

## Life Group Notes 4/7/2024

### Pastor Mark Warren Journey Toward Freedom Continues

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[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 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.**

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Note: I have highlighted suggested discussion questions that Pastor Mark has raised this week, 4/7. 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 footnotes include:

1. [On being made "a little lower than the angels..."](#)

\*\*\***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. \*\*\*

We began with communion. Look up this pivotal passage from Hebrews 2 that was mentioned: *6But somewhere it is testified in these words: "What is man that You are mindful of him, or the son of man that You care for him? 7You made him a little lower than the angels; You crowned him with glory and honor 8and placed everything under his feet." When God subjected all things to him, He left nothing outside of his control. Yet at present we do not see everything subject to him. 9But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honor because He suffered death, so that by the grace of God He might taste death for everyone. 10In bringing many sons to glory, it was fitting for God, for whom and through whom all things exist, to make the author of their salvation perfect through suffering.*

1. Look closely. What do you see?
2. The author is quoting Psalm 8. Does he need chapter and verse to be effective?
3. The author of Hebrews is known for saying, "Somewhere it is written..." and then quoting an OT verse. How effective is this style?
4. How practical? Do you always remember chapters and verse numbers?
5. See the footnote on "a little lower than the angels..." below. How was Adam made a little lower than Elohim God?
6. How much lower? Who was given absolute dominion over all the earth and every living creature in it?
7. How important is it that Jesus is born "...the last Adam," and not from outside of Adam's race?

8. Does Jesus' dominion over the earth come from being Son of God? –or from being Son of Man/Adam?
9. What did Jesus inherit as Adam's son? (Genesis 1: 28 God blessed them (Adam and Eve) and said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and every creature that crawls upon the earth.")

Pastor Mark says, "When we order our life around Jesus, He is the Giver of Life. He is the only One Who can give us the joy we are looking for. The peace we are looking for. When we take communion we not only remember everything Christ has done, but also what He offers us continually every day."

1. What do you think of?
2. What do you remember?

Pastor began by forewarning us of the challenge of this message, especially for newcomers.

1. Was it difficult for you?
2. What do you remember, that struck you most?
3. What is the difference between the Jesus whom we think we know compared to the God of the Old Testament...whom we also think we know?
4. How well do we know either?

Pastor says, "The truest form of God we see is God incarnate in Jesus Christ." Look up John 14: [8](#)Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and that will be enough for us." [9](#)Jesus replied, "Philip, I have been with you all this time, and still you do not know Me? Anyone who has seen Me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? [10](#)Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in Me? The words I say to you, I do not speak on My own. Instead, it is the Father dwelling in Me, performing His works."

1. Explain how you see the Father when you see Jesus?
2. Look up Colossians 1: [15](#)The Son is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. [16](#)For in Him all things were created, things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities. All things were created through Him and for Him. [17](#)He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together. [18](#)And He is the head of the body, the church; He is the beginning and firstborn from among the dead, so that in all things He may have preeminence. [19](#)For God was pleased to have all His fullness dwell in Him, [20](#)and through Him to reconcile to Himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through the blood of His cross. How does Paul buttress what Jesus told Philip above? How do you see the Father when you see Jesus?
3. Compare the above to what the author of Hebrews says, "[2](#)But in these last days He has spoken to us by His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, and through whom He made the universe. [3](#)The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of His nature, upholding all things by His powerful word. After He had provided purification for sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high. [4](#)So He became as far superior to the angels as the name He has inherited is excellent beyond theirs. How do you see the Father when you see Jesus? Explain how three authors clarify the same theme.
4. Pastor says, "The life of Jesus is the One we want to model our lives after." Explain. Why is that easier than modeling after our lives after the Father?

5. If the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us...and we saw..., how does seeing Jesus in our form and like us help us to understand? ...help us to walk?

Pastor says, "If you want to answer some of the more difficult questions that the Old Testament poses, you have to come back to Jesus for the answers."

1. Does that make sense?
2. Why? What acts of God in the Old Testament seem to contradict Jesus' works in the New?
3. What were the most difficult moments of the passage from Egypt to the Promised Land?

Pastor illustrates our current state by introducing Sid from *Toy Story*, whose primary joy was derived by twisting toys, breaking heads and body parts, and from these creating macabre, twisted monsters with alien heads.

