

# Life Group Notes 4/13/2025

## Pastor Mark Warren

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](mailto: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 heart and guide our discussions.

***Please pre-read these notes and choose the direction that is appropriate for your 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, 4/13. 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.*** I include each of the passages mentioned in full, to facilitate the enjoyment of these notes. Footnotes are not meant to distract. This week's footnote speaks:

1. [On Hosanna, and the expectation of deliverance.](#)
2. [On Lazarus, and the impact of his resurrection.](#)
3. [On merchants and money changers.](#)
4. [On George Müller, God's will and releasing our own expectations.](#)

**Important:** 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 to help further your study during the week.

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Pastor Mark began by speaking of unmet expectations. He asked, "Have you ever built something up in your mind so incredibly, you were so certain, and it was so perfect...only to have your hope fall apart on you? Maybe it was that dream job that wasn't as much of a dream, or that 'forever' relationship that didn't last, but fell apart. Maybe you 'believed God' for something that did not pan out." He said, "Unmet expectations can crush us."

1. Do you have a testimony?
2. Did you recover? Explain.
3. Do you have a system to protect you and your family from that crushing?
4. Now think about Palm Sunday. What expectations did the people have?
5. Did they have reason for their expectations? Can you list some reasons?
6. What major miracle had the people witnessed only a week earlier? (John 12)

Let's look at His entry from Matthew 21: 1As they approached Jerusalem and came to Bethphage on the Mount of Olives, Jesus sent out two disciples, 2saying to them, "Go into

the village ahead of you, and at once you will find a donkey tied there, with her colt beside her. Untie them and bring them to Me. **3**If anyone questions you, tell him that the Lord needs them, and he will send them right away.” **4**This took place to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet: **5**“Say to the Daughter of Zion, ‘See, your King comes to you, gentle and riding on a donkey, on a colt, the foal of a donkey.’” **6**So the disciples went and did as Jesus had directed them. **7**They brought the donkey and the colt and laid their cloaks on them, and Jesus sat on them. **8**A massive crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. **9**The crowds that went ahead of Him and those that followed were shouting: “Hosanna to the Son of David!” “Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord!” “Hosanna in the highest!” **10**When Jesus had entered Jerusalem, the whole city was stirred and asked, “Who is this?” **11**The crowds replied, “This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth in Galilee.” **12**Then Jesus entered the temple courts and drove out all who were buying and selling there. He overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those selling doves. **13**And He declared to them, “It is written: ‘My house will be called a house of prayer.’ But you are making it ‘a den of robbers.’” **14**The blind and the lame came to Him at the temple, and He healed them. **15**But the chief priests and scribes were indignant when they saw the wonders He performed and the children shouting in the temple courts, “Hosanna to the Son of David!”

1. What do you notice?
2. The prophecy spoken of in verse 4 is from Zechariah 9:9, written around 600. B.C. Why is that significant?
3. Describe the streets after Jesus had passed into the Temple proper. Who cleans up the streets?
4. Might there have been remnants of the debris the following Friday?
5. What were the crowds’ expectations? How were these expectations formed?
6. What were the priests’ and Pharisees’ expectations? What did they fear?

Look at John 2:**13**When the Jewish Passover was near, Jesus went up to Jerusalem. **14**In the temple courts He found men selling cattle, sheep, and doves, and money changers seated at their tables. **15**So He made a whip out of cords and drove all from the temple courts, both sheep and cattle. He poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. **16**To those selling doves He said, “Get these out of here! How dare you turn My Father’s house into a marketplace!” ... **23**While He was in Jerusalem at the Passover Feast, many people saw the signs He was doing and believed in His name. **24**But Jesus did not entrust Himself to them, for He knew them all. **25**He did not need any testimony about man, for He knew what was in a man.

1. What do you see? What details are added?
2. Notice that John recounts this incident at the beginning of Jesus’ ministry. Has Jesus become a greater threat at the end of his ministry? Explain.
3. How can you know if this happened more than once?
4. What signs, spoken of, in John 2:23, were described specifically in Matthew?
5. How quickly does the city go into a spiral, and turn on Jesus?
6. Can you explain what happened? Whom did the crowd start listening to?
7. Pastor Mark asks, “How do we avoid falling into this same trap, where we are saying ‘Hosanna,’ one day and then shouting, ‘Crucify Him,’ the next?” Answer him.
8. What were their expectations? What was going to happen to Rome?

