

Life Group Notes 11/17/2024

Pastor Mark Warren Grounded Week 8 In Identity with Christ

[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.** 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, 11/17. 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.

*****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. ***

During worship, Pastor Richie read from Revelation 5: [11](#)Then I looked, and I heard the voices of many angels and living creatures and elders encircling the throne, and their number was myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands. [12](#)In a loud voice they were saying: "Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing!" [13](#)And I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea, and all that is in them, saying: "To Him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power forever and ever!" [14](#)And the four living creatures said, "Amen," and the elders fell down and worshiped.

1. Take a moment to describe what you see in your own words.
2. How many are present? What are they doing?
3. How many decibels?
4. Richie said, "What we do in worship on Sundays is only practice." What does he mean?

Pastor Mark introduced the message with these words, "In a world that wants to steal our identity, it is vital to us that know how to ground our identity."

1. What do you see? How does the world steal our identity?
2. What do you identify with? What do you "identify as?"
3. How do you "ground your identity?"

He says, "Someone always seems to be telling you who you should be."

1. Do you have a testimony?
2. Who does this? How is it communicated to you?

Pastor Mark spoke of what he wanted to be, growing up. What do you remember? At first he wanted to be a fireman. Then he wanted to be rich and famous. Then he asked the Lord, "What do you want me to be?"

1. Were you like this? Do you have a story?
2. How close to what you dreamed of as a child are your steps today?
3. Is there time for a moment of thanksgiving?

Take a moment and look up 2 Corinthians 5: [6](#)*Therefore we are always confident, although we know that while we are at home in the body, we are away from the Lord.* [7](#)*For we walk by faith, not by sight.* [8](#)*We are confident, then, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord.* [9](#)*So we aspire to please Him, whether we are here in this body or away from it.* [10](#)*For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive his due for the things done in the body, whether good or bad.*

1. What do you see here?
2. What is Paul confident of?
3. Where does that confidence come from?
4. What does it mean to walk by faith and not by sight? What instructs you as you walk?
5. How does faith instruct you? What is the source of all faith?
6. Does the Word ever contradict what you see? Explain.
7. Do you aspire to please Him at all times? What would change if we all did?
8. Do you know what is pleasing to Him? How?

[11](#)*Therefore, since we know what it means to fear the Lord, we try to persuade men. What we are is clear to God, and I hope it is clear to your conscience as well.* [12](#)*We are not commending ourselves to you again. Instead, we are giving you an occasion to be proud of us, so that you can answer those who take pride in appearances rather than in the heart.*

1. What do you see here? What does it mean to fear the Lord?
2. Of whom are you proud? Why?
3. What purpose do good examples serve?
4. How much more difficult is it to follow when there are no good examples?
5. How are you doing?

[13](#)*If we are out of our mind, it is for God; if we are of sound mind, it is for you.* [14](#)*For Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that One died for all, therefore all died.* [15](#)*And He died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died for them and was raised again.*

1. What do you see here? Who is included?
2. Who is excluded from the promise? For whom did Christ not die?
3. Did all around Paul know that they died, at the time? How did Paul know?
4. What does Paul know that others do not?
5. What is the new purpose of life?

[16](#)*So from now on we regard no one according to the flesh. Although we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer.* [17](#)*Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away. Behold, the new has come!*

1. What does it mean to walk by faith and not by sight?
2. How do you regard your family? According to the flesh or according to this promise?

3. What changes when you look at your own children, your whole family in the light of this promise?
4. Look again at verse 17. How does this make you feel?
5. What changes when you look at yourself in this light?
6. If "...old has passed away..." what do you do with the old?
7. How deep is the old buried?

Pastor says, "We literally are a new creation. It is a transformative work that He wants to do in our life."

1. How new? What percent is new? What percent old?
2. How are you doing?
3. How does your identity change, when you accept this as fact?
4. What does it mean to be born "again?" With what baggage from the past is a baby born? Do you carry baggage?

Pastor continues, "We realize that our flesh is not our identity, even though we've done bad things, and we're even prone to keep doing those things, our identity is rooted in whom Jesus says we are, a new creation. We keep advancing with this idea in mind." Look at Galatians 5: *15*But if you keep on biting and devouring one another, watch out, or you will be consumed by one another. *16*So I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. *17*For the flesh craves what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are opposed to each other, so that you do not do what you want.

1. How does this fit in a walk by faith?
2. What changes when you obey this exhortation? How? To what degree?
3. What stops when we walk by the Spirit?

Mark points out, "The world wants to shape us. Our painful experience wants to shape us. But these do not have the final say in our life. Or identity, rooted in Jesus Christ, says we are a new creation. The old is gone." He says, "Some of you are chasing success, and you're not even defined by your success."

