

Life Group Notes 9/3/2023
Pastor Mark Warren The Kingdom Part 8

[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. 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.**

Note: I have highlighted suggested discussion questions that Pastor Mark has raised this week, 9/3. 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.** I include each of the passages mentioned in full, to facilitate the enjoyment of these notes. This week has footnotes on vocabulary, doctrines, and principles of the church. Footnotes are not meant to distract. This week's footnotes include:

1. [On sin, iniquity, transgression, and lawlessness.](#)
2. [On the death penalty for law breaking.](#)

***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 talking about "marriage as a reflection of the church." He celebrated a church couple's (Brian's and Glenda's) forty years of marriage as a "milestone" because the enemy knows that if he can erase successful marriages, he can wipe off God's promise and God's intention for us. **Explain.**

Pastor Mark began with this statement. "It takes a small change in perspective to change an attitude." How did manual labor, packing apples in an apple orchard change Mark's perspective? Do you remember the steps?

1. Pastor Mark, doing manual labor, was grouching, "I'm worth so much more than this." (Why did a "college education" contribute to that notion?)
2. God asked Mark, "How much do you believe you're worth? Mark said, "I'm worth fifty dollars an hour."
3. God responded, "That should be the level of work you perform." How did that change Mark's attitude toward his work?
4. Do you remember? What role was Mark offered only weeks later? Why?

5. Remember Joseph as Potiphar's slave, and as a prisoner in Pharaoh's dungeon? (Genesis 39-40) What made him stand out, so that he was made "manager" in his situation?

Mark introduces today's theme: Work and rest. **What do you remember? What were your thoughts?** He points out the American mindset that looks forward to retirement, where "I won't have to go into work anymore." He said we look on work as a product of the curse, but "...the curse meant that we would have toil in our work, and "Jesus came to reverse the curse." Look up Genesis 2:15. [15](#)The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it. [16](#)And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, [17](#)but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die."

1. Notice verse 15. What was Adam's original task? What does "work it" mean? What did Adam do? What was Adam's assignment?
2. What does "keep it" mean? What role does stewardship play in our original, delegated task?
3. Who owns the garden? Who keeps it for Him?
4. Look back at Genesis 1: [28](#)And God blessed them. And God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth." [29](#)And God said, "Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food. What is the extent of Adam's dominion? What can he do with the fruit of his labor?
5. Now look up chapter 3. What did Adam and Eve and their offspring lose after Adam broke the first and only commandment he had been given up to that day: [16](#)To the woman he said, "I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children. Your desire shall be contrary to your husband, but he shall rule over you."
[17](#)And to Adam he said, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree of which I commanded you, 'You shall not eat of it,' cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life; [18](#)thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. [19](#)By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return."
 6. List the consequences for the woman who was deceived, according to Paul.
 7. List the consequences for Adam who transgressed. How long does the curse last? How does it end? When?
 8. Look at verse 17. Be specific: What was Adam's sin? Why was it wrong to listen to the voice of his Wife? How did this sin lead to Adam's transgression? What Law did Adam deliberately break? ([See Footnote 1 below.](#)) Is it always wrong to listen to the voice of one's wife? Why not? Who had first spoken to Adam? Who was not even present at the time? Had Eve heard God speak the Commandment? Whose responsibility was it to act according to the commandment he had heard?
 9. How has everything changed now that Jesus has entered into the equation?
 10. How has "the Last Adam" changed what the first Adam did?

11. Look at Galatians 3: [23](#) *Now before faith came, we were held captive under the law, imprisoned until the coming faith would be revealed.* [24](#) *So then, the law was our tutor until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith.* [25](#) *But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor,* [26](#) *for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith.* [27](#) *For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.*

How has the coming of Christ changed everything? Who has become our tutor now?