9. How were their expectations disappointed? Who apparently won, Rome or the King of the Jews?
10. How great was the crowds' disappointment? What did they do?
11. Have you ever been to a political rally? What are your thoughts today of your own motives?
12. Have you ever witnessed a loved one or friend who turned from the gospel?
13. What happened? Did expectations crumble as Pastor Mark describes it?
14. Can you take a moment to pray for that loved one?
15. Mark asks, "What do we do when our own expectations are not met?" Answer him.
16. Have you ever prayed for healing, and it did not happen? What was your response?

Pastor Mark moves to a key point: "Here's the tricky part in this: Jesus never once spoke of overthrowing Rome. He promised He would establish His kingdom."

1. Explain.
2. What is the difference?
3. Can you be under "Rome" and the King of kings at the same time? How?
4. What changes when the King is in charge, but Rome is "in power?"
5. How do you change within that system? What do your neighbors see?

"I think sometimes we hold God to something that He never promised us. We ask Him to bless us in our situation, 'Give me...this...' but we neglect to ask Him, 'God, what are you doing?'"

1. Explain.
2. Have you ever been misled into thinking you were following God until you discovered that you weren't?
3. Pastor says, "We get to where He doesn't 'pull through for us' and we question His goodness." Why is this attitude so dangerous.

Pastor makes this suggestion: "What if we just let go of our expectations, and committed ourselves to love."

1. What does this entail?
2. He continues, "I think that's where the breaking down of relationships happens, where we begin to demand expectations that were never agreed to. Disappointment sets in, because we've expected something of someone or of God, and it didn't come through." Do you have a testimony?
3. Pastor related this to John the Baptist's inquiry in the last days of his ministry, as he was being held in Herod's prison. Look at Matthew 11: **2** Meanwhile John heard in prison about the works of Christ, and he sent his disciples **3** to ask Him, "Are You the One who was to come, or should we look for someone else?" **4** Jesus replied, "Go back and report to John what you hear and see: **5** 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. **6** Blessed is the one who does not fall away [who is not *σκανδαλισθη* (*skandalisthe*) offended/scandalized] on account of Me." What were John's expectations? How was John blessed?
4. Look at John the Baptist's own words in John 3: **29** *The bride belongs to the bridegroom. The friend of the bridegroom stands and listens for him, and is overjoyed to hear the bridegroom's voice. That joy is mine, and it is now complete. 30 He must increase; I must decrease. 31 The One who comes from above is above all. The one who is from the earth belongs to the earth and speaks as one from the earth.* How did John avoid being "scandalized"/offended?

5. Did John know something we can't know? Who calls the shots in any of your situations?
6. Who really calls them?
7. Look at [footnote 4 below](#), at how George Müller set expectations. What do you think? How does Müller echo John the Baptist's own words?
8. Do you feel let down when, as Pastor Mark suggests, "...God didn't do what you wanted Him to do?" Do you have a story?
9. What would drive a whole crowd to cry "Crucify Him?" Looking at today's news, is that reaction in Jesus' day extreme?
10. Were Jesus' plans and intentions greater or less than what the people hoped for? Explain.
11. How did the people miss His plans? What were they seeking instead of the Kingdom?
12. Is it still possible to miss His plans? Explain.
13. How does a crowd go from "Hosanna!" to "Crucify Him!" What are the steps?
14. What part did circumstances play?
15. What part did gossip and manipulation play?
16. What part did leadership play?
17. What part did unbelief play?
18. How lethal was misunderstanding?

Pastor Mark said, "Today, let's not go to the place where disappointment gives way to bitterness. Let's go to the place of trust and love. Let's trust that God's plan is the better plan. Let's trust that God sees everything and knows everything, and that He sees you and has your best interest in mind and at hand and in heart."

Review the parable of the four soils, Mark 4:[2](#)*And He taught them many things in parables, and in His teaching He said, [3](#)"Listen! A farmer went out to sow his seed. [4](#)And as he was sowing, some seed fell along the path, and the birds came and devoured it. [5](#)Some fell on rocky ground, where it did not have much soil. It sprang up quickly because the soil was shallow. [6](#)But when the sun rose, the seedlings were scorched, and they withered because they had no root. [7](#)Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the seedlings, and they yielded no crop. [8](#)Still other seed fell on good soil, where it sprouted, grew up, and produced a crop—one bearing thirtyfold, another sixtyfold, and another a hundredfold." [9](#)Then Jesus said, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear."*

