

Life Group Notes 2/13/2022  
Pastor Mark The Life of Jesus Week 3

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(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: Did you do anything special for Valentine's Day? Do you have a favorite memory? You like/dislike? And why?**

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 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.**

Pastor Mark asked three questions to begin with:

1. How do you get abundance in your life?
2. Why is prosperity not always what you first thought it was? Explain.
3. What is the deepest emotion you feel when you are being called to follow Jesus?

**Discuss briefly but save time for later.**

**Look up Luke 5:** <sup>1</sup>On one occasion, while Jesus was standing by the Lake of Gennesaret with the crowd pressing in on Him to hear the word of God, <sup>2</sup>He saw two boats at the edge of the lake. The fishermen had left them and were washing their nets. <sup>3</sup>Jesus got into the boat belonging to Simon and asked him to put out a little from shore. And sitting down, He taught the people from the boat.

<sup>4</sup>When Jesus had finished speaking, He said to Simon, "Put out into deep water and let down your nets for a catch."

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5“Master,” Simon replied, “we have worked hard all night without catching anything. But because You say so, I will let down the nets.” 6When they had done so, they caught such a large number of fish that their nets began to tear. 7So they signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them, and they came and filled both boats so full that they began to sink.

8When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at Jesus’ knees. “Go away from me, Lord,” he said, “for I am a sinful man.” 9For he and his companions were astonished at the catch of fish they had taken, 10and so were his partners James and John, the sons of Zebedee.

“Do not be afraid,” Jesus said to Simon. “From now on you will catch men.” 11And when they had brought their boats ashore, they left everything and followed Him.

Pastor Mark says, “Now look at the first question: How do you get abundance in your life.” **Do you see abundance here? How did it come to be? How abundant? What do we need to get from this? Check out this YouTube link from The Chosen if you can: <https://youtu.be/hWGCkovAUWM>**

Pastor Mark says, “On the practical side of life, your own effort and energy can only take you so far. If you really want abundance in your life, listen to the voice of God.” **Comments? Here they followed Jesus’ directions, and they had this abundant catch.**

Pastor Mark says we must ask for direction of the Holy Spirit, ask where we should put our hands, and then allow Him to direct the next steps in our lives. **Do you have any testimonies you could share?**

**Now look at question two. In light of this experience, why is abundance/prosperity not exactly what you would think?**

**What happened to the fish? How were Peter, James and John enriched?**

**Now think of Pastor Mark’s testimony of the prophecy made over his life...that he would see millions of dollars pass through his hands. Think of the stages he related, up to him becoming pastor here. Has that come true? If you are the steward of millions of dollars, are they your millions?**

**Look up Matthew 25: 28** Therefore take the talent from him and give it to the one who has ten talents. **29** **For everyone who has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. But the one who does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him.** **What does this say of abundance and stewardship? What is in abundance in this parable?**

**Look up Luke 8: 17** For there is nothing hidden that will not be disclosed, and nothing concealed that will not be made known and brought to light. Pay attention, therefore, to how you listen. Whoever has will be given more, but whoever does not have, even what

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he thinks he has will be taken away from him." ***Is this the same principle? What is in abundance in the principle Jesus addresses here? How sobering is this?***

Pastor Mark says, "Jesus meets us where we're at, and leads us to where He wants us to go." ***How does that fit?***

(Scribe's note: ***Was Jesus a stranger to them when they met on the shores of Capernaum? Was this the first time the disciples had seen Jesus? Where did they first meet Jesus? What had they heard John the Baptist say about him?*** (Check their testimony if you like: John 1:35-42) ***How does this fit with what Pastor Mark says?*** (Verse 43 in John says Jesus "decided to set out for Galilee," where these disciples all hailed from. It is even possible that they had already made this nearly ninety-mile hike together.) ***To what extreme does Jesus go to "meet us where we're at?"***

Pastor Mark points out, this decision does come at a cost. (Scribe's note: Does that sound fishy?) ***Look at Luke 5:***

***27*** After this, Jesus went out and saw a tax collector named Levi (aka Matthew) sitting at the tax booth. "Follow Me," He told him, ***28*** and Levi got up, left everything, and followed Him.

***29*** Then Levi hosted a great banquet for Jesus at his house. A large crowd of tax collectors was there, along with others who were eating with them. ***30*** But the Pharisees and their scribes complained to Jesus' disciples, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?"