1. Have you known a "Sid?" Have you ever been one?
2. What is our response to Sid?
3. How do you "clear the house" so the toys don't all get "Sidified?"
4. Speaking of the solar eclipse, is it a good idea to look at the Son directly? How do you look at the Son?
5. How does He get eclipsed?

Look up Joshua 6.

1. Why is the Promised Land filled with obstacles and enemies?
2. Where did they come from? Look what God told Abraham in Genesis 15: [15](#)You, however, will go to your fathers in peace and be buried at a ripe old age. [16](#)In the fourth generation your descendants will return here, **for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete.** [17](#)When the sun had set and darkness had fallen, behold, a smoking firepot and a flaming torch appeared and passed between the halves of the carcasses. [18](#)On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, "To your descendants I have given this land—from the river of Egypt to the great River Euphrates—[19](#)the land of the Kenites, Kenizzites, Kadmonites, [20](#)Hittites, Perizzites, Rephaites, [21](#)Amorites, Canaanites, Girgashites, and Jebusites." Where did they come from?
3. What can be said about the iniquity of the Amorites in Abraham's day? ...in Moses' day?
4. What happens when the iniquity of a people is complete? Review what Caleb told the people after spying out the land in Numbers 14: [8](#)If the LORD delights in us, He will bring us into this land, a land flowing with milk and honey, and He will give it to us. [9](#)Only do not rebel against the LORD, and do not be afraid of the people of the land, for they will be like bread for us. Their protection has been removed, and the LORD is with us. Do not be afraid of them! [10](#)But the whole congregation threatened to stone Joshua and Caleb.
5. Explain what protection this people had for four hundred years, from Abraham to Moses.
6. Compare the mercy and patience shown by God in the Old Testament to that of Jesus in the New Testament.
7. Explain the discernment Caleb had. How does this compare to the Holy Spirit's gift of the Word of Knowledge?

Compare these two incidents in Moses' leadership:

Look up Exodus 17: [5](#)And the LORD said to Moses, “Walk on ahead of the people and take some of the elders of Israel with you. Take along in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile, and go. [6](#)Behold, I will stand there before you by the rock at Horeb. And when you strike the rock, water will come out of it for the people to drink.” So Moses did this in the sight of the elders of Israel. [7](#)He named the place Massah and Meribah because the Israelites quarreled, and because they tested the LORD, saying, “Is the LORD among us or not?”

1. What do you see?
2. What are God’s specific instructions?
3. What is the result of obedience? How much water? (How many millions drank?)

Now look at Numbers 20: [2](#)*Now there was no water for the congregation, so they gathered against Moses and Aaron.* [3](#)*The people quarreled with Moses and said, “If only we had perished with our brothers before the LORD! [4](#)Why have you brought the LORD’s assembly into this wilderness for us and our livestock to die here? [5](#)Why have you led us up out of Egypt to bring us to this wretched place? It is not a place of grain, figs, vines, or pomegranates—and there is no water to drink!”* [6](#)*Then Moses and Aaron went from the presence of the assembly to the entrance to the Tent of Meeting. They fell facedown, and the glory of the LORD appeared to them.* [7](#)*And the LORD said to Moses, [8](#)“Take the staff and assemble the congregation. You and your brother Aaron are to speak to the rock while they watch, and it will pour out its water. You will bring out water from the rock and provide drink for the congregation and their livestock.”* [9](#)*So Moses took the staff from the LORD’s presence, just as he had been commanded.* [10](#)*Then Moses and Aaron gathered the assembly in front of the rock, and Moses said to them, “Listen now, you rebels, must we bring you water out of this rock?”* [11](#)*Then Moses raised his hand and struck the rock twice with his staff, so that a great amount of water gushed out, and the congregation and their livestock were able to drink.* [12](#)*But the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, “Because you did not trust Me to show My holiness in the sight of the Israelites, you will not bring this assembly into the land that I have given them.”* [13](#)*These were the waters of Meribah, where the Israelites quarreled with the LORD, and He showed His holiness among them.*

1. What do you see?
2. Notice, these waters have the same name as those in the Exodus incident. What is different? What are the Israelites still longing for?
3. How many of these survivors even remember the figs of Egypt?
4. What are God’s instructions to Moses? How are they different this time from His instructions in the Exodus incident?
5. What is Moses’ response?
6. Describe his attitude here. How is this different from the incident described in Exodus?
7. What do you think? Did Moses disobey? What do you think his sin was? What was required of him?
8. Did the children of Israel get water?
9. Why did Moses strike the rock instead of speaking to it? Could past experience dictate current response? How does relationship become religious ritual?
10. Review what Saul was told by Samuel in 1 Samuel 15: [22](#)But Samuel declared: “Does the LORD delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as much as in obedience to His voice? Behold, obedience is better than sacrifice, and attentiveness is better

*than the fat of rams. 23For rebellion is like the sin of divination, and arrogance is like the wickedness of idolatry. Because you have rejected the word of the LORD, He has rejected you as king.”* How does what Moses did compare to what Saul did?