1. Explain.
2. Look at Romans 5: *3*Not only that, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; *4*perseverance, character; and character, hope. *5*And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out His love into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, whom He has given us. *6*For at just the right time, while we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. What do you see? When we say, "The old has gone," do we forget our past completely?
3. List the steps Paul mentions here. How are you doing?
4. What do we gain from our past trials and sufferings? Why is hope so important?
5. Now decide: What are you chasing? What are you defined by?
6. Look again at verse 9 above: *9*So we aspire to please Him, whether we are here in this body or away from it." What is Paul chasing?
7. Define success on these terms. What is Paul's reward in [verse 12, above](#)?
8. If the Corinthians can be proud of Paul, how does that help shape what they chase?
- Mark goes on, "The reality is, when we are in Christ Jesus, **grounded in our identity in Christ**, we realize we are redeemed; we are forgiven; we are set apart. And our value doesn't come from our achievements or our failures, our value comes from understanding that Christ has purchased us BECAUSE He loves us. He therefore redeems us and forgives us."

1. How has our redemption become the evidence of our value? What did Christ hold back for Himself when He redeemed us?
2. How does our value now come from His achievement and not ours?
3. What becomes our boast? How “new” is the new that has come?
 - He says, “The second thing that we need to understand is that we are now **named as His children**. Why is this important? Because sometimes people will just say, “There’s a God out there, well, yeah, He is Love. He gave us Jesus, and wants us to be with him through eternity. But, we still feel like we are subjects to this deity out there. We are slaves or subjects.”
1. Do you feel the distance?
2. Look again at verse 14 above: [14](#)For Christ’s love compels us, because we are convinced that One died for all, therefore all died. Describe Paul’s slavery.
3. How effectively does love compel you? What do you do for someone else, just because you love them? Explain.

Look up Romans 8: [15](#)For you did not receive a spirit of slavery that returns you to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship, by whom we cry, “Abba! Father!” [16](#)The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children. [17](#)And if we are children, then we are heirs: heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ—if indeed we suffer with Him, so that we may also be glorified with Him.

1. What do you see?
2. “Abba” is Aramaic for “pappa” or “daddy.” To this day, Arab children call their fathers “Abba.” What do you call your father today?
3. Would you call your Father in heaven, “Daddy?” Could you?
4. Does this seem fitting or unfitting? Explain.
5. Look at verse 17. What does it mean to be a co-heir with Christ? What do we inherit?
6. Look up John 5: [17](#)But Jesus answered them, “To this very day My Father is at His work, and I too am working.” [18](#)Because of this, the Jews tried all the harder to kill Him. Not only was He breaking the Sabbath, but He was even calling God His own Father, making Himself equal with God. What do you see?
7. What did the Jews understand that Paul is highlighting here?
8. Have we understood this lesson?
9. What does it mean to be “equal with God,” as His sons?
10. Did God adopt-a-pet? Or did He adopt His own children? Explain.
11. Look at verse 16 from Romans 8 above. What is the Spirit telling you?
12. When you know that the testimony of scripture is the witness of the Spirit, what assurance do you gain? Does it help to know this?
13. How does the scripture become good news for us? How good is this news?
14. Explain again: to what extent has the old passed away? What ELSE has become new?
15. What does a sense of belonging and security do to a large family?
 - Mark comes to his third point. We can get grounded in our identity by **shedding some of the world’s definitions**. The world will tell us that it is our achievements, our status and the opinions of others that identify us. Or it can be life’s trauma’s that identify us, and we are measured by past success or worse, past failures.
1. Explain.
2. How has social media strengthened our bondage to others’ views of us?

Look up Galatians 2: [19](#)For through the law I died to the law so that I might live to God. [20](#)I have been crucified with Christ, and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me. [21](#)I do not set aside the grace of God. For if righteousness comes through the law, Christ died for nothing.

1. What do you see? Mark says, "Our identity is found in this verse." Explain.
2. What has Paul identified with? What has passed away?
3. What has become new?
4. How does righteousness come?
5. What does your righteousness look like when it comes?
6. Who will see and recognize your righteousness when it comes?
7. Who will you look like? Who will benefit?

Pastor Mark explains, "Two thousand years ago, Jesus saw a flash of all creation for all time, and He said, 'I'm doing this for you.' When we identify with Jesus Who went to the cross for us, as we model His death with our own water baptism, we're showing the world that we have been crucified with Christ, identified in His death, and that we no longer live. It is Christ living in us, a New Creation."

