

Life Group Notes 5/7/2023
Pastor Mark Warren on Colossians Week 4

If you have observations or questions feel free to 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) **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, 5/7. 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 notes on Pastor Mark's message, from pages 5 to 7, I have made footnotes to help dig deeper into some of the principles Mark covers. *These notes are offered to enhance understanding and are not designed to complicate discussions in life group.* This week I covered ideas:

1. [On wisdom.](#)
2. [On Paul's greetings and salutations.](#)

How did the Polish trip testimony strike you? What did you think, watching and hearing?

What was Pastor Mark angry about?

Here is the link to the video, Childhood 2.0 to which he was referring. It contains "material not suitable for children": <https://youtu.be/He3IJhFy-l>

This video talks about the effect our devices have on children. Everything not appropriate is on the devices that are in the pockets of every single child, especially in middle and high schools. It's hurting our kids. It's destroying lives. People are being brainwashed, and our minds attacked. The children are asked, "Do you think your parents know?" and their answer is, "No! No way."

1. What do you do when you know your children did not ask for this?
2. What is your response? Do you handle the temptation well?

Colossians 4: Prayerful Speech and Actions

1Masters, supply your slaves with what is right and fair, since you know that you also have a Master in heaven.

1. Was slavery the chief evil in Paul's day? What was?
2. Who is highest in heaven's hierarchy? Who is described as the greatest in the Kingdom?

2Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful, **3**as you pray also for us, that God may open to us a door for the word, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains. **4**Pray that I may declare it clearly, as I should.

1. What was the key weapon in Paul's day?
2. He exhorts the Colossians to be "watchful" and "thankful." What do the watchful get in return? What do the thankful get? Why are we thankful? Are we thankful for the assault on us and on our youth? If not, what stirs up the thanksgiving that Paul is talking about?
3. Pastor Mark says to parents, "God will show you where things are going on." What do parents need to do, then, in their watchfulness?
4. When God shows you a need, what do you know about that need, concerning God's intention and His promise? What does it take on your part? What does your prayer unleash in the natural realm?
5. Look at verse 3...Remember Paul is asking strangers to pray for him. What is his prayer request?
6. Why does he ask strangers to pray that God open a door?
7. What do you think? Did their prayers work, and were doors opened?
8. What was the result of opened doors? Do you suppose that Paul declared the mystery clearly? Could Paul be ineffective? What damage does prayerlessness do to the spread of the gospel?
9. Apply your answer to today. What is key to stopping this assault on our children?
10. Pastor Mark says, "You have an enemy that wants to destroy your life, and I know that you haven't asked for it." What is your response? How can we pray for one another in this light?

11. Pastor Mark says, “We are going to contend as a church for this next generation.” What will be the result?

5 Act wisely toward outsiders, redeeming the time. 6 Let your speech always be full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.

1. What is an outsider? Do you know any? Do you know them well? How do you act wisely? Do you have any advice to share?
2. Proverbs states, “The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.” What does the fear of the Lord contribute to a wise walk with outsiders? Pastor says, “God IS wisdom.” Any talk of God is an examination of wisdom. ([See the footnote below.](#))
3. Pastor Mark says wisdom is 3 “A’s”: First Assessing the situation that presents itself. (How do we speak to Polish teenagers in a way that is accessible.) Second, “Ask the Holy Spirit, ‘What are you doing right now?’” Third, “Act on His direction.” Freedom is found in that action. Does this suggest how to “walk in wisdom?” What do you think?
4. Why do we need to redeem the time? How much time do we have?
5. Explain verse 6 in your own words? What is speech full of grace? Do you have a testimony? A time when someone’s words were captivating in their kindness? What is “seasoned with salt?” Once again, Mark speaks of the power of our words. Review what Pastor said of our words. Why are they “powerful?” What impact do our words have? Look up 2 Corinthians 10: *3 For though we live in the flesh, we do not wage war according to the flesh. 4 [The weapons of our warfare are not the weapons of the world. Instead, they have divine power to demolish strongholds.](#) 5 We tear down arguments and every presumption set up against the knowledge of God; and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.* Do your words have this kind of impact? Do they have this potential if you begin to take care and to train yourself?
6. Pastor Mark says you make it your goal to “pull something good out of your friend.” Is it easier for you to find fault in another, or find their strength? Which do you speak of more often, their faults or their strengths?
7. Pastor Mark highlights the end of verse 6. How does knowing the power of your words also instruct you in speaking them? How does this help you “...know how your are to answer them?”
8. He says, “If we are filled indeed with the Holy Spirit, there should be some evidence of something different inside of us.” How do our words provide that evidence? Jesus said, “Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaks.” How does that fact help us to assess ourselves? Each other? How does it help us discern need in those with whom we speak?