***31*** Jesus answered, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. ***32*** I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance." ***What was Matthew's reaction to Jesus' invitation? Why would Matthew host a great banquet as the first thing he does? For whose benefit? What does Jesus mean by "not coming to call the righteous?" How has Matthew's "abundance" suddenly increased? Can you prove that Matthew repented? How?***

***Why does Jesus say, "Fear not"? What is it when He calls us from our routines to a new type of fellowship? What does that change? Do you have a testimony as to how things changed?***

***What is the nature of our fears? Take a moment.*** Mark says, "We're fearful of losing the things that bring us comfort in this world, but the things of this world are very temporary." ***Is that comforting? Why or why not? Is it helpful?***

***Look up Mark 10: 17*** As Jesus started on His way, a man ran up and knelt before Him. "Good Teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?" ***Why is this such a good question? What kind of person asks this question? What has the young man inherited already? Why isn't that enough?***

18 “Why do you call Me good?” Jesus replied. “No one is good except God alone. 19 You know the commandments: ‘Do not murder, do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not bear false witness, do not cheat others, honor your father and mother.’” **How are you doing?**

20 “Teacher,” he replied, “all these I have kept from my youth.”

21 Jesus looked at him, loved him, and said to him, “There is one thing you lack: Go, sell everything you own and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow Me.”

22 But the man was saddened by these words and went away in sorrow, because he had great wealth. **What is the difference between this young man and Matthew? Do you believe “treasures in heaven” are practical, and useful for today? Would this man have been better off or worse off practically and financially, if he had followed Jesus’ direction? Apply that to today, with today’s dubious financial structures. What is most sure, practically speaking?**

23 Then Jesus looked around and said to His disciples, “How hard it is for the rich to enter the kingdom of God!” **How does that make you feel?**

24 And the disciples were amazed at His words. **Are his words threatening?**

But Jesus said to them again, “Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God! 25 It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.” **Why does Jesus call His disciples “children?” How difficult is this idea? Is it easier for a child or for an adult to accept it? Why?**

26 They were even more astonished and said to one another, “Who then can be saved?” **Why is this an excellent question?**

27 Jesus looked at them and said, “With man this is impossible, but not with God. For all things are possible with God.” **How does that make you feel? Are his words still threatening? What does it take? What does it mean to “enter the kingdom of God”? How do you know if you have entered?**

**Look at Luke 12: 32** Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father is pleased to give you the kingdom. **33** Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide yourselves with purses that will not wear out, an inexhaustible treasure in heaven, where no thief approaches and no moth destroys. **34** For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. **Now Jesus is talking to us in the same terms with which He spoke to the rich young ruler. What is the command? What is the return? Define prosperity in this light. What does “inexhaustible” mean? How high is the cost of “inexhaustible treasure in heaven”? What is the practical**

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***value of treasure in heaven here and now on this earth? Why is the gospel so practical? (Which has more lasting value? Heavenly treasure or bitcoin?)***

***Look at Luke 12: 13*** Someone in the crowd said to Him, “Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me.”

***14*** But Jesus replied, “Man, who appointed Me judge or executor between you?” ***15*** And He said to them, “Watch out! Guard yourselves against every form of greed, for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.” ***Answer Mark’s question: “Why is it that God gave Peter, James and John a super abundance of fish just before He called them away?” Was there a promise inherent in that abundance? Does this relate to “treasure in heaven” in a practical way?***

***16*** Then He told them a parable: “The ground of a certain rich man produced an abundance. ***17*** So he thought to himself, ‘What shall I do, since I have nowhere to store my crops?’ ***18*** Then he said, ‘This is what I will do: I will tear down my barns and will build bigger ones, and there I will store up all my grain and my goods. ***19*** Then I will say to myself, ‘You have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take it easy. Eat, drink, and be merry!’”

***20*** But God said to him, ‘You fool! This very night your life will be required of you. Then who will own what you have accumulated?’

***21*** This is how it will be for anyone who stores up treasure for himself but is not rich toward God.”

***How much insurance is there in a 401K in this day and at this hour? Do you know what is more sure? How do you become “rich toward God”? Is there sin in a retirement account? Is it wrong to save up for your children’s children’s children? What is the point here?***

***What does this mean: “Many are called but few are chosen?” How is one chosen? What must come first? Do your possessions possess you, or does God possess your heart?***

***Mark says, “Discipleship is really ‘Followership.’” What does that mean?***

***Finally, look up Mark 10: 28*** Peter began to say to Him, “Look, we have left everything and followed You.”

***29*** “Truly I tell you,” Jesus replied, “no one who has left home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or fields for My sake and for the gospel ***30*** will fail to receive a hundredfold in the present age—houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and fields, along with persecutions—and in the age to come, eternal life. ***31*** But many who are first will be last, and the last will be first.” ***How sure is this return? Is this return more secure than Bitcoin? Take a moment and describe the prosperity Jesus speaks of here. What does one hundredfold represent? What is the reward of obedience?***