11. What principle is being offered us?

12. What are the consequences of inattentiveness? What rights did Moses lose in being inattentive?

Examine the practices of the people Israel was called to displace, described in detail in Leviticus 18.

1. How much of the sin described in Leviticus 18 is not seen today as sin at all?
2. When in the Bible is sin described as an alternative lifestyle? What are the wages of sin? If sin is our choice, does that make it an “alternative lifestyle?” Why not?
3. How deeply evil was the “iniquity of the Amorites,” the people of the land of Canaan? How does this develop over four hundred years?
4. How does behavior pollute a land? How were the Israelites to purge the land of the behavior? What compromises were called for with this behavior?
5. What happens to a people who behave this way?
6. How many years has it taken for this to develop in our land today?
7. Is this considered evil today?

Now relate this to our journey into the freedom Christ brought us through the cross.

1. What are the obstacles?
2. How are they similar to the obstacles seen in the people of the land of Canaan?
3. What would happen if Israel chose to align themselves with the evil of the land, and to adopt their ways and their culture?
4. What are we being called to be?
5. How “OK” is what our culture today describes as “OK?” How close have we come to Leviticus 18 “not OK?”
6. Is our culture “antichrist” and “anti-God?” How? Do you have a testimony?

Look at what Paul says in 2 Corinthians 10: *1Now by the mildness and gentleness of Christ, I appeal to you—I, Paul, who am humble when face to face with you, but bold when away. 2I beg you that when I come I may not need to be as bold as I expect toward those who presume that we live according to the flesh. 3For though we live in the flesh, we do not wage war according to the flesh. 4The weapons of our warfare are not the weapons of the world. Instead, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. 5We 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. 6And we will be ready to punish every act of disobedience, as soon as your obedience is complete.*

1. Describe the threat Paul is making. Is it real?
2. Is it sobering? Why? What have you seen of the power Paul describes?
3. What is a stronghold? Where does it exist?
4. What presumptions have been set up today against the knowledge of God?
5. Why are these presumptions so dangerous when enthroned in our state schools? Who is the target?
6. What hope can parents derive from this passage?
7. Have you ever argued? How did that go? Have you ever lost an argument?

8. Have you ever wished for the weapons Paul describes? Have you ever used them? Do you have a testimony, where the stronghold holding a friend or brother captive was demolished?
9. Have your thoughts ever been taken captive and made obedient to Christ? How did that help you, and win you over to peace and security?
10. When is disobedience punished, according to verse six? Think of the sin of the Amorites seen above in Genesis 15. Describe God's patience?
11. When is one's obedience complete?
12. What would you like to know about these weapons? How will you discover them?

Compare this passage to what Paul tells the Ephesians in chapter 6: **11** Put on the full armor of God, so that you can make your stand against the devil's schemes. **12** For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this world's darkness, and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. **13** Therefore take up the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you will be able to stand your ground, and having done everything, to stand.

1. Why is it important to understand that "we wrestle not with flesh and blood?" How many times have you blamed your spouse or your children or your friends?
2. Who is the enemy?
3. Where do rulers of darkness hold sway?
4. Can darkness have any power if people do not submit to it?
5. Whose power does darkness wield? How did darkness get Adam's power?
6. What are those "heavenly places?" How does your own heart become a heavenly place?
7. How do you protect your heart from being ruled by evil? What strongholds do you struggle with?
8. What weapons does Paul recommend twice, here? What comprises the "full" armor of God?

