

Life Group Notes 5/4/2025

Pastor Mark Warren Kingdom

Come Week 8 Marriage

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, 5/4. 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 his message on marriage by saying a message on marriage can be very painful.

1. Explain.
2. What makes it difficult?
3. Is it more difficult today than ever? Why?

Pastor Mark began, "In a world that views relationships as casual, almost throw-away/disposable, where everything is 'quick and easy'...we have disposable clothes, disposable friends...going through this series in Matthew, and seeing principles from him, we notice that Jesus addresses our relationships, and specifically our marriage relationship. Today I'm going to be talking about marriage, divorce and remarriage. These all come together because God's heart for marriage is really reflected in what marriage is supposed to be." He continues, "Marriage is not contractual, although people treat marriage as a contract, it is actually a covenant."

1. Explain.
2. What is the difference?

He says, "Marriage is supposed to be a picture of Jesus' own unwavering, sacrificial, forgiving love for His Bride, His church."

1. What does that imply?
2. How well has the Church reflected the love of the bride to her husband?
3. How well has Jesus reflected the love of a husband to you...His bride?
4. Has *He* ever left *you* or forsaken you?
5. Decide what the next question is, and discuss it here.
6. Explain if you can how it is that the divorce rate is the same inside and outside the church.
7. He points out that divorce is not a plan...it's a concession to our weaknesses. Explain.
8. Pastor broke good news: The rate is now going down among Christians, and especially among those who practice their faith, and fellowship with one another consistently. Explain.

Look up Matthew 19: **1**When Jesus had finished saying these things, He left Galilee and went into the region of Judea beyond the Jordan. **2**Large crowds followed Him, and He healed them there. **3**Then some Pharisees came and tested Him by asking, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any reason?" **4**Jesus answered, "*Have you not read that from the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female,'* **5***and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh'?* **6***So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let man not separate.*" **7**"Why then," they asked, "did Moses order a man to give his wife a certificate of divorce and send her away?" **8**Jesus replied, "Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because of your hardness of heart. But it was not this way from the beginning. **9**Now I tell you that whoever divorces his wife, except for sexual immorality, and marries another woman commits adultery." **10**His disciples said to Him, "If this is the case between a man and his wife, it is better not to marry." **11**"Not everyone can accept this word," He replied, "but only those to whom it has been given. **12**For there are eunuchs who were born that way; others were made that way by men; and still others live like eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. The one who can accept this should accept it."

1. What do you see?
2. What was Jesus doing in verses 1 and 2? Was this the first time He was known to heal those who needed healing? Had any Pharisee ever healed in this way?
3. How did the Pharisees respond to Him healing?
4. Why put Him to a legal test? What was the Pharisees' supposed "strength?"
5. Were they asking a question to which they did not know the answer already?
6. Look at Jesus' response in verses 4-6. Answer His question: Had they never read this? What had they missed in their reading?
7. Look at the Pharisee's next question. Did they know the answer to this question as well?
8. You answer the Pharisee's question. Why did Moses allow for divorce?
9. How did Moses actually extend a measure of grace? What was the alternative?
10. What greater evil could divorce possibly prevent?
11. Compare the hardness of heart of the Israelis in the desert with 21st century hardness of heart. What do you see?
12. Look at the disciples' response in verse 10. Describe the disciples' reaction to Jesus' words. Why were they surprised?

13. What does this verse suggest in terms of the universal attitude toward divorce in Jesus' own day?
14. Is today any different? How far back in history does hardness of heart go?
15. Look at Jesus' answer to them. Was He making marriage covenant decisions harder or easier for them? Explain.
16. If divorce is not an option, what does a marriage on the rocks need?
17. How does having only one option simplify the next steps?
18. Mark listed stumbling blocks to successful relationships. Make a list.
19. On this list, which stumbling block is an acceptable excuse for divorce. Explain, gently.
20. If the couple represents visibly in present time Christ and the Church, and the relationship ahead, why is adultery so damaging?
21. Look at Lamentations 1:8. *Jerusalem has sinned greatly; therefore she has become an object of scorn. All who honored her now despise her, for they have seen her nakedness; she herself groans and turns away.* Why did God issue a certificate of divorcement to Israel in the Old Testament?
22. Is divorce His ultimate intent then, if she is unfaithful? Or does He even call Israel back, cleanse her and robe her?

Pastor relates the story of "Sue," who never dreamed of divorce. After five years, her husband left.

1. Do you recall the story?
2. Why was Sue riddled with guilt and shame?
3. She says, "The Holy Spirit came to me and said, 'You did not seek me first.'" What does that explain?
4. Does it help to reconsider steps you've taken? Explain.
5. Look up Isaiah 1: **18** "Come now, let us reason together," says the LORD. "Though your sins be like scarlet, they will be as white as snow; though they be as red as crimson, they will become like wool. **19** If you are willing and obedient, you will eat the fat of the land. **20** But if you resist and rebel, you will be devoured by the sword." Explain what you see?
6. Look at verse 18. How is this a call to Sue and all who are like her?
7. How do our sins become white as snow? What steps does Isaiah prescribe?
8. What warnings does he issue as well?
9. How does establishing hope begin the healing process?
10. Are you willing and obedient? Can you eat fat?
11. Look at Romans 5: **8** But God proves His love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. **9** Therefore, since we have now been justified by His blood, how much more shall we be saved from wrath through Him! Put this verse in the context of Isaiah's prophecy above. What do you see?
12. How does this fit in the context of conflicts in your own marriage? Can one lean on God's proven love? Do you have a testimony?
13. Who is justified by His blood? Who is not justified?
14. Pastor Mark says, "God's heart is for reconciliation." Look again at Isaiah's word. How do we know what Mark says is truth?

