

Life Group Notes 2/27/2022
Pastor Mark The Life of Jesus Week 5

(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: With lent beginning on Wednesday, what are your thoughts about fasting? What are your questions? Take a moment to pray for Ukraine.

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.**

Mark asks, "Do you believe that you can do all the things Jesus did? Heal the sick? Raise the dead? Walk on water?" Do you have scripture to back you up? (Look up John 14:12¹² Truly, truly, I tell you, whoever believes in Me will also do the works that I am doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. ¹³And I will do whatever you ask in My name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son....) Where do limits come from in that promise? (Look up Mark 16:15-18¹⁵ And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. ¹⁶Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned. ¹⁷And these signs will accompany those who believe: In My name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; ¹⁸they will pick up snakes with their hands, and if they drink any deadly poison, it will not harm them; they will lay their hands on the sick, and they will be made well." Where do limits come from in that promise? Do you have an encouraging testimony? What have you seen? Where do doubts come from? If we are called to be Jesus' witnesses, what are we supposed to be seeing?

Luke 7 The Faith of the Centurion

(Matthew 8:5–13; John 4:43–54)

1When Jesus had concluded His discourse in the hearing of the people, He went to Capernaum. **2**There a highly valued servant of a centurion (*See scribe's note below.*) was sick and about to die. **3**When the centurion heard about Jesus, he sent some Jewish elders to ask Him to come and heal his servant. **4**They came to Jesus and pleaded with Him earnestly, "This man is worthy to have You grant this, **5**for he loves our nation and has built our synagogue."

6So Jesus went with them. But when He was not far from the house, the centurion sent friends with the message: "Lord, do not trouble Yourself, for I am not worthy to have You come under my roof. **7**That is why I did not consider myself worthy to come to You. But just say the word, and my servant will be healed. **8**For I myself am a man under authority, with soldiers under me. I tell one to go, and he goes; and another to come, and he comes. I tell my servant to do something, and he does it." **Take a moment: Where does all authority come from? Look at what Samuel tells Saul (1 Sam 15:22)** **22**But 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. **23**For 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."... **Again, where does all authority come from? Remember where Satan told Jesus he had all the kingdoms of this world, and they were his to give? How did Satan get them? How did Jesus regain them?**

9When Jesus heard this, He marveled at the centurion. **Why do you think Jesus marveled?** Turning to the crowd following Him, He said, "I tell you, not even in Israel have I found such great faith." **10**And when the messengers returned to the house, they found the servant in good health. **Why did Jesus not find such faith in Israel? Did Jesus say the word? Or did the healing happen because the Centurion believed? What makes this Centurion's faith so unusual? How does faith come?** ("...by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.") **How does faith grow?** (Mark 4: **26**Jesus also said, "The kingdom of God is like a man who scatters seed on the ground. **27**Night and day he sleeps and wakes, and the seed sprouts and grows, though he knows not how. **28**All by itself the earth produces a crop—first the stalk, then the head, then grain that ripens within." Of its own in good soil, well husbanded, and not from our own toil. It's the nature of the seed, which is the Word of God. (**Scribe's note: We serve a God Who in the first thirty years of His time on earth, did not do a single miracle. It is not the fault of the sapling that it has produced no fruit, but it is the fault of the husbandman to give up on the seed and blame the tree before its season.**)

Jesus Raises a Widow's Son

11Soon afterward, Jesus went to a town called Nain. His disciples went with Him, accompanied by a large crowd. **12**As He approached the town gate, He saw a dead man being carried out, the only son of his mother, and she was a widow. And a large crowd from the town was with her.

13When the Lord saw her, He had compassion on her and said, “Do not weep.” **14**Then He went up and touched the coffin, and those carrying it stood still. “Young man,” He said, “I tell you, get up!” **15**And the dead man sat up and began to speak! Then Jesus gave him back to his mother. ***Whose faith raised the dead? Was it the mother’s? Was it the dead man’s? Why did Jesus raise the young man? Was it to prove He was God? What does Luke say? Which proves Jesus’ deity best? His compassion? Or the miracle? Which should be easier for us to show? Do we believe that God still has compassion today? Do you have a testimony? How does God’s compassion stir faith?***

16A sense of awe swept over all of them, and they glorified God. “A great prophet has appeared among us!” they said. “God has visited His people!” **17**And the news about Jesus spread throughout Judea and all the surrounding region. ***What stirred the crowd? Was it the miracle or the compassion? Or both? Which is easier to forget over time? Why do we forget compassion?***

John’s Inquiry

(Matthew 11:1–6)

18Then John’s disciples informed him about all these things. **19**So John called two of his disciples and sent them to ask the Lord, “Are You the One who was to come, or should we look for someone else?”

20When the men came to Jesus, they said, “John the Baptist sent us to ask, ‘Are You the One who was to come, or should we look for someone else?’” ***What made John the Baptist forget what he had already seen and pronounced? See above.***

21At that very hour Jesus healed many people of their diseases, afflictions, and evil spirits, and He gave sight to many who were blind. **22**So He replied, “Go back and report to John what you have seen and heard: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor. **23**Blessed is the one who does not fall away on account of Me.” ***Is He talking about the miracles? Or the compassion? Or both? How could one fall away after seeing all this?***

Jesus Testifies about John

(Malachi 3:1–5; Matthew 11:7–19)

24After John’s messengers had left, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed swaying in the wind? **25**Otherwise, what did you go out to see? A man dressed in fine clothes? Look, those who wear elegant clothing and live in luxury are found in palaces.