Mark looks at the armor Paul lists:

- **14** *Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist*, Mark says, "Truth is the compass. He wants us to live according to the truth found in His Word. His Word is truth. 'I'm wearing the belt...So tell me, is what's being said 'Truth?'"
- *with the breastplate of righteousness arrayed*, Righteousness is not of our own, but belongs to Christ. That's where it is found. I cannot be good enough, and my own goodness does not protect me. His faith called me. His faith saved me. His righteousness now protects me. Through the Spirit I carry the life of Christ me.
- **15** *and with your feet fitted with the readiness of the gospel of peace*. I stand ready to spread that peace. I walk with Jesus, reconciled, and He brings peace with God, and with all in every encounter.
- **16** *In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one*. Faith that isn't tried is only theory. Our faith in every promise of the Word will be tested. Faith withstands every test, because its foundation is sure. We do not walk by sight but by faith in the Promise on which we also stand. God being for us, there can be nothing against us. Whatever "dart" is launched against us, to bring us down, our failures and our weaknesses, our faith

withstands it and extinguishes the threatening fires. God saves me and forgives me in Christ Jesus.

- *17* **And take the helmet of salvation.** Salvation is the dwelling of our mind. Safety and security are there.
  - *and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.* You pray, “God let your Word read me.” The Word becomes a weapon of aggression in response to what we see. “Let your Word begin to transfer my heart.”
  - *18* **Pray in the Spirit at all times, with every kind of prayer and petition. To this end, stay alert with all perseverance in your prayers for all the saints.** A prayer in the Spirit is a deliberate response to all circumstances, trials and temptations. And Paul extends this response aggressively to our neighbors, friends and the Church around us.
1. What do you see?
  2. Compare this admonition to Joshua walking around the city of Jericho. What guided him?
  3. What protected Israel from disaster?
  4. In a culture that is antichrist, what protects us from disaster?
  5. How do you take on this armor? Do you have a testimony?
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### **The Follow-up Application**

1. Use the [SOAP journal studies](#) below throughout the week.
2. If your enemy is not flesh and blood, make a list of those you must forgive, who are not your enemy.
3. List what is your enemy.
4. List what strongholds are crumbling like Jericho.
5. Pray, “God help me to wear this spiritual armor, and to face this enemy that is so clearly anti-Christ, that I might be able to withstand the onslaught of the evil that is against me.”

### **Take the time to pray.**

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#### **Scribe's Notes:**

1. **On being made “a little lower than the angels...”**—Psalm 8, that is quoted again in Hebrews 2 **above** says this, “*4* **What is man that You are mindful of him, or the son of man that You care for him?** *5* **You made him a little lower than the **angels**; You crowned him with glory and honor.** *6* **You made him ruler of the works of Your hands; You have placed everything under his feet; *7* all sheep and oxen, and even the beasts of the field, *8* the birds of the air and the fish of the sea, all that swim the paths of the seas.” This Psalm, in the original Hebrew, is pregnant with meaning when examined. The word “angels” highlighted above is translated from the Hebrew word *Elohim*, a plural noun that most often is the title used for God Himself. His Majesty is highlighted**

and established by using the plural form. (The *Shema*, the Jewish declaration of faith, highlights this paradox, "*Shama Israel, YHWH Eloheinu YHWH achad.*" Hear, oh Israel! YHWH (Yahweh) our GODS, YHWH is One." (I.E. Singular. Not plural.)) The psalm hearkens to the day of creation where Adam was made a "little less than/lower/lacking little" than God Himself, Who said, "Let us make Adam in our image and in our likeness, and let him have dominion over all..." In His very image and likeness, Adam was made to reign, but he fell. Jesus, born as the Son of Adam, "...the last Adam...", was raised to Adam's domain to reign. What's interesting is that the term *Elohim*, when translated into Greek in the LXX (Septuagint) version of the Hebrew Bible, was changed to "angels." Thus the author of Hebrews, quoting from the Septuagint, used the term "angels." Yet, the book of Hebrews points out that Jesus, not ashamed to call us brothers, is so much greater than the angels, and the angel who appears to John in the book of Revelation declares that he's a fellow servant with us. The point is of vital importance: The spiritual battle we are called to fight as we return to the land of promise is not only winnable, it has already been won. We step into the victory that was established when Jesus obeyed unto accepting the cross on our behalf,.

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**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: Hebrews 2:6-12
Tuesday: Hebrews 2:13-18
Wednesday: Colossians 1:15-19
Thursday: 2 Corinthians 10:1-6
Friday: Hebrews 1:2-4
Saturday: Genesis 15:15-20
Sunday: Numbers 14:8-10

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.