Pastor says, "We can find that the work God has prepared for us now can again bring peace and joy to our lives." **Explain.** He continues, "It doesn't really matter what your job is, I can tell you how to find joy in your job. I can tell you how to get up in the morning and be excited to go to work." **Don't look ahead: What did he suggest? Now, look at Colossians**

3: [23](#) *Whatever you do, work heartily, as for the Lord and not for men,* [24](#) *knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward. You are serving the Lord Christ.* [25](#) *For the wrongdoer will be paid back for the wrong he has done, and there is no partiality.* Think:

1. What was Joseph's reward for working heartily as for the Lord and not for Potiphar?
2. What was Pastor Mark's reward for working heartily for the apple orchard owner?
3. Compare the Laws of the Kingdom, expressed here, with the Law of gravity. Is there any chance an apple, loosed from the branch of the tree, will not fall? Is there any chance the wrongdoer will not receive payback? Can you "break" the law of gravity, or does the law of gravity break you? How does that change your prospective on God's law?

Look up Ephesians 6: [5](#) *Bondservants, obey your earthly masters with fear and trembling, with a sincere heart, as you would Christ,* [6](#) *not by the way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart,* [7](#) *rendering service with a good will as to the Lord and not to man,* [8](#) *knowing that whatever good anyone does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether he is a bondservant or is free.* [9](#) *Masters, do the same to them, and stop your threatening, knowing that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and that there is no partiality with him.*

1. Look at verse 5. If you are not in management, how is what you do like being a bondservant? Do you feel like a servant sometimes?
2. How do you posture your heart at work if you are not in management? How does Paul say you should? Can you see Christ in your management?
3. What is the reward for obedience to this precept?
4. What are the chances that this Law of the Kingdom will not receive back from the Lord?
5. Think carefully here, if you are working to receive back from the Lord by obeying this principle, is this a good thing? Or a bad thing?
6. For whom are you working at your job?

Mark says, "If we get the perspective that we are working for Jesus in our work, it changes the attitude. We can get up in the morning and say, 'Thank you, God, that I get to represent you in my workplace.'"

1. What kind of employee will you become?
2. How will that change the way you manage your responsibility at your workplace?
3. Look above again at Colossians 3:25 *For the wrongdoer will be paid back for the wrong he has done, and there is no partiality.* Is this a threat? Or a promise?
4. What if this payback were as swift as gravity when falling from a window?
5. How would the level of wrongdoing change?

6. Why do you think there is a period of time before this promise's fulfillment?
7. How much weight do the words, "...for there is no partiality..." add? Who is not included?
8. Imagine having this verse displayed as a pithy proverb throughout the workplace. On every mirror. Would anything change? Would you change?
9. Explain this proverb, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. The knowledge of the Holy One is understanding." Why is fear only at the beginning? How does knowing God remove the need for fear? Why does, as John says in 1 John 4:18, "Perfect love casts out all fear, because fear has torment."
10. Now explain why loving Jesus on the job makes you a better and more desirable worker.
11. Mark says, "How do we realize that we are going to serve with excellence. We get a mindset that says, 'I will be an excellent employee?'" Answer him. How does your day begin?
12. Do you have a strategy for dealing with a difficult boss? A difficult co-worker?
13. Mark says, "We say, 'Jesus, I represent you, and you're my boss. I'm looking for your instructions throughout my day.'" Does that help? Do you have a testimony, where you received His instructions supernaturally?
14. If you are in management, look above at verse 9. Pastor suggests you say, "Jesus owns the company." How do you measure up? How does that change your perspective?
15. Mark says, "The way you treat your employees, the way you discipline your employees, the way you schedule your employees matters because you are working as unto the Lord." Discuss this. Why do these things matter for a good manager? Can you think of anything else that matters that is often overlooked?

Pastor asks, "With that attitude, would we find joy in our work? Would we find **rest** in our work."

1. Pastor says, most of our attitudes come from our heart motivation. What would an attitude like this change?
2. What difficulties could an attitude like this prevent?
3. Pastor suggests that while Adam was tending the garden before the curse was laid on the ground, he found that the most restful labor. Is this an oxymoron?
4. What did he never have to worry about before the fall?