26What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. **27**This is the one about whom it is written:

‘Behold, I will send My messenger ahead of You,
who will prepare Your way before You.’

28I tell you, among those born of women there is no one greater than John, yet even the least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.” ***How many miracles are attributed to John the Baptist? How can he be greater than all? Yet, what is Jesus saying***

about us? How is that possible? What do we have that John the Baptist did not have?

29 All the people who heard this, even the tax collectors, acknowledged God's justice. For they had received the baptism of John. 30 But the Pharisees and experts in the law rejected God's purpose for themselves, because they had not been baptized by John.

Luke differentiates between the religious leaders and regular folks. What is the difference? What did they do differently?

31 "To what, then, can I compare the men of this generation? What are they like? 32 They are like children sitting in the marketplace and calling out to one another:

'We played the flute for you,
and you did not dance;

we sang a dirge,

and you did not weep.' ***What do children do in a marketplace? Why are they so quick to criticize, whatever is happening? Ecclesiastes says, "To every season there is a time and a purpose for everything." How does this explain what Jesus is saying here? Where is the place for criticism? Where is the place for discernment? What season are we in currently?***

33 For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine, and you say, 'He has a demon!' 34 The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and you say, 'Look at this glutton and drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' 35 But wisdom is vindicated by all her children." ***Explain how wisdom is vindicated. Pastor Mark says, "You cannot just claim to be right, without bearing out the right fruit in the end." Explain. Jesus said, "I came to seek and save the lost." What does that look like?***

A Sinful Woman Anoints Jesus

(Matthew 26:6–13; Mark 14:3–9; John 12:1–8)

36 Then one of the Pharisees invited Jesus to eat with him, and He entered the Pharisee's house and reclined at the table. 37 When a sinful woman from that town learned that Jesus was dining there, she brought an alabaster jar of perfume. 38 As she stood behind Him at His feet weeping, she began to wet His feet with her tears and wipe them with her hair. Then she kissed His feet and anointed them with the perfume.

39 When the Pharisee who had invited Jesus saw this, he said to himself, "If this man were a prophet, He would know who this is and what kind of woman is touching Him—for she is a sinner!"

40 But Jesus answered him, "Simon, I have something to tell you."

"Tell me, Teacher," he said.

41 "Two men were debtors to a certain moneylender. One owed him five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. 42 When they were unable to repay him, he forgave both of them. Which one, then, will love him more?" ***Answer Jesus' question without peeking at Simon's answer.***

43 "I suppose the one who was forgiven more," Simon replied.

“You have judged correctly,” Jesus said. ***Did you get it right? How does grace, mercy and forgiveness stir up love? Explain the verse from Romans, “It is the goodness of God that leads to repentance.” What had the woman already done, prior to coming? What had she already received? How do you know?***

44And turning toward the woman, He said to Simon, “Do you see this woman? When I entered your house, you did not give Me water for My feet, but she wet My feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. **45**You did not greet Me with a kiss, but she has not stopped kissing My feet since I arrived. **46**You did not anoint My head with oil, but she has anointed My feet with perfume. **47**Therefore I tell you, because her many sins have been forgiven, she has loved much. But he who has been forgiven little loves little.”

48Then Jesus said to her, “Your sins are forgiven.” ***Answer Mark’s question: How could such a woman feel comfortable coming into this Pharisee’s house? Did she come to get forgiven? Or did she come because she knew she had been forgiven? How does Jesus, and anyone with eyes to see, recognize that her sins had been forgiven? When did the woman first love? Before or after she poured out the ointment on the feet? What did her love demonstrate? How can you tell if someone has not been forgiven? What can you say of those you know who go out of their way to love others?***

49But those at the table began to say to themselves, “Who is this who even forgives sins?” ***How is this statement error? How does it prove they did not understand what Jesus said?***

50And Jesus told the woman, “Your faith has saved you; go in peace.” ***How does Jesus know this? How was her faith manifested? Look very closely. What did she do?***

Why is “doing what Jesus did” a good class to take?

Discuss Mark’s final points:

- 1. If you don’t believe that Jesus can do the impossible, it’s impossible for you to see a miracle. You have to realize that the same Holy Spirit that was in Jesus is in you.***
- 2. When we argue between who’s right and who’s wrong, we miss the purposes of God.***
- 3. Do our actions still reveal that we’ve been forgiven, by how much we love Jesus, and how much we love others?***

How does Paul’s prayer for the Philippians pertain to this idea? Phil 1:9And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, **10**so that you may be able to test and prove what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, **11**filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

Can you pray this for each other?

Scribe’s “*It’s all Greek to me*” notes:

A centurion was a ranked commissioned officer in the Roman army, ostensibly put in charge of ten platoons of ten, hence he had one hundred soldiers under him.

“The centurion was the commander of a centuria, which was the smallest unit of a Roman legion. A legion was nominally composed of 6,000 soldiers, and each legion was divided up into 10 cohorts, with each cohort containing 6 centuria. The centurion thus nominally commanded about 100 men, and there were 60 centurions in a legion.”

Five hundred denarii is five hundred days wages...a year and a half. The other owed just over a month's wages.