

Life Group Notes 6/6/2025

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. 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, 4/6. 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 the lilies of the fields of Galilee.](#)
2. [On you of little faith.](#)

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 opened by recounting a panic attack he suffered when his leg was in a cast, and he was overwhelmed with anxiety. He said, "Anxiety is fueled by a need to control."

1. Do you have a testimony?
2. Do you agree with his assessment?

Then he speaks a Word of Wisdom, "God is saying...wait a second. I never intended for you to control. He already tells us this in Matthew 6: [25](#) *Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes?* [26](#) *Look at the birds of the air: They do not sow or reap or gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they?* [27](#) *Who of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life?"*

1. Answer Him. What has worry contributed to your well-being?
2. Is life more than food? Is the body more than clothes?
3. Does God feed the birds?

4. Are you more valuable than a bird?

28And why do you worry about clothes? Consider how the lilies of the field grow: They do not labor or spin. **29**Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his glory was adorned like one of these. **30**If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?

1. Do you worry about clothing?
2. See footnote 1 below. Have you seen how God clothes the fields?
3. Was Solomon arrayed like the fields in bloom? Explain.
4. Which does God care more for, the fields...or you and your family?
5. Answer Jesus' question in verse 30. Do you have a testimony?

31Therefore do not be anxious, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' **32**For the Gentiles strive after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. **33**But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added unto you. **34**Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Today has enough trouble of its own.

1. What causes you to worry?
2. What do you do when you get anxious? Do you have a method?
3. Verse 33 sets priorities. Are you supposed to stop seeking?
4. Does today have troubles? Take time to pray for each other.
5. Look at verse 34. Did Jesus say we'd have no troubles?
6. Look at what Jesus said at the last supper, John 16: **32**"Look, an hour is coming and has already come when you will be scattered, each to his own home, and you will leave Me all alone. Yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me. **33**I have told you these things so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take courage: I have overcome the world!" Why is it good to know in advance that we'll have struggles?

Pastor points out, "Jesus is reminding us this is an order thing, not a stress thing. Maybe your priorities need to be aligned. See, Jesus doesn't eliminate our needs, He reorders them."

1. Explain. What do we seek first?
2. Why?
3. If you're seeking the Kingdom first, what is the impact on your family? Who benefits? How?
4. What is the impact on your neighbor?
5. List practical steps you take when seeking something.
6. How do you seek the kingdom? Whom do you put in charge?
7. How do you seek His righteousness? What will that look like to others?

Pastor Mark reminds us that when the Bible speaks of seeking the Kingdom of God, it's not speaking of heaven. The Kingdom is here and now, and it can rule over our own life. We pray, "Thy kingdom come...Thy will be done on earth..." Who is to take that step and become an answer to that prayer?

Take a minute to examine 2 Peter 1: **3***His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through the knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. **4**Through these He has given us His precious and magnificent promises,*

so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, now that you have escaped the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.

5For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; **6**and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; **7**and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, love. **8**For if you possess these qualities and continue to grow in them, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. **9**But whoever lacks these traits is nearsighted to the point of blindness, having forgotten that he has been cleansed from his past sins.

1. What do you see?
2. What promises do you know of? Which do you rely on?
3. How is Peter giving us practical steps to seeking righteousness?
4. Would these steps work for you? Explain.
5. Explain the promise in verse 8. Are you perfected in any of these qualities?
6. Explain how the kingdom is as a seed growing inside of us.

Pastor says, "We can experience what this means to live under the lordship of Jesus, reflecting His character and pursuing His mission."

1. Who will be impacted by this? Who else?
2. When we reflect Jesus' character, who benefits? Does anyone not benefit?
3. If we aggressively pursue His mission, who benefits? What is His mission?
4. How does not pursuing His mission add to our own stress? Explain why Jesus' command to seek is a stress reliever.
5. If we are pursuing the Kingdom as our top priority, what are we not pursuing?

