

Life Group Notes 8/13/2023
Pastor Mark Warren The Kingdom Part 5

[No doctrine is a given unless it has been found in the Word given by the Holy Spirit and received by you. If you have observations or questions, feel free to send me an email with your comment or observations at tbeachhead@comcast.net. Thank you for taking the time—Pete Mehegan, the Scribe.]

Remember: 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 facilitate discussion and to discern 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 that Pastor Mark has raised this week, 8/13. 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. This week has several footnotes on vocabulary, doctrines, and principles of the church. Footnotes are not meant to distract, but enhance the reading, and to help find answers to questions that arise. This week's footnotes include:

1. [On rest and the Sabbath.](#)
2. [On the rebellion.](#)

***Please **Note:** At the very [end of these notes](#), I've included passages that were mentioned in this week's message for deeper study using SOAP journaling and further study during the week. ***

Pastor began by encouraging us to listen, to hear what God has to say. "Some say, 'Well, I don't know how to hear God.'" **How do you know when you hear God? What distinguishes His voice from your own inner voice? Do you have scripture for this?** He asks:

1. Can the kingdom of God be lived here and now?
2. Can we pray, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven," with an expectation of a response in the affirmative? What does the answer look like?
3. Have you begun to see the answer come to light?

Pastor Mark describes the lives of people he has encountered whose lives are in constant conflict. Jealousy and strife, self-sufficiency and pride prompt them to insulate themselves from others and even from each other, putting relationships and marriages at

risk. He says, what they are lacking is rest. **Explain.** He says, "We're called 'human beings' and not 'human doings,' but we measure ourselves more by what we do than who we are."

Explain. If we're productive we have value, and our value is in the widgets we produce.

What does God require, beyond widgets? (See Micah 6:8 [8He has shown you, O man, what is good and what the Lord requires of you, that you do justly, that you love mercy, and you walk humbly with your God.](#))

Look up Hebrews 3: [12](#)See to it, brothers, that none of you has a wicked heart of unbelief that turns away from the living God. [13](#)But exhort one another daily, as long as it is called today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness. [14](#)We have come to share in Christ if we hold firmly to the end the assurance we had at first.

[15](#)As it has been said: "Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts, as you did in the rebellion." [16](#)For who were the ones who heard and rebelled? Were they not all those Moses led out of Egypt? [17](#)And with whom was God angry for forty years? Was it not with those who sinned, whose bodies fell in the wilderness? [18](#)And to whom did He swear that they would never enter His rest? Was it not to those who disobeyed? [19](#)So we see that it was because of their unbelief that they were unable to enter.

1. List key points here. Can this be done alone? How important is it that we encourage one another?
2. How does one get hardened? Explain what sin does.
3. Explain verse 14. What happens when we give up?
4. Look up [footnote 2](#). What was the rebellion? Why did people fall?
5. Define "unbelief." What is the fruit of unbelief?
6. Look up Joshua and Caleb's encouragement in Numbers 14:6-9. [6](#)Joshua son of Nun and Caleb son of Jephunneh, who were among those who had spied out the land, tore their clothes [7](#)and said to the whole congregation of Israel, "The land we passed through and explored is an exceedingly good land. [8](#)If the LORD delights in us, He will bring us into this land, a land flowing with milk and honey, and He will give it to us.[9](#)Only do not rebel against the LORD, and do not be afraid of the people of the land, for they will be like bread for us. Their protection has been removed, and the LORD is with us. Do not be afraid of them!" What do you see?
7. If encouraging one another is a step. What is the next step?

Look up Chapter 4: [1](#)Therefore, while the promise of entering his rest still stands, let us fear lest any of you should seem to have failed to reach it. [2](#)For good news came to us just as to them, but the message they heard did not benefit them, because they were not united by faith with those who listened. [3](#)For we who have believed enter that rest, as he has said, "As I swore in my wrath, 'They shall not enter my rest,'" although his works were finished from the foundation of the world. [4](#)For he has somewhere spoken of the seventh day in this way: "And God rested on the seventh day from all his works." [5](#)And again in this passage he said, "They shall not enter my rest."

1. What do you see? Read [footnote 1](#). Where does the promise of entering His rest come from? Why rest? What is that rest?

2. Note the comparison of the “good news coming” to the Israelites in the desert, and the good news coming to us. What are the two choices when the good news comes? What are the consequences of unbelief?
3. Who was the first to rest? Why the seventh day? What was He doing for the first six? What is the seventh day for?
4. What does it take to enter that rest? What did God do when He rested?

*6*Since therefore it remains for some to enter it, and those who formerly received the good news failed to enter because of disobedience, *7*again he appoints a certain day, “Today,” saying through David so long afterward, in the words already quoted,

“Today, if you hear his voice,
do not harden your hearts.”

*8*For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken of another day later on. *9*So then, there remains a Sabbath rest for the people of God, *10*for whoever has entered God’s rest has also rested from his works as God did from his.

