

Life Group Notes 11/30/2025

Mark Warren “The Stars are Brightly Shining”

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.

Leaders: *Please pre-read these notes and choose the direction that is appropriate for your group. Scan the detailed questions that follow the AI-generated study questions, to see if you want to add any more detailed questions.*

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, 11/30. 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.

Footnotes are added to supply detail, and to enhance the study. Use at your discretion, and know any questions are welcomed. This week’s footnotes cover:

1. [On the morning star in scriptures.](#)

The format begins with a summary of the notes, followed by study questions. This week, notes in full detail can be found beginning on page 3:

Section I: Summary

Here’s “co-pilot’s” AI summary of the Sermon Lifegroup Notes

These are Life Group notes for a sermon by Mark Warren titled “The Stars are Brightly Shining,” delivered on November 30, 2025. It is structured to help group leaders and participants engage in meaningful discussion, reflection, and spiritual growth, emphasizing kindness, sensitivity, and openness to the Holy Spirit. The notes center on the biblical theme of Jesus as the “Morning Star,” drawing from Revelation 22:16 and connecting this imagery to various Old and New Testament passages. Participants are encouraged to explore the significance of light, prophecy, hope, and spiritual awakening through guided questions and scripture references. Practical steps for daily spiritual practice are

suggested, such as taking time for stillness, praying for God's illumination, and applying the SOAP journaling method (Scripture, Observation, Application, Prayer). The overall message is that Christmas is meant to be experienced with Jesus, focusing on joy, renewal, and the assurance that darkness does not have the final say. Footnotes and additional resources are provided for deeper study of the "Morning Star" theme and related scriptures.

Section II: Study questions

One-Hour Life Group Discussion Guide (Highlighted Section)

Opening (5 minutes)

- Welcome everyone and open with prayer, inviting God's presence and guidance.
- Briefly introduce the focus: exploring Jesus as the "Morning Star" and the significance of light, promise, and hope.

Icebreaker (5 minutes)

- Ask: "Did you participate in Saturday evening's service? Do you have a testimony to share?"

Scripture Reading (5 minutes)

- Read Revelation 22:16–17 aloud: "I, Jesus, have sent My angel to give you this testimony for the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the bright Morning Star. The Spirit and the bride say, 'Come!' Let the one who hears say, 'Come!' And let the one who is thirsty come, and the one who desires the water of life drink freely."

Guided Discussion (35 minutes)

Choose several questions from the highlighted section to encourage reflection and sharing:

1. List what you see in Revelation 22:16. Why the root of David? Why his offspring? Why do the credentials of a King matter? Why a star? Why the "bright" star? Why the "morning" star? What comes in the morning?
2. Connect the "testimony of Jesus" spoken of in Revelation 19 to what we read in 22:16ff. What is the impact of Christ's testimony? What do you learn about angels in 19? What is behind every prophecy? What happens when you hear the testimony of Jesus?
3. Why was His testimony so important to the churches? What does the testimony of Revelation add to the gospel as a whole? What is He saying to the church today? Are you thirsty?
4. Pastor Mark summarizes: "Jesus is telling you: 'I am here, and I am guiding you.'" Do you agree? How do we know He is here? How does He guide us?
5. How many times were stars used in the Old and New Testaments? Can you list them? (See [footnote 1](#) for morning star references.)
6. Look at Genesis 15:4–6. What do you see? How has the night sky changed for Abram from this day forward? Why? What will the stars remind him of every night from that point on? Explain the importance of "Abraham believed God." How is Abraham the father of our faith?
7. Look at Isaiah 51:1–2 and Matthew 2:1–2. What do these passages reveal about promise, identity, and guidance? Why is it "His star" which the Magi saw?

8. Reflect on Balaam's prophecy in Numbers 24:15–17 and David's song in Psalm 2. Who is the star? What does the scepter do? Who is the Son we are kissing? Are there limitations to His power?
9. Compare Romans 13:11–14 and Isaiah 60:1–4. What comes with the morning star? How has the coming of the day changed everything? How close are we to daybreak according to Paul?
10. Now look at Ephesians 5:13-15. What do you see? Compare all three passages.
11. Pause and reflect: When Paul admonishes us to "awake out of sleep," and Isaiah calls us to "rise and shine," what were we doing before this word came? What do we do different at the dawning of the new day? How do you "put on Jesus?"

