

Life Group Notes 11/3/2024
Pastor Mark Warren Grounded Week 7 Giving

[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, 11/3. 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.**

*****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. ***

Pastor began by talking politics. Do you remember?

1. What do you remember?
2. Why is he not talking issues and candidates? What is more important?
3. Why is being grounded in God's Word more important than issues and candidates?
4. Do you have confidence to know that the Spirit of God is guiding you when you go to the polls on Tuesday?
5. Is not showing up an alternative? Do you have a testimony where you know that your vote made a difference?
6. Pastor says, "You must be responsible and accountable to the Spirit of God Who dwells in you." What does that even mean?
7. Share for a moment. What has the Spirit been saying to you over the last weeks?
8. Now take some time to pray. If you're together after voting day, pray for those who won the election. If you are together before the election day or as it's going on, pray that God fill the house with those who can hear His voice and obey Him.

Pastor's message today is being grounded in giving, what he called "being grounded in generosity." Pastor says, "As one of the pastors here, I've always wanted something for you, not something from you." Why is that important?

He says, when we pursue Jesus and His Word, He always has something for you. Sometimes when we talk about giving, you might first suspect that we're asking

for something from you, but it's the opposite. God has ordained mechanisms that are inherent in this principle.

1. Explain.
2. Look up Luke 6: *37Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven. 38Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured back to you.* *39Jesus also told them a parable: "Can a blind man lead a blind man? Will they not both fall into a pit? What do you see?"*
3. Read the verses again. What is the promise, in your own words?
4. How literally should one take these verses? Is there one that should be more literally understood than another? Do you have a testimony?
5. Pastor says, "When you follow His plan, and you walk in His way, God actually has something to give you." Explain in the context of these verses? How is God looking to give something to you, and not asking for anything from you?
6. How well do blind men lead others? Can a miser lecture on generosity?

Pastor continues, the second suspicion that one might have when we speak of giving is that the church is in financial trouble. In fact, Pastor says, "We are over budget for this year. It's a reflection of your [the church members'] generosity." He continues, "I want to let you know, there is no motivation in this message that we are needing anything from you."

1. Where do suspicions come from? Have you seen mismanagement before... (caution: without personal references)? How did a lack of integrity impact the services and ministry?
2. How have you handled any suspicions?

Pastor says, "In talking about our giving there are three things to talk about:

- Our time. We've talked about giving of time in serving.
- Our talents. God has gifted us in unique ways with unique gifts that we want to use in His service.
- Our treasure. Jesus spent much time talking about money. That will be today's focus.

Mark quoted Jesus, who said, "Where your treasure is...there will your heart be also." What does that mean? Look at what He said in Matthew 6: *20But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. 22The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are good, your whole body will be full of light.*

1. What do you see?
2. How do you "store up" treasures in heaven?
3. What is the only thing you can bring with you to heaven?
4. How does your neighbor, then, have more value than your houses, cars and possessions?
5. Look at how Jesus says this in Luke 12: *33Sell your possessions and give to the poor. Provide yourselves with purses that will not wear out, an inexhaustible treasure in heaven, where no thief approaches and no moth destroys. 34For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. 35Be dressed for service and keep your lamps burning.* What do you see?
6. How does what "our treasure" is become even clearer in Luke?
7. How is your eye doing?
8. What happens, according to Luke's account, when you give to the poor?
9. Review again how Paul puts our giving in this context: 2 Corinthians 9: *11You will be enriched in every way to be generous on every occasion, so that through us your*

giving will produce thanksgiving to God. [12For this ministry of service is not only supplying the needs of the saints, but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanksgiving to God.](#) [13](#)Because of the proof this ministry provides, the saints will glorify God for your obedient confession of the gospel of Christ, and for the generosity of your contribution to them and to all the others

10. Describe how your neighbor's thanksgiving to God for your generosity. How is Thanksgiving wielded as a spiritual weapon?
11. Review the context of these verses in chapter 9: [6Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. 7Each one should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not out of regret or compulsion. For God loves a cheerful giver. 8And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things, at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.](#) What do you see?
12. Do you have a testimony?
13. What is God actually doing in verse 8? Whose treasure are we giving when we give?
14. Compare this to what King David says in 1 Chronicles 29: [13Now therefore, our God, we give You thanks, and we praise Your glorious name. 14But who am I, and who are my people, that we should be able to give as generously as this? For everything comes from You, and from Your own hand we have given to You. 15For we are foreigners and strangers in Your presence, as were all our forefathers. Our days on earth are like a shadow, without hope.](#) What do you see?
15. If we are "but foreigners and strangers" what are the best ways to use the treasures He gives us?
16. Where was King David's treasure? Where was David's heart?
17. Why is it important to understand that this is not a New Testament principle? Has God ever changed?