Pastor moves on to review, "When we shift our attitude toward our workplace, we find more joy, more peace, more satisfaction in our work, but now let's look at rest." Think of Genesis 1 and 2.

1. Look at Genesis 1: And God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day. Why did God review his work on the sixth day and not on the seventh?
2. Who was the first to rest?
3. Why? What did God do on the first day of rest? Did He sleep?

Look at Genesis 2: *1Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. 2And on the seventh day God finished his work that he had done, and he rested on the seventh day from all his work that he had done. 3So God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it, God rested from all his work that he had done in creation.*

1. List what was finished on the sixth day. What existed before the beginning?
2. Note this is the account of Creation's first sabbath. Who rested first?
3. Look carefully at verse 3. Why did God bless the seventh day? What benefit did God derive from resting?
4. What benefit does creation derive from God resting?
5. If you are an artist, describe what benefit your painting derives from you finally walking away and leaving it. What does "overworking the piece" mean?
6. Look at the commandment in Exodus 20: [8](#) "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. [9](#) Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, [10](#) but 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. [11](#) For 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. What do you see? Who is excluded from the rest?
7. Unto whom did God pass the blessings of rest? Why? Whose image do we bear?

Look at Exodus 31: [13](#) "Tell the Israelites, 'Surely you must keep My Sabbaths, for this will be a sign between Me and you for the generations to come, so that you may know that I am the LORD who sanctifies you. [14](#) Keep the Sabbath, for it is holy to you. Anyone who profanes it must surely be put to death. Whoever does any work on that day must be cut off from among his people. [15](#) For six days work may be done, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of complete rest, holy to the LORD. Whoever does any work on the Sabbath day must surely be put to death.

1. According to these verses, what is the purpose of a Sabbath?
2. How has the purpose changed from Genesis 2? What distinguishes God's people from all the other peoples on the earth? Who is the sign between?
3. Why is it important to have a sign to remember this?
4. Look at Romans 1: [28](#) Furthermore, since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, He gave them up to a depraved mind, to do what ought not to be done. [29](#) They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed, and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, and malice. They are gossips, [30](#) slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant, and boastful. They invent new forms of evil; they disobey their parents. [31](#) They are senseless, faithless, heartless, merciless. What are the consequences that come with forgetting Who it is Who sanctifies us?
5. Look at verse 14. See [footnote 2 below](#). Explain how death is not the punishment for breaking the law, but the consequence derived naturally from breaking the law.
6. Explain this verse: Mark 12: [27](#) Then Jesus declared, "The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath. [28](#) Therefore, the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath." Did God create man because he had this pesky sabbath that no one was keeping? What is the sabbath designed for? When you realize that the New Testament "Son of Man" would come from the Old Testament "Son of Adam," how has Adam's original dominion been restored? How was Adam originally "Lord of the Sabbath?"
7. Mark asks, "Is the sabbath truly about not doing any work?" Answer him. What do you think?

Look up Hebrews 4: **1**Therefore, while the promise of entering His rest still stands, let us be careful that none of you be deemed to have fallen short of it. **2**For we also received the good news just as they did; but the message they heard was of no value to them, since they did not share the faith of those who comprehended it.

1. This evokes the rebellion of the people in Numbers 13 and 14, where twelve leaders, one each from each of the tribes of Israel, were sent into the land of Promise to spy out the land. Ten came back with an evil report, and only Caleb and Joshua reported good news and said to the whole congregation of Israel, 14:7 *"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!"* The people rebelled, and went to stone Caleb and Joshua. What did Joshua and Caleb have that the other leaders did not have?
2. What was the people's choice?
3. Why did they choose to believe the ten and not the two?
4. What was the message they all heard (verse 8 from Numbers)?
5. Why did the message have no value?

