

Life Group Notes 4/27/2025

Pastor Mark Warre—Kingdom

Come Week 7

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 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, 4/27, a week after the celebration of the Resurrection. Let's look at what was said. 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 being God's "workmanship."](#)
2. [On talents the servants received.](#)
3. [On Keith Green and the Sheep and the Goats \(again.\)](#)
4. [On the three parables of Matthew 25.](#)

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.

Here's an opening quiz. *Fill in the blanks:* Pastor began by saying, "You all know that it is by _____ we have been _____ through _____, not by _____, so that no one can boast. ((a) works, (b) faith, (c) saved, (d) grace. For extra points, name the book and the chapter. (You can only peek at the [Soap Verses](#) below if you have to cheat!) Now, examine what follows: **10***For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance as our way of life.*

1. Is this a paradox?
2. If we are not *saved by works*, how are we saved?
3. Whose works are we doing?

4. Whom do these works (that God prepared for us in advance, that we should do them) benefit most? What does this mean in terms of loving our neighbor?
5. Explain this: “We are absolutely not saved by our works, but we are absolutely saved for good works.”
6. Pastor looked at us in the eyes, and said, “God has prepared before the beginning of time good works for you to accomplish while you are alive here on earth.” Are you doing His works? Do you have a testimony?

Pastor opens Matthew 25 to help understand what these works are. This chapter opens with the parable of the ten virgins talking about how to get ready for Jesus’ return. Take a moment to review this parable.

1. Why is the oil essential to the lamp?
2. What do the virgins bring to the banquet?
3. How is the banquet to be lit? So why is the oil required?
4. What has to happen to our lamps for darkness to prevail?
5. Is there any other way for darkness to prevail?

Pastor moves on to the parable of the talents. Let’s look at this parable. Look at Matthew 25:**14***For it is just like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted them with his possessions. **15**To one he gave five talents, to another two talents, and to another one talent—each according to his own ability. And he went on his journey.*

16*The servant who had received the five talents went at once and put them to work and gained five more. **17**Likewise, the one with the two talents gained two more. **18**But the servant who had received the one talent went off, dug a hole in the ground, and hid his master’s money.*

19*After a long time the master of those servants returned and settled accounts with them. **20**The servant who had received the five talents came and presented five more. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘you entrusted me with five talents. See, I have gained five more.’*

21*His master replied, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Enter into the joy of your master!’*

22*The servant who had received the two talents also came and said, ‘Master, you entrusted me with two talents. See, I have gained two more.’*

23*His master replied, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Enter into the joy of your master!’*

24*Finally, the servant who had received the one talent came and said, ‘Master, I knew that you are a hard man, reaping where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed. **25**So I was afraid and went out and hid your talent in the ground. See, you have what belongs to you.’*

26*‘You wicked, lazy servant!’ replied his master. ‘You knew that I reap where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed. **27**Then you should have deposited my money with the bankers, and on my return I would have received it back with interest.*

28*Therefore take the talent from him and give it to the one who has ten talents. **29**For everyone who has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. But the one who does not have, even what he has will be taken away from him. **30**And throw that worthless servant into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’*

1. What do you see?

2. See the [footnote on talents below](#). Did the master distribute talents/skills? Or talents/money?
3. How many years' wages is one talent of silver? Was the third servant ripped off?
4. How did the servants know what to do next with the wealth they were delegated?
5. Imagine you were delegated 16 years of wages, would you know how to invest them? What would you do?
6. Would you have buried that much money in a handkerchief?
7. Knowing, as the first hearers of this parable all did, the vast sum delegated to the third servant, can you understand the displeasure of the master?
8. How does this change your understanding of the parable?
9. Connect the distribution of quantities of silver to the good works you've been designed with, to do. Whose silver is it? To whom do the works belong?
10. Mark says, "When we are ready to meet Jesus face to face, we know that He's going to ask, 'What did you do with what I have given you?'" Answer Him.
11. How sobering is the fate of the third servant? What does it help you think?

Pastor says, "You're alive. You're breathing. This is not bad news, this is good news. I now know."