1. What do you see? How does this explain what happens in the disappointed hearts of those who were there in Jerusalem that day? Where was good soil found?
2. Review Jesus' explanation from Mark 4: [11](#)*He replied, "The mystery of the kingdom of God has been given to you, but to those on the outside everything is expressed in parables, [12](#)so that, 'they may be ever seeing but never perceiving, and ever hearing but never understanding; otherwise they might turn and be forgiven.'" [13](#)Then Jesus said to them, "Do you not understand this parable? Then how will you understand any of the parables? [14](#)The sower sows the Word. [15](#)Some are like the seeds along the path, where the word is sown. As soon as they hear it, Satan comes and takes away the word that was sown in them. [16](#)Some are like the seeds sown on rocky ground. They hear the word and at once receive it with joy. [17](#)But they themselves have no root, and they remain for only a season. When trouble or persecution comes because of the word, they quickly fall away. [18](#)Others are like the seeds sown among the thorns. They hear the word, [19](#)but the worries*

of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth, and the desire for other things come in and choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful. **20** Still others are like the seeds sown on good soil. They hear the word, receive it, and produce a crop—thirtyfold, sixtyfold, or a hundredfold.” Looking at each soil, how long will it take for each heart to turn bitter and advocate for crucifixion?

Pastor Mark lists the steps to total trust, and letting go of expectations.

- ◇ **It’s OK to be honest with Jesus.** It’s OK to say, “I’m disappointed. I was hopeful I was praying...and I am disappointed. But God I trust you. I know your ways are not my ways and your thoughts are not my thoughts.” (Look up Isaiah 55:7 *Let the wicked man forsake his own way and the unrighteous man his own thoughts; let him return to the LORD, that He may have compassion, and to our God, for He will freely pardon.* **8** *“For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways.” declares the LORD.* **9** *“For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so My ways are higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts....”*)
  - What do you see?
  - Look up Matthew 26: **37** *He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee and began to be sorrowful and deeply distressed.* **38** *Then He said to them, “My soul is consumed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with Me.”* **39** *Going a little farther, He fell facedown and prayed, “My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me. Yet not as I will, but as You will.”* **40** *Then Jesus returned to the disciples and found them sleeping. “Were you not able to keep watch with Me for one hour?” He asked Peter.* **41** *“Watch and pray so that you will not enter into temptation. For the spirit is willing, but the body is weak.”* **42** *A second time He went away and prayed, “My Father, if this cup cannot pass unless I drink it, may Your will be done.”* **43** *And again Jesus returned and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy.* What do you see? How did Jesus strengthen His own determination to follow God’s plan.
    - What protected the disciples from turning away that night?
    - Explain how God’s plan was better than to overthrow the Roman empire at that time.
    - Was the empire overthrown in the end? Why not that night?
    - Who benefits most today? What are you doing with that benefit?
    - Describe Jesus’ capitulation to the Father’s will in the garden: “
- ◇ **Ask for God’s perspective, not just a perspective.** If His ways are higher than our ways, why is His perspective important?
  - How do you know when you have found His perspective?
  - What clear distinction marks His perspective and sets it apart from any other?
- ◇ **Reflect on His past faithfulness.**
  - We’re determined to trust His plan. **37** *He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee and began to be sorrowful and deeply distressed.* **38** *Then He said to them, “My soul is consumed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with Me.”* **39** *Going a little farther, He fell facedown and prayed, “My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me. Yet not as I will, but as You will.”* **40** *Then Jesus returned to the disciples and found them sleeping. “Were you not able to keep watch with Me for one*

hour?" He asked Peter. **41**"Watch and pray so that you will not enter into temptation. For the spirit is willing, but the body is weak." **42**A second time He went away and prayed, "My Father, if this cup cannot pass unless I drink it, may Your will be done." **43**And again Jesus returned and found them sleeping, for their eyes were heavy. How was Jesus facing what was ahead? How did the other three? Explain.

- What did Jesus know that the others did not know?
- How did He know? Think back to the transfiguration and what Jesus had learned from Moses and Elijah.
- Had any of these three heard what Jesus heard? Why not?
- How easy is it to miss God's plan even when He brings us to the mountaintop to witness it in advance? Do you have a testimony?

◇ **Loosen your grip on your plans.** Look at Matthew 10:**38**and anyone who does not take up his cross and follow Me is not worthy of Me. **39**Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. **40**He who receives you receives Me, and he who receives Me receives the One who sent Me. Put Pastor Marks word into this perspective. Is he right? How do you "find your life" to lose it?