Pastor says, "He has asked us to reflect His character and to pursue His mission."

1. Reflect on the statement. What do you see?
2. Does it help to know that you are a reflection of Jesus to others?
3. What do others see?

Pastor says, "Our culture teaches us to focus on control and security. You need to manifest your own destiny. You need to control it. Your bank account and your retirement need to be firmly in place for you to feel peace."

1. Is this true?
2. What does Jesus say? How does a focus on surrender and trust change the above priorities?
3. What are the steps to surrender?
4. What are the steps to prove that you trust?

Pastor's steps to start releasing the chains of anxiety, that you can start doing today:

1. Morning habits: **Start with God** and a simple prayer, not scrolling. Begin your day by saying, "God I trust you. You are worthy all my confidence. Your kingdom come and your will be done today. How can I serve your people today?" You decide first thing in the day that you are seeking His kingdom first this day.
2. At any moment, **ask kingdom questions**: "What can I do right now to best reflect the Kingdom? Whom can I serve?" When you understand that you are deliberately asking these questions, you reassure yourself Whom you are seeking, and Whose righteousness is reflected.

3. **Surrender the uncontrollable.** Pastor points out that your spouse is not controllable. (Your thoughts?) Surrender to Him those whom you must not seek to control. Look at Philippians 4: [5](#)*Let your gentleness be apparent to all. The Lord is near.* [6](#)*Be anxious for nothing, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.* [7](#)*And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*
 - a. Look at verse 6: What do you see?
 - b. How does verse 6 echo what Jesus told us in Matthew 6 above?
 - c. What replaces anxiety? How? List Paul's stress eliminating steps.
 - d. How do these steps seek the kingdom first?
 - e. What is controllable?
 - f. List Paul's steps in order.
 - g. What comes when you follow these steps?
 - h. In whose image are your enemies made? Does God love them as much as He loves you?
 - i. Does this thought help?
 - j. What do worries contribute to your existence?
 4. Jesus invites us to **trade worry for trust.**
 - a. Pastor says, "Worry makes us say that 'somehow this is not going to work out.'" Explain.
 - b. How does seeing the birds and the lilies help with trust?
 - c. What changes when we realize that we're carrying what we were never meant to carry? Does that realization have a "look?"
 - d. What is your source of trust?
 - e. How can I learn trust from you?
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Follow up application:

1. Use the [Soap study below](#) to pursue your own understanding.
2. List practical steps you take when seeking something, then list practical steps toward seeking the Kingdom of God. Take one step.
3. Pray for your spouse/family with thanksgiving. Write down what changes.

Take the time to pray.

Scribe's Footnotes:

1. **On the lilies of the fields of Galilee**—Before my return stateside in the summer of 1987, I worked in Northern Israel, in the Galilee region during the spring. Our assignment was to reach the Arab villages of Northern and Central Galilee. Every week in the spring the fields changed colors from reds to purples to blues to mixed, depending on the dominant flower that week. I had never seen fields clothe themselves in this manner before.
2. **On "You of little faith"**—Jesus is quoted five times in Matthew and once in Luke telling his disciples that they have "little faith," they are "ὀλιγόπιστος" (*oligopistos*). "Little-faith" ([3640](#) /*oligopistos*) describes someone dull to hearing the Lord's voice, or disinterested in walking intimately with Him. In contrast, the goal of life is to receive (obey) the Lord's gift of faith in each scene of life (Ro 14:23; Heb 11:6). Today,

questioning someone's faith is tantamount to judgment in the worst sense...yet faith that is not alive and growing is dead, as James says. How are you? Have you inventoried your own faith lately?

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 6:25-27
Tuesday: Matthew 6:28-30
Wednesday: Matthew 6:31-33
Thursday: Matthew 6:34
Friday: John 16:32-33
Saturday: 2 Peter 1:3-4
Sunday: 2 Peter 1:5-9

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.