Application & Prayer (10 minutes)

- Invite group members to share areas where they need God's light or guidance.
- Pray together, asking God to help each person experience spiritual awakening and hope, and to "arise and shine" in their daily lives.

Section III: Complete study notes

Pastor Mark began by remembering the first Saturday evening's service on the 29th.

1. Did you participate in Saturday evening's service?
2. Do you have a testimony?

Look up Revelation 22:¹⁶*"I, Jesus, have sent My angel to give you this testimony for the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the bright Morning Star."*¹⁷*The Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" Let the one who hears say, "Come!" And let the one who is thirsty come, and the one who desires the water of life drink freely.*

1. List what you see. Why the root of David?
2. Why his offspring?
3. Why do the credentials of a King matter?
4. Why a star?
5. Why the "bright" star? Why the "morning" star?
6. What comes in the morning? Make a list.
7. When John fell down before the angel whom Jesus sent, in Revelation 19, we saw this: ¹⁰*So I fell at his feet to worship him. But he [the angel] told me, "Do not do that! I am a fellow servant with you and your brothers who rely on the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."* Connect this to the verse above from chapter 22. What is the impact of Christ's testimony brought by the angel?
8. What do you learn about angels in 19:10?
9. What is behind every prophecy according to 19:10?
10. What happens when you hear the testimony of Jesus? What do you learn?
11. Why was this testimony so important to the churches in John and the apostles' day?
12. What does the testimony John heard on Patmos add to understanding the gospel as a whole? Why?
13. What is Jesus saying to the church today?
14. Are you thirsty? Explain.

Pastor Mark summarizes this notion saying, "Jesus is telling you: 'I am here, and I am guiding you.'"

1. Do you agree?
2. How do we know He is here?
3. How does He guide us?
4. How many times were stars used in the OT and the NT? Can you list them?

Look at Genesis 15: ⁴*Then the word of the LORD came to Abram, saying, "This one will not be your heir, but one who comes from your own body will be your heir."* ⁵*And the LORD took him outside and said, "Now look to the heavens and count the stars, if you are able."* *Then He told him, "So shall your offspring be."* ⁶*Abram believed the LORD, and it was credited to him as righteousness.*

1. What do you see?
2. How has the night sky changed for Abram from this day forward? Why?
3. What will the stars remind him of every night from that point on?
4. Explain the importance of these words, "Abraham believed God."
5. How is Abraham the father of "our [Christian] faith"? Do you look at the stars?
6. Look at Isaiah 51: ¹*"Listen to Me, you who pursue righteousness, you who seek the LORD: Look to the rock from which you were cut, and to the quarry from which you were hewn."* ²*Look to Abraham your father, and to Sarah who gave you birth. When I called him, he was but one; then I blessed him and multiplied him. From what rock were we cut? Explain.*
7. Look at Matthew 2: ¹*After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem,* ²*asking, "Where is the One who has been born King of the Jews? We saw His star in the east and have come to worship Him."* Why is it His star? How did they know?
8. Who, in exile in the east and raised up to counsel kings, foretold the coming of Messiah five centuries before it happened?
9. Look at Balaam's prophecy in Numbers 24: ¹⁵*Then Balaam lifted up an oracle, saying, "This is the prophecy of Balaam son of Beor, the prophecy of a man whose eyes are open,* ¹⁶*the prophecy of one who hears the words of God, who has knowledge from the Most High, who sees a vision from the Almighty, who bows down with eyes wide open:* ¹⁷*I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near. **A star will come forth from Jacob, and a scepter will arise from Israel.** He will crush the skulls of Moab and strike down all the sons of Sheth.* What do you see?
10. This was spoken in Moses' day, 1500 years before Jesus. Who is the star?
11. Compare this prophecy to what David sang five hundred years later in Psalm 2: ⁶*"I have installed My King on Zion, upon My holy mountain."* ⁷*I will proclaim the decree spoken to Me by the LORD: "You are My Son; today I have begotten you. ⁸Ask Me, and I will make the nations Your inheritance, the ends of the earth Your possession. ⁹You will break them with an iron scepter; You will shatter them like pottery."* ¹⁰*Therefore be wise, O kings; be admonished, O judges of the earth. ¹¹Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling. ¹²Kiss the Son, lest He be angry and you perish in your rebellion, when His wrath ignites in an instant.* What does the scepter do?
12. Whom are we kissing?
13. Are there limitations to His power?

