respect/fear of fire. **Can you relate? What comes to mind?** Jesus is called the "All Consuming Fire." **Look up Hebrews 12:28** Therefore, since we are receiving an unshakable kingdom, let us be filled with gratitude, and so worship God acceptably with *reverence and *awe. ²⁹**"For our God is a consuming fire."** **Describe this fear. Look up Deuteronomy 9** ¹Hear, O Israel: Today you are about to cross the Jordan to go in and dispossess nations greater and stronger than you, with large cities fortified to the heavens. ²The people are strong and tall, the descendants of the Anakim. You know about them, and you have heard it said, "Who can stand up to the sons of Anak?" ³But understand that today the LORD your God goes across ahead of you as a consuming fire; He will destroy them and subdue them before you. And you will drive them out and annihilate them swiftly, as the LORD has promised you. **Whom did the people fear forty years prior? Whom should they have feared? Why? Describe the meaning of fear here. What does "swiftly" mean.**

Mark talks of the God "...who takes the obstacles in front of you, and brings the miracles necessary to take your land and even get you to those places."

Why is this fear healthier than the fear of the obstacles? Look up John 15: 5 I am the vine, and you are the branches. The one who remains in Me, and I in him, will bear much fruit. For apart from Me you can do nothing. 6 If anyone does not remain in Me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers. Such branches are gathered up, thrown into the fire, and burned. Why is "remaining / abiding" in Him reasonable? Why is NOT "remaining / abiding / dwelling" something to fear? Is this a reasonable fear?

Mark asks, "What are ways we can honor Him and revere Him?" ***Answer Him? Are "reverence and honor" foreign concepts in this century? What has happened? How are you doing?***

Pastor Mark made a list:

1. We take up and abide in His Word, the Holy scriptures, prioritizing the knowledge of God in this way.
2. We honor him by honoring those around us. We are made in the image of God therefore all humanity is made in His image. The way we treat others manifests the reverence we have toward Him.
3. In our situation of need, we honor Almighty God by acknowledging that we need a miracle, and He is able and willing to bring that miracle. Mark says, "When you ask, you trust God for the outcome." Mark says, when we ask, sometimes we can get disappointed when things do not happen as we had hoped. And this is not right. "We can trust Him with the outcome." ***Respond to this. Do you have insights or a testimony to share?***

What do you think of these?

Pastor exhorts us to ask this question, "How can I honor you in this season?" ***What do you think? Prepare a testimony. Be ready to encourage others in the answers you receive.***

Take the time to pray.

Scribe's notes:

1. **On "Mighty God," *El Gibowr*:** Where last week Jesus was our "go to," called our "Wonderful Counselor", or the "advisor of wonders, miracles and works of power," paralleling how our "*paraclete*" in the New Covenant, the Holy Spirit, is called alongside us to be our teacher and sent to lead us into all truth; this week, He is called *El Gibowr*, Almighty God. "*El*" is the singular title throughout the Old Testament, given to supreme authority above kings and rulers. "*Gibowr*" is the

Hebrew word for “strong, or mighty.” It’s used many times to describe heroes and mighty men and is often translated “valiant warrior,” “champion,” “mighty one” or “one of outstanding power.”

- 2. On the “fear of the Lord:”** No serious study where knowing God is the goal can overlook an examination of the Fear of the Lord. Look again at the verses in the body of the notes above: specifically Proverbs 9:10 and Proverbs 1:7. Knowledge begins with the fear of the Lord and wisdom begins with the same. We are admonished throughout the book of Proverbs to put gaining wisdom as the top priority in our lives. The Hebrew word used for “fear” is *yirah*, which, indeed, means “reverence, or respectful piety,” as teachers often claim, but it is also the Hebrew word for abject terror. The three Greek words used to translate this concept in the New Testament express different aspects of fear: *phobos* from which we get “phobia,” means terror and fear. *Eulabeia*, from Hebrews 12, relates to reverent caution, holding back in awe. We saw Peter placing it as a step toward Love in the first chapter of his second epistle, translated “piety.” Then there is *deilos*, also from Hebrews 12, which actually relates to cowardice and timid fear. Crossing the lake in the storm, Jesus asks His disciples, “Why are you so fearful...*deilos*?” but the author of Hebrews admonishes us to approach God this way. Yet, Evangelicals have a difficult time with “fearing God” in terms of being terrified or even timid, because it highlights judgment and condemnation. The apostle John agrees, and even says so, but the biblical concept of this fear is clearly written to highlight beginnings: It’s the idea of the toddler whose house lies on a main drag, who is terrified to go play in the front yard because he’ll be punished by his pappu. This child understands the “fear of pappu,” and will therefore never know the fear of the Mac Truck. The child begins to learn wisdom. But as John points out in 1 John 4: *18 There is no fear in love, but perfect love drives out fear, because fear involves punishment. The one who fears has not been perfected in love. 19 We love because He first loved us.* The Father’s love for the child confined that child to the back yard...until love for the Father removed the constraints of that “Law.” The child became a worker of the front lawn, mowing the grass, raking the leaves...participating in the work of the Father, with never any room for fear of the truck. **How does the “fear of getting caught” become the obedience of Love that John describes?**