3Now we who have believed enter that rest. As for the others, it is just as God has said:

*"So I swore on oath in My anger,
'They shall never enter My rest.'"*

And yet His works have been finished since the foundation of the world. **4**For somewhere He has spoken about the seventh day in this manner: *"And on the seventh day God rested from all His works."* **5**And again, as He says in the passage above: *"They shall never enter My rest."*

1. Look closely. What have we believed?
2. What is the nature of rest? Threat? Or privilege?
3. Look at verse five. What is the nature of this invitation?
4. To what kind of rest are we being called?

6Since, then, it remains for some to enter His rest, and since those who formerly heard the good news did not enter because of their disobedience, **7**God again designated a certain day as *"Today,"* when a long time later He spoke through David as was just stated: *"Today, if you hear His voice, do not harden your hearts."*

1. What day do we begin to seek rest?
2. What hinders us from doing that?
3. Do you hear His voice?

8For if Joshua had given them rest, God would not have spoken later about another day. **9**There remains, then, a Sabbath rest for the people of God. **10**For whoever enters God's rest also rests from his own work, just as God did from His. **11**Let us, therefore, make every effort to enter that rest, so that no one will fall by following the same pattern of disobedience.

1. How do we know Joshua had not given them rest?
2. Read this carefully. What does the rest look like?
3. Pastor Mark suggests that part of the Sabbath rest involves coming together, and appreciating the good things of the week. What do you think?
4. What else is included?

Isaiah 58 speaks clearly of religious observances like fasting and sabbath observation. Read this carefully: **5***Is this the fast I have chosen: a day for a man to deny himself, to bow*

his head like a reed, and to spread out sackcloth and ashes? Will you call this a fast and a day acceptable to the LORD?

6Isn't this the fast that I have chosen: to break the chains of wickedness, to untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and tear off every yoke?**7**Isn't it to share your bread with the hungry, to bring the poor and homeless into your home, to clothe the naked when you see him, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?

8Then your light will break forth like the dawn, and your healing will come quickly. Your righteousness will go before you, and the glory of the LORD will be your rear guard.**9**Then you will call, and the LORD will answer; you will cry out, and He will say, 'Here I am.'

1. Summarize what you just read of fasting?
2. According to these verses, on whom do you focus when you fast: God, your neighbor or yourself.
3. What is the promised reward for loving your neighbor when you fast? List them all.

If you remove the yoke from your midst, the pointing of the finger and malicious talk,**10**and if you give yourself to the hungry and satisfy the afflicted soul, then your light will go forth in the darkness, and your night will be like noonday. **11**The LORD will always guide you; He will satisfy you in a sun-scorched land and strengthen your frame. You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail.

12Your people will rebuild the ancient ruins; you will restore the age-old foundations; you will be called Repairer of the Breach, Restorer of the Streets of Dwelling. What happens when you stop back biting and slander?

1. List the rewards this time.
2. How will others see you?

13If you turn your foot from breaking the Sabbath, from doing as you please on My holy day, if you call the Sabbath a delight, and the LORD's holy day honorable, if you honor it by not going your own way or seeking your own pleasure or speaking idle words, **14**then you will delight yourself in the LORD, and I will make you ride on the heights of the land and feed you with the heritage of your father Jacob."

1. What are the requirements added to keeping the Sabbath. Make a list.
2. What should you do? What should you not do?
3. If you do not go your way on the Sabbath, Whose way do you go?
4. List the rewards.
5. How does Isaiah change your perspective on the Sabbath?
6. Pastor Mark talks about just wanting to "unwind...kick back...watch a show." Do these fit into this concept? Which of the three does not fit?
7. Using Pastor's parable of his son's electric bike, why is "unplugging" and "unwinding" neither wise nor part of the rest? How much charge does the battery get unplugged.
8. Does the Sabbath rest mean plugging back in, then? Explain.
9. Pastor says, "We run so hard and then we unplug, and we don't really get any rest, because Jesus is our rest." Explain.
10. Look up John 8: **31**So Jesus said to the Jews who had believed him, "If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples,**32**and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."... **34**Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin. **35**The slave does not remain in the house

forever; the son remains forever. 36 So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed. How are freedom and rest related? How does “abiding/dwelling in the Word related to plugging in and recharging the electric bicycle?