Pastor Mark “circles back” to the younger generation. He says, “Anxiety through the roof. Depression through the roof. Self-worth at an all-time low. When they compare

themselves to each other they never measure up.” **How does this explain their addiction and susceptibility to social media and their devices? How are they going to survive? Do you remember Mark’s answer? What are we going to do about it?**

When we pray, and contend against the devil on their behalf, what will happen?

Review Paul’s exhortation to the Philippians 4: 8 Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable— if anything is excellent or praiseworthy— think on these things. ⁹Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me, put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you. **Mark asks, “Is what you’re presenting in your walk before Jesus any of these things?” Look soberly at what Jesus says to the church in Laodicea in Revelation 3: ²⁰Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in and dine with him, and he with Me. **What will you be offering Him for dinner when he walks in? Good food? Because you’ll be getting His meat in return for whatever you offer Him when you open your door. Does what you are offering Him bring you closer to the Lord?** Pastor says, “Whatever you consume starts coming out.” **How much more sobering are these times than when we were teenagers?****

Take the time to pray.

The Follow-up Application

1. Remember to pray for each other. With that in mind, pray for someone who has a need. Pray for the leadership as Paul asked for prayer...use Paul’s words.
 2. Apply the three “A’s” Assess/Ask/Apply in your own situation this week.
 3. Take time to contend for yourselves if you’re stuck and addicted to your devices, and for the youth. Remember how Paul’s success depended on the prayers of the Colossians. Likewise, your youth, this next generation, depends on your prayers.
 4. Watch what you watch.
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The Rest of the Story

Greetings from Paul’s Fellow Workers (See footnote below.)

(Romans 16:21–23)

⁷Tychicus will tell you all the news about me. He is a beloved brother, a faithful minister, and a fellow servant in the Lord. ⁸I have sent him to you for this very purpose, that you may know about us, and that he may encourage your hearts. ⁹With him I am sending Onesimus, our faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you. They will tell you about everything here.

[10](#)My fellow prisoner Aristarchus sends you greetings, as does Mark the cousin of Barnabas. You have already received instructions about him: If he comes to you, welcome him. [11](#)Jesus, who is called Justus, also sends greetings. These are the only Jews among my fellow workers for the kingdom of God, and they have been a comfort to me.

[12](#)Epaphras, who is one of you and a servant of Christ Jesus, sends you greetings. He is always wrestling in prayer for you, so that you may stand mature and fully assured in the full will of God. [13](#)For I testify about him that he goes to great pains for you and for those at Laodicea and Hierapolis.

[14](#)Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas send you greetings.

Signature and Final Instructions

[\(1 Corinthians 16:19–24; 2 Thessalonians 3:16–18\)](#)

[15](#)Greet the brothers in Laodicea, as well as Nympha and the church that meets at her house.

[16](#)After this letter has been read among you, make sure that it is also read in the church of the Laodiceans, and that you in turn read the letter from Laodicea.

[17](#)Tell Archippus: “See to it that you complete the ministry you have received in the Lord.”

[18](#)This greeting is in my own hand—Paul.

Remember my chains.

Grace be with you.

Scribe’s notes:

1. **On wisdom.** Wisdom is a major theme of the book of Proverbs. The opening chapter promises wisdom and insight and the solution of enigmas to those who chase *her* down. She is personified as a woman, and her best description is found in chapter 8: [1](#)Does not wisdom call out, and understanding raise her voice?
[2](#)On the heights overlooking the road, at the crossroads she takes her stand.
[3](#)Beside the gates to the city, at the entrances she cries out:
[4](#)“To you, O men, I call out, and my cry is to the sons of men.
[5](#)O simple ones, learn to be shrewd; O fools, gain understanding.
[6](#)Listen, for I speak of noble things, and the opening of my lips will reveal right.
[7](#)For my mouth will speak the truth, and wickedness is detestable to my lips.
[8](#)All the words of my mouth are righteous; none are crooked or perverse.
[9](#)They are all plain to the discerning, and upright to those who find knowledge.