Pastor Mark laid out steps in these terms:

- ✠ If you're divorced, seek reconciliation if possible, recognizing that it is not always possible, yet, miracles are possible if neither party has remarried.

1. Look at what Paul told the Corinthians in 1 Corinthians 7:10 To the married I give this command (not I, but the Lord): A wife must not separate from her husband. 11But if she does, she must remain unmarried or else be reconciled to her husband. And a husband must not divorce his wife.
 2. What do you see? How do you know Paul is speaking to both husband and wife with equal ardor? (Look at the last sentence.)
 3. Mark says, "God is in the business of reconciliation." Prove it.
 4. How many Old Testament passages prove this principle?
 5. Look at Isaiah 49:15 "Can a woman forget her nursing child, or lack compassion for the son of her womb? Even if she could forget, I will not forget you! 16Behold, I have inscribed you on the palms of My hands; your walls are ever before Me. 17Your builders hasten back; your destroyers and wreckers depart from you. Describe what you see here?
 6. Have you ever seen someone carve or tattoo the initials of a loved one on their own person?
 7. The books of Nehemiah, Ezra and Hagar describes the return of the builders and the retreat of the wreckers. Why is this so encouraging?
 8. How do we know this is worth fighting for?
 9. Examine what he says when Isaiah begins to describe Messiah in chapter 42: 2He will not cry out or raise His voice, nor make His voice heard in the streets. 3A bruised reed He will not break and a smoldering wick He will not extinguish; He will faithfully bring forth justice. 4He will not grow weak or discouraged before He has established justice on the earth. In His law the islands will put their hope. What do you see here? Have you ever broken a bruised reed?
 10. When you know He doesn't grow weak or discouraged, how does this impact your own choices?
- † Take a moment to examine what Paul says to us all in 1 Corinthians 7. If you're single, Mark says, "Listen to what God has for you and pursue that."
1. Do you have a testimony?
 2. What do you see?
 3. Take a moment to pray for each other.
- † If you've already been remarried, seek repentance and not reversal.
1. Pastor says, "Seek repentance in everything in the past."
 2. [Extend forgiveness, grace and mercy where it is due]
 3. "Then put this marriage as the model and a new beginning.
 4. "Grace is found at that place of repentance." Explain what he means.
 5. Review Christ's summary of the Lord's prayer in Matthew 6:14 For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. 15But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive yours. How does a willingness to forgive strengthen our ability to model God's design? What happens if you replace the word "men" above with "your ex?"
- † In the situation you are in, examine yourself. 17Regardless, each one should lead the life that the Lord has assigned to him and to which God has called him. This is what I prescribe in all the churches.

Mark clarifies, "I'm not suggesting that anyone should return to a life that was threatening or abusive." That is neither the commandment nor the call. Reconciliation is God's heart, and peace is at the center.

He asks, "So now what? How do we honor Jesus in our relationships...married, divorced, remarried, single? This truth remains:

- ✠ "You are loved by God Who is faithful, patient and full of mercy. God sees you and loves you.
- ✠ "If you're married fight for your marriage with the same perseverance Christ shows His church. Forgive quickly. Serve sacrificially. Reflect His love in a covenant that the world doesn't understand.
- ✠ "If you're divorced, ask the Holy Spirit is reconciliation is still possible. Just ask the question. If it's not, commit to walk forward in purity and peace, trusting God's grace.
- ✠ "If you're remarried, bring that marriage fully under the Lordship of Jesus. Repent where needed. Walk in truth. Be faithful from this day forward. God is a redeemer. Therein is the hope.
- ✠ "Let every relationship, every marriage, every heart turn to the One Who never walks away. And may our lives reflect This One Who never lets up, never gives up, and ever lives to make intercession for us."

Mark concludes by looking at Hosea, the prophet who was directed to marry the prostitute Gomer. Despite her unfaithfulness, Hosea continues to pursue her. He's willing to redeem her and to take her as his wife again. Look up the conclusion in Hosea 14: ***1**Return, O Israel, to the LORD your God, for you have stumbled by your iniquity. **2**Bring your confessions and return to the LORD. Say to Him: "Take away all our iniquity and receive us graciously, that we may present the fruit of our lips. **3**Assyria will not save us, nor will we ride on horses. We will never again say, 'Our gods!' to the work of our own hands. For in You the fatherless find compassion." **4**I will heal their apostasy; I will freely love them, for My anger has turned away from them. **5**I will be like the dew to Israel; he will blossom like the lily and take root like the cedars of Lebanon. **6**His shoots will sprout, and his splendor will be like the olive tree, his fragrance like the cedars of Lebanon. **7**They will return and dwell in his shade; they will grow grain and blossom like the vine. His renown will be like the wine of Lebanon.*

1. Describe the promise.
 2. List what is included. What gets restored?
 3. What is our part...what are we committing to?
 4. What do we get in return?
 5. Has God's love changed in any way toward us?
 6. To what degree does God fight for His Bride? Does He ever give up?
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Follow up application:

1. Use the [Soap study below](#) to pursue your own understanding.
2. Examine carefully 1 Corinthians 7 this week in terms of your own personal relationships, and your current situation. Write down what you learn. Take the first steps in pursuing right relationships.

Take the time to pray.

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 19:9-12
Tuesday: Lamentations 1:8-9
Wednesday: Isaiah 1:18-20
Thursday: Isaiah 49:15-17
Friday: Isaiah 42:2-4
Saturday: 1 Corinthians 7:17
Sunday: Hosea 14:1-6

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.