1. Why is the fact that you're breathing such good news? What do you know now?
2. What changes, when you realize that today is the day of distribution, and you're receiving sixteen years wages today? Make plans.
3. Pastor says, "He's generated something inside of us to invest in the Kingdom of God, to generate something for His Kingdom." What something?
4. Who all benefits when we make such an investment? Explain.
5. Pastor says, "It's usually not flashy. It's found in those quiet, hidden ways, humbly done to benefit somebody else." What is he talking about?
6. If you've served in a ministry at Grace, describe the benefits. Who benefitted most?
7. Think about this: Did the original investment grow?
8. Explain Proverbs 10: [22](#) *The blessing of the LORD enriches, and He adds no sorrow to it.* In the above parable, did the hand of the Lord make someone rich?

Now look at the parable of the sheep and the goats:

Matthew 25:31 *When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, He will sit on His glorious throne. 32 All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate the people one from another, as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. 33 He will place the sheep on His right and the goats on His left.*

34 *Then the King will say to those on His right, 'Come, you who are blessed by My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. 35 For I was hungry and you gave Me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave Me something to drink, I was a stranger and you took Me in, 36 I was naked and you clothed Me, I was sick and you looked after Me, I was in prison and you visited Me.'*

37 *Then the righteous will answer Him, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You something to drink? 38 When did we see You a stranger and take You in, or naked and clothe You? 39 When did we see You sick or in prison and visit You?'*

40 *And the King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of Mine, you did for Me.'*

41 Then He will say to those on His left, 'Depart from Me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. **42** For I was hungry and you gave Me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave Me nothing to drink, **43** I was a stranger and you did not take Me in, I was naked and you did not clothe Me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after Me.'

44 And they too will reply, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to You?'

45 Then the King will answer, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for Me.'

46 And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

1. What do you see?
2. Does the species matter?
3. What matters that results in separation? What did one do that the other did not do?
4. Why are both sheep and goats both surprised by the triage?
5. Did the sheep do what they did to get "saved?" Why did they care for the least?
6. What is the purpose of riches?
7. Whose hand supplies our riches? How should we love our neighbors?
8. What did the goats not do, resulting in separation? Why did they not care?
9. In this parable...how is Jesus recognized? Where is He always found?
10. Compare verse **40** And the King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of Mine, you did for Me.' ...with verse **45** Then the King will answer, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for Me.' How does Jesus identify with "the least" that Pastor Mark always talks about, for whom we are to care?
11. Look at what Jesus told Paul on the road to Damascus in Acts 9:**3**As Saul drew near to Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him.**4**He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute Me?" **5**"Who are You, Lord?" Saul asked. "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting." What was Paul doing to the least of Jesus' brethren?
12. How perfectly is Jesus identified with those whom you meet and greet each day?
13. Why is awareness of need, in all your circumstances, a requirement?
14. Review how Jesus ended the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 7:**24**Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. **25**The rain fell, the torrents raged, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because its foundation was on the rock. **26**But everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not act on them is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. **27**The rain fell, the torrents raged, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell—and great was its collapse!" How is it important to both hear and do?
15. According to this principle, what is the correlation between faith in what you hear, and how you respond?
16. Look at how John puts this principle in 1 John 3:**16**By this we know what love is: Jesus laid down His life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. **17** If anyone with earthly possessions sees his brother in need, but withholds his compassion from him, how can the love of God abide in him? **18**Little children, let us love not in word and speech, but in action and truth. Does this fit? Explain.

17. Look at how James puts this principle in James 2: **14** *What good is it, my brothers, if someone claims to have faith, but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? **15** Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. **16** *If one of you tells him, "Go in peace; stay warm and well fed," but does not provide for his physical needs, what good is that?* Answer James. How well does this fit into the lesson?*
18. According to Jesus, what is that Person's Name of whom James speaks, who is without clothes or daily food?
19. Explain pastor's key in these terms: "We don't serve to earn salvation. We serve because we've been saved." Is there any other alternative to serving, if we believe and are truly saved?
20. Explain in this light what John says here in 1 John 3: **14** We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love our brothers. The one who does not love remains in death. **15** *Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that eternal life does not reside in a murderer.* How is hatred manifested? How are we to manifest our love?
21. What does James mean here in James 1: **22** Be doers of the word, and not hearers only. Otherwise, you are deceiving yourselves?
22. Mark calls himself a practitioner. How does one practice what the Word says?
23. Do "theologians" need to practice the Word? Explain. How do these notes help in practical ways?

Mark spoke of the fact that offerings are not taken at Grace anymore.