1. When is the best time to think about entering this rest? Why not tomorrow?
2. What prevents entering?
3. Did they enter God’s rest when they finally entered the promised land? How do you know?
4. Look at verse 9. Have you rested from your works as God did from His?
5. What do you think God did on His first day of rest?
6. What comes with rest? How much laundry and how many chores?

*11*Let us therefore strive to enter that rest, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience. *12*For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. *13*And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

1. How was rest robbed from the people in the desert?
2. What prevents you from resting?
3. Look at verse 12? Why is it dangerous to disobey the Word of God? Can you ever get away with even a little disobedience? Explain.
4. Why is knowing we are naked and exposed a good thing?

Look up 1 Corinthians 6: *9*Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who submit to or perform homosexual acts, *10*nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor verbal abusers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God. *11*And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

1. If you do not inherit the kingdom, what is the hope of rest?

2. Look at the list. Now look at verse 11. Why does Paul say, “Some of you...were?” How much of what they were, i.e., used to be, enters into your consideration for today’s self-assessment? How does obedience bring rest? What washes you clean? What does a clean conscience feel like? What are the benefits of a clean conscience?

Look up Matthew 22: [1](#)And again Jesus spoke to them in parables, saying, [2](#)“The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding feast for his son, [3](#)and sent his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding feast, but they would not come. [4](#)Again he sent other servants, saying, ‘Tell those who are invited, “See, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding feast.”’ [5](#)But they paid no attention and went off, one to his farm, another to his business, [6](#)while the rest seized his servants, treated them shamefully, and killed them. [7](#)The king was angry, and he sent his troops and destroyed those murderers and burned their city. [8](#)Then he said to his servants, ‘The wedding feast is ready, but those invited were not worthy. [9](#)Go therefore to the main roads and invite to the wedding feast as many as you find.’ [10](#)And those servants went out into the roads and gathered all whom they found, both bad and good. So the wedding hall was filled with guests.

[11](#)“But when the king came in to look at the guests, he saw there a man who had no wedding garment. [12](#)And he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding garment?’ And he was speechless. [13](#)Then the king said to the attendants, ‘Bind him hand and foot and cast him into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ [14](#)For many are called, but few are chosen.”

1. What do you see? For whom is the feast?
2. How important is attendance?
3. What is more important: your attendance, or that the feast be enjoyed?
4. Describe the patience of the king giving the feast.
5. Describe the behavior of the subjects. What does their behavior remind you of?
6. What is the ultimate end of the wicked?
7. Look at verse 8 and 9. Who is now invited that were not invited before?
8. Who comes? What is the result?
9. Do the “good and the bad” guests make you think of the wheat and the tares growing in the same field? Explain.
10. Explain verses 11-14. Can this be compared to the five foolish virgins in Matthew 25? Explain.
11. What are the wedding garments that the one does not have?
12. Mark says, “He says, ‘I want the feast...but I just don’t want this “Jesus” thing.’” How does that explain the one’s mistake?
13. What is the difference between the “called” and the “chosen”? Why are so few chosen? What does it take to be chosen?

14. How is the call to the banquet like the call to His rest? What happened on that day when they heard His voice and turned away?
15. What do you do when you hear His voice today?
16. What stole the rest from those who refused the offer?

Mark speaks of the garments we should put on. Look at 1 Corinthians 13. [4](#)Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant [5](#)or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; [6](#)it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth.[7](#)Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. [8](#)Love never ends...[11](#)When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways. [12](#)For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known.

[13](#)So now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

1. Is it possible to turn from disagreeable to agreeable? What are the steps?
2. How does one give up childish ways when one is old?
3. What childish ways will you give up today, starting now?
4. What are your strongest traits listed here? What traits need work?
5. Mark says, "Faith is like the door that opens up to us, hope is like the kingdom into which we are moving, a place of peace and rest, but love is the very essence of how we function in the kingdom. Explain.

Look at the garments we are offered in Isaiah 61: [1](#)*The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to bring good news to the poor; he has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; [2](#)to proclaim the year of the LORD's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; [3](#)to grant to those who mourn in Zion—to give them a beauty instead of ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they may be called oaks of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that he may be glorified. [4](#)They shall build up the ancient ruins; they shall raise up the former devastations; they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations.*

1. If he gave these garments to us, what's our next step?
2. When we wear these, how is our countenance changed?
3. Who quoted this verse in the New Testament (Luke 4)? In what context? What was the response of the listener (verse 28)? Why? Explain in this context, "Many are called but few are chosen."
4. Look at verse four. What is our purpose? How far reaching is this purpose? What is our first step?