- He says, "Letting go of control leads to a deeper, richer life with God. Explain.
- He says, "We have to surrender." What are the steps to surrender?
- He says, "When we stop putting God in a box, and we stop manufacturing these expectations that God is going to do something for us, we'll have fewer disappointments.

When we begin seeking God's perspective we're going to...

◇ **Choose to love without expectations.**

- This is the cure to unmet expectations...when you have none.
- Love is when you just show up and bring grace with you.
- Love refuses to control people.
- What can you add to this list?
- List ways your relationships will change.
- He says, "Imagine God is doing something beautiful in your life."

Pastor Mark reviews the good news. "Jesus did become king, but not the way we imagined. His crown was made first of thorns before it was made of glory. His path to resurrection and life was through the cross."

1. In what way does this reality contradict our own expectations?
2. What do you expect of a crown?
3. What does the doorway to life look like to you?
4. Think of this...If you were Peter witnessing the cruelty of the trial, how would you have prayed?
5. What would you have said?
6. How would your expectations have changed?

Ask yourself these questions:

1. What expectations from God do you have today?
2. Where did these expectations get formed?
3. What have you based your own hope on?

4. Pastor says, “Can I encourage you to let go of your expectations and just love?” Review 1 Corinthians 13: **4**Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. **5**It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no account of wrongs. **6**Love takes no pleasure in evil, but rejoices in the truth. **7**It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. **8**Love never fails. How does this fit?
  5. How does the way of love become His way and not your way?
  6. How does the way of love offer freedom to the one who is loved by you?
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**Follow up application:**

1. Use the [Soap study below](#) to pursue your own understanding.
2. List steps that love takes...use your own friends and neighbors in your design, and be specific. Here’s a challenge: start with the most difficult in your circle. (Be careful not to leave this paper lying around to be discovered!)

**Take the time to pray.**

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**Scribe’s Footnotes:**

1. **On “Hosanna,” and the expectation of deliverance**—Hosanna, that was cried out in the streets of Jerusalem as Jesus entered on a donkey, is a liturgical shout of praise and thanksgiving drawn from the psalms, specifically Psalm 118. According to the dictionary, it is derived from the Hebrew phrase הוֹשִׁיעָה נָא (Hoshia Na), “Oh, Lord, save...” The verb is the Hebrew word H3467 (יָשַׁע, yasha) - to save, deliver...found in the root of Jesus’ name.
2. **On Lazarus and the impact of his resurrection**—Lazarus’ resurrection in John 11 intensified the plot against Jesus’ life because it directly threatened the authority of the Pharisees, being borne of a power that they could never wield. John 12 shows how the tension mounted, as even Lazarus had become a threat, and his death was likewise being sought. Remember, Jesus’ triumphal entry began in Bethany, the home of Lazarus, Mary and Martha.
3. **On merchants and money changers**—The merchants and money changers that Jesus clearly confronted more than once were brazen examples of how the Word of God was nullified in favor of tradition, and how the love of money became the order of the Jewish expression of faith. Mosaic Law exacted a temple tax of one half shekel...but that shekel had to be in the shekel of the sanctuary. Roman money, used in the street, could not be used in the Temple because the effigy on the coin was of pagan idols or of Caesar himself. Thus, an exchange had to be made, and the money changers exacted rates to their extreme profit. Likewise, sacrifices brought into the sanctuary were “inspected” and found “unclean,” by those who sold “pure sacrifices,” famously raised in Bethlehem, for profit.
4. **On George Müller, God’s will and releasing our own expectations**—George Müller (1805-1898) was one of the most remarkable men of faith of the nineteenth century, known for running orphanages in England purely on faith. When asked how he determined the will of God, he described his own method in this way: “1. I seek at the beginning to get my heart into such a state that it has not will of its own in regard to a given matter. Nine-tenths of the difficulties are overcome when our hearts are ready to do the Lord’s will, whatever it may be. When one is truly in this state, it is usually but a

little way to the knowledge of what His will is.” More can be learned at this site:  
<https://www.georgemuller.org/devotional/discerning-the-will-of-god>

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**For further study:**

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

Monday: Matthew 21:6-11

Tuesday: John 2:13-16

Wednesday: John 2:23-25

Thursday: John 3:29-31

Friday: Mark 4:2-9

Saturday: Mark 4:11-20

Sunday: Isaiah 55:7-9

Once again, some passages suggested here have more than the usual number of verses. This is not to increase the burden but to provide clarity of context. Pick the verses that speak to you most clearly, and run these through the SOAP steps.