[10](#)Receive my instruction instead of silver, and knowledge rather than pure gold.

[11](#)For wisdom is more precious than rubies, and nothing you desire compares with her.

[12](#)I, wisdom, dwell together with prudence, and I find knowledge and discretion.

[13](#)To fear the LORD is to hate evil;

I hate arrogant pride, evil conduct, and perverse speech.

[14](#)Counsel and sound judgment are mine; I have insight and strength.

[15](#)By me kings reign, and rulers enact just laws;

[16](#)By me princes rule, and all nobles who govern justly.

[17](#)I love those who love me, and those who seek me early shall find me.

[18](#)With me are riches and honor, enduring wealth and righteousness.

[19](#)My fruit is better than gold, pure gold, and my harvest surpasses choice silver.

[20](#)I walk in the way of righteousness, along the paths of justice,

[21](#)bestowing wealth on those who love me and making their treasuries full.

[22](#)The LORD created me as His first course, before His works of old.

[23](#)From everlasting I was established, from the beginning, before the earth began.

[24](#)When there were no watery depths, I was brought forth,
when no springs were overflowing with water.

[25](#)Before the mountains were settled, before the hills, I was brought forth,

[26](#)before He made the land or fields, or any of the dust of the earth.

[27](#)I was there when He established the heavens,
when He inscribed a circle on the face of the deep,

[28](#)when He established the clouds above,
when the fountains of the deep gushed forth,

[29](#)when He set a boundary for the sea,
so that the waters would not surpass His command,
when He marked out the foundations of the earth.

[30](#)Then I was a skilled craftsman at His side,
and His delight day by day, rejoicing always in His presence.

[31](#)I was rejoicing in His whole world, delighting together in the sons of men.

[32](#)Now therefore, my sons, listen to me, for blessed are those who keep my ways.

[33](#)Listen to instruction and be wise; do not ignore it.

[34](#)Blessed is the man who listens to me, watching daily at my doors,
waiting at the posts of my doorway.

[35](#)For whoever finds me finds life and obtains the favor of the LORD.

[36](#)But he who fails to find me harms himself; all who hate me love death.”

- 2. On Paul's sign-off:** Paul's salutation at the end of the letter is key to establishing the authenticity of the letters. He's either sending greetings from those travelling with him to their friends in the destination church, or they're sending greetings to friends in that church who are known and loved by Paul and his fellow travelers. The names often represent a testimony of the deep relationships in the early church. Colossians is no exception. The letter to the Colossians is being carried by Tychicus. He was used to carry letters to Titus (Titus 3:12) and to the Ephesians (Ephesians 6:21, as he told Timothy in 2 Tim 4:12). Acts 20 tells us he was from the province of Asia. With Tychicus, he sent Onesimus, a Colossian who was once a slave to Philemon, and now a brother. In fact, Onesimus is quite possibly here bringing the letter to Philemon that Paul wrote, asking for forgiveness on Onesimus' behalf...and even his release from slavery. Travelers with Paul who send greetings are also well-known: Aristarchus, who greets them and also greets Philemon has been traveling with Paul from Thessalonica in Macedonia, his home country, and was seized in Acts 19 with Gaius. He was on the ship with Paul when Paul first traveled to Rome in Acts 27. Mark is there sending greetings, and we are reminded that he's Barnabas' cousin. The last time we heard of Mark was when he and his cousin left Paul's company in a heated dispute (Acts 15:36-41). Luke is called the "beloved physician" here, and so we know his profession. Epaphras sends greetings, and we learned that he had come to Paul with his concerns for the Colossians in the first chapter. He remained with Paul. Demas also sends greetings to Philemon, but he doesn't maintain this good report when Paul speaks "privately" to Timothy about him. Compare notes and see what you think: 2 Timothy 4: [9](#)Make every effort to come to me quickly, [10](#)[because Demas, in his love of this world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica. Crescens has gone to Galatia, and Titus to Dalmatia.](#) [11](#)Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, because he is useful to me in the ministry. Notice too, Nympha has a home church. What does this say of the first century church?