Pastor Mark says, "I'm giving you a method and a mechanism to keep your heart free from idolatry, and the things that can so entangle your heart. The danger is that this can move us away from the very place that He wants us, trusting Him, relying on Him and seeing Him as our provider...which means that he IS our Father."

1. What do you see?
2. What is the danger of looking at money the wrong way? How is our whole vision skewed if our treasure is here.

Pastor Mark then reviews the biblical history of giving, and the first offerings recorded in Genesis 4: [2Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, while Cain was a tiller of the soil. 3So in the course of time, Cain brought some of the fruit of the soil as an offering to the LORD, 4while Abel brought the best portions of the firstborn of his flock.](#)

And the LORD looked with favor on Abel and his offering, 5but He had no regard for Cain and his offering. So Cain became very angry, and his countenance fell.

[6](#)"Why are you angry," said the LORD to Cain, "and why has your countenance fallen? [7](#)If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you refuse to do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires you, but you must master it."

1. What do you see? Does it make sense?
2. Who put giving into their hearts in the first place?
3. What did Cain give? What did Abel give?
4. How was Abel's offering better than Cain's?
5. Pastor Mark says, "Abel gave out of a right heart, where Cain gave out of obligation and a sense of duty." Explain.

6. What is the difference between bringing “some of the fruit...” and bringing “the best portions of the firstborn of the flock?”
7. Did Cain sin in his offering?
8. Look at how God addresses Cain. What do you see?
9. How is God offering wisdom and understanding?
10. How does Cain’s response to God miss the mark God was setting for him?

Look up Deuteronomy 14: [22](#)*You must be sure to set aside a tenth of all the produce brought forth each year from your fields. [23](#)And you are to eat a tenth of your grain, new wine, and oil, and the firstborn of your herds and flocks, in the presence of the LORD your God at the place He will choose as a dwelling for His Name, so that you may learn to fear the LORD your God always.*

1. What is the tithe?
2. What is included? Do you see Cain’s offering as well as Abel’s? Explain.
3. What is the purpose of setting aside one tenth of all your proceeds?
4. Look at Proverbs 9:[9](#)*Instruct a wise man, and he will be wiser still; teach a righteous man, and he will increase his learning. [10](#)The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding. [11](#)For through wisdom your days will be multiplied, and years will be added to your life.* Why is the fear of the Lord important?
5. Why do we need reminders, like the tithe, to keep us on the path of wisdom?
6. Pastor Mark said, “It’s not just about what they gave, but who they became in the act of giving.” Explain.
7. Pastor says, “Tithing confronts strongholds that money has over us.” Explain.
8. How were you feeling when you heard this message? Were you uneasy? Has this message ever made you uneasy? Care to share?
9. Pastor Mark says, “The chances are you might be coming up against something that is a stronghold.” What does he mean?
10. Look up 2 Corinthians 10: [3](#)*For though we live in the flesh, we do not wage war according to the flesh. [4](#)The weapons of our warfare are not carnal. Instead, they are mighty through God to demolish strongholds. [5](#)We tear down arguments and every presumption set up against the knowledge of God; and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.* What do you think? Is tithing a weapon do demolish strongholds?
11. How does a tithe, a tenth, set a standard for giving? Can you give less? Can you give more?

Pastor says, “Jesus was concerned that money was that money has the ability to make us self-reliant. Proudful. Materialistic. Do you have an example? Matthew 19 tells the story of the rich young ruler who wants to have eternal life. Jesus listed the commandments, which the young man says he’s always kept. Then, “[21](#)Jesus told him, ‘If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow Me.’

“[22](#)When the young man heard this, he went away in sorrow, because he had great wealth. “[23](#)Then Jesus said to His disciples, ‘Truly I tell you, it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven.[24](#)Again I tell you, it is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.’”

1. What do you see?
2. What fear prevented the young man from entering into the covenant? Why?
3. What has greater value, the young man’s vast treasures? Or the treasure in heaven Jesus was offering? Explain.
4. How was the young man walking away from the deal of a lifetime?

5. If the young man had sold all his goods and given the proceeds to the poor, would he be a poor man? Explain?
6. Is it possible to outgive God?

Pastor Mark says, "It's been my experience that those who give the tenth seem to manage to do more with the remaining ninety." Do you have a testimony?

He asks us to examine Luke 16: **10**Whoever is faithful with very little will also be faithful with much, and whoever is dishonest with very little will also be dishonest with much. **11**So if you have not been faithful with worldly wealth, who will entrust you with true riches? **12**And if you have not been faithful with the belongings of another, who will give you belongings of your own? **13**No servant can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and money."

1. What do you see?
2. Answer the question in verse 11.
3. Explain the parable of "serving two masters."
4. Look at verse 12. If they are belongings "of your own..." who cares what you do with them? Why?
5. How does your attitude toward "your" belongings become a test of your own faithfulness?
6. What of your belongings are the "belongings of another?"
7. Pastor called this the "faithfulness principle." Explain.