Now look at Romans 13: ¹¹*And do this, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep; for now our salvation is nearer than when we first believed.* ¹²*The night is far spent, the day is at hand. Therefore let us cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light.* ¹³*Let us walk properly, as in the day, not in revelry and drunkenness, not in lewdness and lust, not in strife and envy.* ¹⁴*But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.*

Compare this passage to Isaiah 60: ¹*Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD rises upon you.* ²*For behold, darkness covers the earth, and thick darkness is over the peoples; but the LORD will rise upon you, and His glory will appear over you.* ³*Nations will come to your light, and kings to the brightness of your dawn.* ⁴*Lift up your eyes and look around: They all gather and come to you; your sons will come from afar, and your daughters will be carried on the arm.*

1. What comes with the morning star?
2. How has the coming of the day changed everything?
3. How close are we to daybreak according to Paul?
4. Look at verse eleven in Romans 13. How do we know salvation is nearer?
5. Is it possible to hasten that day? Explain.
6. Look at Isaiah 60:4. How does this bring comfort to those with “Holiday blues?” What is the promise?
7. (How did Abraham respond when he heard the promise of offspring after waiting so many decades?)
8. Pause and reflect: When Paul admonishes us to “awake out of sleep,” and Isaiah calls us to “rise and shine,” what were we presumably doing before this word came?
9. What do we do different at the dawning of the new day? List Paul’s suggestions?
10. How do you “put on Jesus?”

Mark continues, “You don’t need to ‘muster up courage for the holidays.’ You just need to listen to Who Jesus is. When Jesus fashions Himself this way [as the Morning Star], he’s saying ‘I am the One Who breaks the power of the darkness and guarantees the arrival of a new day.’ He guarantees the night is over and that there is a new day coming.”

1. Have you ever felt like you needed muster up courage to make the sun rise?
2. Would it help the sun rise if you did? Why is it good to know that the sun does not depend on your muster?
3. Does the Son depend on you mustering courage before He arises and fulfills His Promises? Explain.
4. Have you been sleeping? Have you had nightmares?
5. What will help you wake up to the New Dawn?

Look at what Peter says in his second letter, 1: ¹⁸*And we ourselves heard this voice from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain.* ¹⁹ *We also have the word of the prophets as confirmed beyond doubt. And you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts.* ²⁰*Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture comes from one’s own interpretation.*

1. Why is written prophecy “more sure” for Peter than it is for us? What had he seen and heard, according to verse 18, on that mountain that we have not, yet?
2. How does the Word of Promise become “a light shining in a dark place?”
3. Why is it good to be able to “see” what is ahead, when it is very dark?

4. According to Peter, where does the Morning Star first rise? Why is this important?
5. What role does prophecy from Scripture play?
6. How does prophecy bring internal transformation before its fulfillment in the physical world.
7. What role does hope play? What is hope based on?
8. How does hope bring a spiritual awakening?
9. How do you know the “darkness doesn’t stay dark?”
10. In twelve-step programs, you are taught to say, “This, too, shall pass.” What does that mean? Why is it good to remember?
11. What do you think: What would it look like if, say, three services-full of spiritually awakened people started interacting with the community?
12. Compare the promises Peter speaks of from scripture to the promises the world is making. Why is the world a threat to humanity and everything good?

Mark says, “Christmas is not sentimental nostalgia. It is a divine announcement that darkness does not get the final say.”

1. Explain.
2. How important is it to remember history, knowing what a birth in a stable led to?
3. How is remembering history like counting the stars at night until the child of promise is born?
4. Was Abraham’s long wait ever easy? Was it fruitful? Explain.