1. Have you noticed?
2. How does that work for you?
3. Has it become easier to give?
4. How do Life Group Community Grants work? Talk about the impact you've seen.
5. "Hospitality can be as simple as a smile." Explain.
6. In speaking of ministry and service at Grace, he said, "We're doing this for Jesus and to Jesus." Explain.

Pastor asks, "So what are you going to do with what you have been given?"

1. Looking back over chapter twenty five at the three parables: of the virgins, of the talents and of the sheep and the goats, how does this question apply to each?
2. He says, "Our love is demonstrated by our acts of service." Explain.

Pastor asks:

- ⑥ What gifts has God placed in your hands? What good works did He plan for you before time began? He suggests you pray, "God, open my eyes to the needs around me." Write down what you see.
- ⑥ What is required to be faithful to those gifts? He says, "When you see the opportunity to invest, go for it!" Discuss this. He continues, "God didn't give you talents just for you. He gave them so that others, through you, might see the goodness and mercy and glory of God. Why is this an awesome precept?"
- ⑥ What does it mean to live "saved *and* sent?" How do we not waste what we have been given? Are we saved for our own sake? Or is God looking at our neighbor, and declaring that our neighbor needs us? What equipment has He entrusted to us on our neighbor's behalf?

Follow up application:

1. Use the [Soap study below](#) to pursue your own understanding.
2. Make plans to invest sixteen years of wages as if you had just received it. What are your first steps?

Take the time to pray.

Scribe's Footnotes:

1. **On being “God’s workmanship”**—When Paul speaks of us as “God’s workmanship,” he uses the term ποίημα (*poiéma*), which does mean workmanship, but it means more. Strongs puts it like this: *The term “poiéma” refers to something that has been made or created, emphasizing the craftsmanship or artistry involved in its creation. In the New Testament, it is used to describe the work of God, particularly in relation to His creation and His work in believers.* The French translate it as *oeuvre*, masterpiece. We’re not just a work. We are the demonstration of His genius.
2. **On talents that the servants received**—The “talent” (τάλαντον—*talanton*) that the servants received was not a skill, but a measure of gold or silver, and it was understood as a very large amount. The weight varied from country to country, but the dictionaries explain it on these terms: *“a silver talent, worth about 6,000 denarii (6000 days wages...gold talents were worth about 30 times as much). A talent was not a coin but rather a weight (about 75 lbs., NIVSB) used as the basis of monetary exchange.”* The term should never be understood as or confused with a skill that the master distributed unequally. It seems that skill is innate to each servant, but the wisdom to assess that skill and to divide His investment accordingly is innate to the Master.
3. **On Keith Green and the Sheep and the Goats (again)**—Think of this as the Scribe’s gift to you. This 1978 clip includes Keith’s introduction in a live performance. Enjoy, but listen closely to what the Spirit was saying to the churches in 1978 whose prophets wore double-knit fleece shirts and bell bottoms. In this clip, Keith points out that apple trees are designed before the world was created to bear fruit, and that design is inherent in the seed that was planted. It’s not a special apple tree that bears fruit while others don’t, and those that do not bear fruit get special attention for a season, to encourage the fruit bearing. Sheep and goats have purpose by design: <https://youtu.be/GF4pTiAZRnc?si=2G0CYRgIxu7naEgp> Ask yourself what has changed? Have we grown in any way since Keith Green sang this?
4. **On the three parables of Matthew 25**—In doing these notes I went to an excellent essay on these three parables, written by Pastor Mike Leake, with whose work I was otherwise unfamiliar. He says, “Both the sheep and the goats seemed surprised by their fate. The sheep didn’t realize it was ‘Jesus’ that they were providing for. Likewise, the goats did not know it was ‘Jesus’ they were rejecting. This, I believe, is the key to properly understanding this passage. They are not sheep because they do these good deeds or goats because they fail to do these good deeds, but rather their doing of the good, or failing to do the good, is precisely because of their character. Wise virgins wait. Good servants serve. Sheep serve. That’s the point of Jesus’ teaching here.” There is much more found at

this site: <https://www.biblestudytools.com/bible-study/topical-studies/4-things-we-learn-from-jesus-parable-of-the-sheep-and-the-goats.html>

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: Ephesians 2:4-7
Tuesday: Ephesians 2:8-19
Wednesday: Ephesians 2:10
Thursday: Proverbs 10:22
Friday: Matthew 25:24-30
Saturday: Acts 9:3-6
Sunday: Matthew 7:24-27

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.