1. Explain.
2. Paul explains it this way to the Colossians: Look up Colossians 1:[26](#)*the mystery that was hidden for ages and generations but is now revealed to His saints.* [27](#)*To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.* [28](#)*We proclaim Him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ.* What do you see?
3. What changes when Christ is in you? What has changed so far?
4. What becomes new?
5. What changes when we identify with the sacrificial love that compelled Jesus to do what He did?
6. Take a moment to review these notes: Who does Jesus say we are? Make a list.
7. Pause, look at your neighbor, and tell him his value in Jesus' esteem.
 - Mark returned to **the concept of adoption, being integral parts of the family of God.** "I think this is the thing that makes me so sad. When I hear about Christians who don't go to church—and I get that church-hurt is real—I get it. People get hurt by church. I do not believe you can be a solo Christian. We have to identify with the family He has placed us in. We call that the church.
1. Thoughts?
2. How did you overcome "church-hurt?"
3. Have you ever been a "solo Christian?"
4. Look up Hebrews 10: [24](#)*And let us consider how to spur one another on to love and good deeds.* [25](#) *Let us not neglect meeting together, as some have made a habit, but let us encourage one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching.* What does the author say the purpose of meeting together is?
5. Look again: Do you meet for selfish reasons, for self-edification, or because others need you?
6. According to these verses, how does the importance of meeting together increase every day?
7. Look at what Paul tells the Corinthians as he instructs them in the use and purpose of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. 1 Corinthians 12: [12](#)*The body is a unit, though it is composed of many parts. And although its parts are many, they all form one body. So it is with Christ.* [13](#)*For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free, and we were all given one Spirit to drink.* [14](#)*For the body does not consist of one part, but of many.* How does a "solo Christian" fit into this doctrine?
8. How well does your body function if it loses a member?

9. Does it still function? Optimally? Or at a loss?
10. Looking at this, define your role. Take a moment to recognize others' roles.
11. Is there again cause for thanksgiving? Why is that important? What does thanksgiving prevent?
12. Take a moment to pray for your friends who have been "church-hurt." What changes immediately when you do?

Pastor summarizes the lesson with Paul's exhortation to the Romans in chapter 12: *1Therefore I urge you, brothers, on account of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. 2Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what is the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God.*

3For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but think of yourself with sober judgment, according to the measure of faith God has given you. 4Just as each of us has one body with many members, and not all members have the same function, 5so in Christ we who are many are one body, and each member belongs to one another.

1. What do you see?
2. Where is our identity not found? Where is it found?
3. What has passed away? What has become new? Whom are we to please?
4. Explain how the image of the body comes into Paul's teaching even here.
5. How important is it that we be ONE body, and not separate members like dry bones scattered in a valley?

Pastor says, "We're living in the world, but we are not of the world. We need to learn to take ourselves out of the world system, while living in a world system to be effective."

1. Explain.
2. What tools have we been given for this?
3. How well are we being equipped?
4. List what makes Christians different, practically speaking. What do you do today that is different from your old ways?
5. What motivates you?
6. Pastor called us to compare the time we spend on social media with the time we spend in the Word. How did you do? Do you have a testimony?

(Pastor says, "Social media is a good place to pick up on ideas, but it is addictive and studies show that it is erosive to the mind. It contributes to depression and anxiety.")

1. Do you have a testimony?
2. What benefits are derived from social media?
3. How real are the dangers?

Pastor concludes saying, "The world will leave you empty and lost. The world's ways might be fun for a season, interesting for a while, but it will never satisfy you the way having a relationship with Jesus will.

1. What are your final thoughts?
2. What did you learn?
3. What is your plan?

The Follow-up Application

1. Use the [SOAP journal studies](#) below throughout the week.
2. **Daily** remind yourself of God's truth.
3. **Daily** affirm intentionally and vocally your own adoption as His child, a child of the Most High God. Walk in that blessing.
4. **Renew** your mind. Carefully check your thoughts. Where do they come from?
5. **Connect** with community. Engage with fellow believers and do not allow yourself to be amputated.
6. **Reject** all lies and embrace the truth.
7. **Live it out.** Jesus tells you who you are in His Word. Be that person. Catch it when the old self tries to resurrect itself.
8. **Leave reminders** for yourself in conspicuous spots. It's too easy to forget the truth when what you see conflicts with what you know.
9. **Check each step** as you do this.

Take the time to pray.

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: Revelation 5:11-14
Tuesday: 2 Corinthians 5:6-12
Wednesday: 2 Corinthians 5:13-17
Thursday: Galatians 5:15-17
Friday: Galatians 2:19-21
Saturday: Romans 8:15-17
Sunday: John 5:17-18

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.