Look up Hebrews 12: [1](#)Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,[2](#)looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured

the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

1. Look at Hebrews 11. Who is in the “cloud of witnesses” that surround us?
2. Look again. How do they encourage us? What did they do that we are learning from? What was the key to Hebrews 11?
3. How does their faith instruct us? And what does their faith encourage us to do?
4. In Roman times, runners ran naked. What happens when we lay aside these garments listed in verse 1?
5. What propelled Jesus to willingly endure the cross? Who is the “joy that was set before Him?” Name a name? Was it worth it? Who else...have you told them recently? When we understand that we are the joy that Jesus was promised, and His inheritance, what changes?

The Follow-up Application

1. Use the [SOAP journal studies](#) below throughout the week.
2. Make plans to join a life group. If you're new to Grace, find out how.
3. Play red light green light. Pastor Mark says, “The one who wins is not the fastest. He's the one most attentive to the sound of the voice and responds to that voice the quickest and consistently.” In doing SOAP this week, train yourself to hear and respond quickly. Let the application begin a habit of obedience. Use 1 Corinthians 13 as a guide.
4. Look deeply for any place of bitterness and unforgiveness that robs you of peace and rest this week. Write it down, burn the paper (safely) and with the Holy Spirit as your partner, make the decision to turn from it.

Take the time to pray.

Scribe's Notes:

1. **On rest and the Sabbath**—The commandment found in Exodus 20:8 says, “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. 9Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, 10but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall not do any work, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. 11For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day. Therefore, the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.” Notice the reference to Genesis chapter 2, where God rests: 1Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array. 2And by the seventh day God had finished the work He had been doing; so on that day He rested from all His work. 3Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because on that day He rested from all the work of creation that He had accomplished.

- a. This is the first time “rest” is mentioned in the Bible, in the first week of creation. What did God do on the seventh day?
- b. To whom did He speak and with whom did He fellowship?
- c. Explain why Adam was made in God’s image and in His likeness?
- d. How did that enhance the fellowship they shared?
- e. Why is it significant that we are called to behave as God did after six days of labor?

Now look up Isaiah 58 and try to understand God’s idea of rest: **6** “*Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the straps of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? 7* *Is it not to share your bread with the hungry and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover him, and not to hide yourself from your own flesh? 8* *Then shall your light break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up speedily; your righteousness shall go before you; the glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard. 9* *Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer; you shall cry, and he will say, ‘Here I am.’ If you take away the yoke from your midst, the pointing of the finger, and speaking wickedness, 10* *if you pour yourself out for the hungry and satisfy the desire of the afflicted, then shall your light rise in the darkness and your gloom be as the noonday. 11* *And the LORD will guide you continually and satisfy your desire in scorched places and make your bones strong; and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail. 12* *And your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; you shall be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of streets to dwell in. 13* *“If you turn back your foot from the Sabbath, from doing your pleasure on my holy day, and call the Sabbath a delight and the holy day of the LORD honorable; if you honor it, not going your own ways, or seeking your own pleasure, or talking idly; 14* *then you shall take delight in the LORD, and I will make you ride on the heights of the earth; I will feed you with the heritage of Jacob your father, for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.”*”

- a. What do you notice?
 - b. What happens when we fast, if we do the right thing?
 - c. What are the benefits to keeping the sabbath?
 - d. Do you see the theme of “wedding garments” in this?
 - e. Make a list from these verses, what you do when you’re fasting or enjoying the Sabbath. List the benefits.
2. **On the rebellion**—The “rebellion” that David refers to in the Psalm is that which took place in Numbers 13 and 14, where Moses sends twelve tribes into the land, and only two, Caleb and Joshua come back with a favorable report. The rest are so discouraged they refuse to continue on, despite Caleb’s powerful words which we looked at above, and God determined to let them die in the desert to “...fulfill the word that you have spoken against yourself.” The lesson here on rebellion, and the principle involved is a theme throughout the entire Bible. Look at what Samuel tells Saul when Saul grew impatient waiting for Samuel, and decided to do the “sacrifice” without waiting: 1 Samuel 15: **22** And Samuel said, “Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to listen than the fat of rams. **23** For rebellion is as the sin of divination, and presumption is as iniquity and idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, he has also rejected you from being king.”

For further study:

Take a moment each day this week to apply the SOAP... (**S**cripture—Copy the scripture. / **O**bservation—Write what you see. / **A**pplication—What is God saying? / **P**ray—What is your response?) ...method to some of the scripture we looked at this week:

Monday: Psalm 95:7-11
Tuesday: Hebrews 4:1-3
Wednesday: Numbers 14:6-9
Thursday: 1 Samuel 15:22-23
Friday: Hebrews 4:11-13
Saturday: 1 Corinthians 6:9-11
Sunday: 1 Corinthians 13:4-8

(Scribe's note: I have been told that the SOAP method is most effective when limited to two to four verses. Study is most effective when context is clear. At times, I might include more verses for the purpose of clarity and context. You are free to take the verses that speak to you and respond in the context of that verse. As with the notes themselves, this task is to be a joy for you. If at any point you feel you are not "doing it correctly," your grade has already been determined. You ARE A+ already because you are reading these words.)