11. Relate what Jesus says about “practicing sin” here with what Isaiah says in verse 13 above, in “...not going your own way...”
12. Pastor concludes: “A day of rest is not to unplug, but to plug in.” Your thoughts.

The Follow-up Application

1. Use the [SOAP journal studies](#) below throughout the week.
2. Using Paul’s letter to the Ephesians cited above, do an introspective analysis of your attitude toward your work. For whom are you working? Does your boss, do your clients, do your co-workers know this? How do they know? How would they know?
3. Consciously begin every day for the next two weeks with the commitment, “Jesus, I’m going to work for you today. You are my boss.”
4. Make a commitment not to “unplug,” but to make Jesus your source of rest. Write down what you do. (Pastor: “Open your Bible. Put on worship music. Do something that connects you to your creator.”) You will find rest.

Take the time to pray.

Scribe’s Notes:

1. **On sin, transgression, iniquity, and lawlessness.** The vocabulary of sin is clear and sometimes overlooked, but to understand the degrees of pain our actions cause, it’s good to examine some of the words we use. Note that each is translated from words in both Greek and Hebrew that are remarkably clear. This footnote is not meant to be extensive, but to give a general understanding of concepts we are not conditioned to even consider. *Sin*, then is found in the idea of a target where the arrow missed the bullseye. Anything off target is sin, where Christlikeness is the only standard and the acceptable goal. *Transgression* is the deliberate breaking of the Law. Adam transgressed. Eve sinned. *Iniquity* is a step away from the right direction. It’s a change in what we meditate on. The servant introduced iniquity to Eve in the garden, and caused her to meditate on law breaking, and away from righteousness. We are surrounded by iniquity, that is, others’ doing evil. When we begin to contemplate that evil, or worse when we find entertainment in it, we are drawn to it, and hence transgression. Lawlessness is the behavior of those who are their own law, as in the days of the Judges, where “Everyone did what was right in their own eyes.” For David, God’s Law was his delight, because it instructed his feet and lit his path.
2. **On the death penalty for lawbreaking.** In the Bible, the very first death penalty pronounced with a commandment is in Genesis 2: [16](#) And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, “You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, [17](#) but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, *for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.*” This translation is the translator’s choice, and indeed it is the traditional choice. The original Hebrew language does not use these words and say, “you shall surely die,” because Hebrew has a different way of expressing this consequence. In Hebrew,

Adam is told, "...in that day you shall eat of it *dying, you shall die...or...you shall die unto death.*" Death is the certain result of your action. Once again, as with gravity and every other Law, this is an expression of the inexorable Law of the Kingdom. "If you jump out of the window, falling you shall fall." You cannot break God's Law. God's Law breaks you if you do not follow it. Arsenic is labeled "poison", because the consumption of arsenic leads to death...as does breaking EVERY law of the kingdom. In Exodus 31, we find to our dismay that Moses was told that to break the Law of the Sabbath carried with it capital punishment: Anyone who profanes it must surely be put to death. Whoever does any work on that day must be cut off from among his people. And once again, the Hebrew does not say he should be "put to death." As in Genesis, the Hebrew says, "Anyone who profanes it dying he shall die...or he shall die unto death." The point is, God's Law is not written as an expression of threat and punishment. God's Laws are the Laws of health and well-being. When you break the Law of the Sabbath, you break the Law of healthy living as surely as when you drink arsenic or jump out of the window. What we MUST know is that the consequences are just as certain as death.

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: Genesis 39:6-9
Tuesday: Numbers 14:6-9
Wednesday: Hebrews 4:9
Thursday: Isaiah 58:2-4
Friday: Isaiah 58:6-8
Saturday: Isaiah 58:9-11
Sunday: Isaiah 58:12-14

(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. Just to clarify: the side-effect of dwelling on God's word is real freedom. 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.)