Pastor's children when they were young had three little jars in which to distribute their allowance. They had a "Jesus jar." They had their own jar with their name on it, and they had a "save jar." Whenever they got money they divided their money three ways.

1. What did you think?
2. Do you have a testimony?
3. How do you teach faithfulness to children?
4. Why is that concept essential?
5. Why is it so hard for people that win millions in the lottery?
6. Explain this precept that Mark expressed: "Jesus isn't after your money. He's only after your heart."
7. Which is more difficult for you to give Him? How do you know?
8. Mark says, "At Grace we don't take an offering..." Why not?
9. Then he adds, "If we don't teach on it, you don't get the opportunity to know." What is that opportunity? What fruit comes from knowledge?
10. Where does Paul say faith comes from? (Romans 10)

Look up Psalm 50: **9**I have no need for a bull from your stall or goats from your pens, **10**for every beast of the forest is Mine— the cattle on a thousand hills. **11**I know every bird in the mountains, and the creatures of the field are Mine.

1. What is God asking for exactly?
2. Why is our heart the very thing that he's after?
3. When our hearts are His, whom can He reach?
4. How is the condition of our hearts "...infinitely more important than the amount in our hands?"
5. Pastor says, "We don't get to transfer our wealth. Our wealth stays." What is the only thing we CAN transfer and bring with us to heaven?
6. Why do relationships matter more than riches?

7. Pastor says, "How we steward our own resources is a reflection of the condition of our heart." Explain.
8. Pastor Mark contrasted the tight fist with the open palm in terms of resources. (1:14:42) Do you remember? What is that contrast?
9. Do you have a testimony?
10. Look up 1 Samuel 16:*7*But the LORD said to Samuel, "Do not consider his appearance or height, for I have rejected him; the LORD does not see as man does. For man sees the outward appearance, but the LORD sees the heart." This is where Samuel was called to anoint a son of Jesse, David. What does this verse teach?
11. What do you look at?
12. Pastor Mark says, "God doesn't only see what we give, but the heart behind our giving." Explain. Apply that to Cain.
13. He continues, saying "God has 'pre-trained' us to give. He knows the world will train us to be selfish, to have fear, to cling, but He has pre-wired in us the grace to give." Explain.
14. His says, "Giving is not a requirement, but a privilege." How does that work?
15. What changes when we regard giving as an opportunity rather than an obligation?
16. Look again at what Paul told the Corinthians in [2 Corinthians 9](#) above: "*7*Each one should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not out of regret or compulsion. For God loves a cheerful giver.. *8*And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things, at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work." Explain. What is the limit to the abundance this verse promises? Define "all" in this context.

Pastor Mark makes the argument that the "what" is the tithe, the 10%, and the "where," once the tent of meetings, then the tabernacle...finally the temple...has become the local church which has the obligation to reach the lost, care for the least and train the found.

1. Assess his argument.
2. What is an alternative?
3. Mark tells Pastor Richie's parable of the person who at a satisfying meal at a restaurant, but decided to go down the street to another restaurant to pay his bill to them. Explain the parable. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the analogy?
4. Look up Malachi 3:*8*Will a man rob God? Yet you are robbing Me! But you ask, 'How do we rob You?' In tithes and offerings. *9*You are cursed with a curse, yet you—the whole nation—are still robbing Me. *10*Bring the full tithe into the storehouse, so that there may be food in My house. Test Me in this," says the LORD of Hosts. "See if I will not open the windows of heaven and pour out for you blessing without measure. *11*I will rebuke the devourer for you, so that it will not destroy the fruits of your land, and the vine in your field will not fail to produce fruit," says the LORD of Hosts. What do you see?
5. What is the "full tithe?" What is the storehouse?
6. To whom does the tithe belong in this passage? Where does the tithe belong? For what purpose?
7. How do we all benefit from the tithe being put where it belongs?
8. How often in scripture does God call us to put Him to the test?
9. Does God want the tithe "from you? ...or "for you?"
10. Explain how stewardship differs from a doctrine of "give in order to get." Who all benefits from faithful stewardship? Name each of the beneficiaries, and explain.

The Follow-up Application

1. Use the [SOAP journal studies](#) below throughout the week.
2. Consider tithing. If you tithe already, consider the next step.
3. Ask God about “giving Tuesday.” How are you being challenged?

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: Luke 6:37-39
Tuesday: Matthew 6:20-22
Wednesday: Luke 12:33-35
Thursday: 2 Corinthians 9:11-13
Friday: 1 Chronicles 29:13-15
Saturday: Proverbs 9:9-11
Sunday: 2 Corinthians 10:3-5

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.