Look at what Jesus said in John 8:¹²*Once again, Jesus spoke to the people and said, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows Me will never walk in the darkness, but will have the light of life.”* Compare this to what David sang from Psalm 119:¹⁰⁴*I gain understanding from Your precepts; therefore I hate every false way.* ¹⁰⁵*Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.* ¹⁰⁶*I have sworn and confirmed that I will keep Your righteous judgments.*

1. What do you see?
2. How does the Light of the World, the Word of God, light our steps so that we never walk in darkness?
3. How does verse 106 respond to Jesus saying, “Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness?”
4. In John 9, Jesus says this, ⁴*“While it is daytime, we must do the works of Him who sent Me. Night is coming, when no one can work.* ⁵*While I am in the world, I am the light of the world.”* Judging by miraculous works all around us, what time are we in? Nighttime or daytime?
5. Did Jesus foresee a season where “...no man can work?” Explain.
6. What can we be sure is coming? How sure? Remember, according to Peter, where does daylight dawn first?
7. Explain this verse from John 1:⁴*In Him was life, and that life was the light of men.* ⁵*The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.* Can any darkness ever overcome a flashlight?
8. What happens to darkness when a flashlight is lit? ...when a floodlight is lit?
9. Does darkness have any power over light at all?
10. What would be necessary for darkness to prevail?

Pastor Mark said, “Sometimes, I think, we do not need more information. Sometimes we just need more illumination.”

1. Explain. Do you have a testimony?

2. Where do you find light? Explain.
3. Listening to today's message, does it help you see what he means?
4. Explain. What became better illuminated today?
5. Have you ever decided to stop trying to figure something out, only to have the answer come, once you let go? Can you talk about it?

He continues, "God's light exposes the lies we believed. The fears that have shaped us. The sin that has held us. The decisions that are leading us astray. But His light also reveals our calling, our identity, our next steps, His presence, His promise, our purpose."

1. What do you see?
2. Is there anything in this list that *you* do not want to see revealed?
3. Do you have a testimony? Does it work like this with you?
4. Why does God not often give the ten-year-plan? Why is He more concerned with "just the next step," as Pastor says.
5. Mark mentioned Noah...Think of this, if Noah was given a "hundred year plan" to build the ark (scholars guess anywhere from 75 to 100 years in construction) and Noah was six hundred years old when the flood came, how did he spend his first 500 years before building boats? Why is this important to think about?
6. Mark says, "Sometimes you're trying to make sense of your circumstances, and you do not see the whole picture. You just have to trust me?" Is this true?
7. How easy is it for you to trust?
8. He mentioned the Magi, who left the East in search of the One born King of the Jews. How specific and how clear was God's guidance?
9. Did the Magi doubt? How do you know?

Pastor lists steps to drawing closer to the Morning Star. Christmas was never meant to be "survived." It was meant to be experienced with Jesus.

- ✠ **We need to learn to slow down and look up.** If you want to see stars, you're not going to look down. Abraham looked up and remembered the promise every day until Isaac was born, and then after...because the stars didn't promise one child, but offspring that exceeded the stars in number. Psalm 40: ¹⁰*"Be still and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted over the earth."* Stillness creates space for clarity. Ask Jesus where He is shining in your life today? Give Him access to those dark areas in your life.
- ✠ **Invite His light into your darkness.** Look at what Paul told the Ephesians in Chapter 5: ¹³*But everything exposed by the light becomes visible, for everything that is illuminated becomes a light itself.* ¹⁴*So it is said: "Wake up, O sleeper, rise up from the dead, and Christ will shine on you."* ¹⁵*Pay careful attention, then, to how you walk, not as unwise but as wise...* Does this sound like anything we've read today? Mark says, "The light doesn't come to shame you or condemn you. The light comes for your freedom, for your life, for your peace and for your joy." Explain. In 1 John 1, John puts it this way: ⁶*If we say we have fellowship with Him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth.* ⁷*But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin.* Pastor says, "Daily pray this, 'Lord, shine a light where I'm avoiding you.' The only way past hurts and wrongs will truly die is if you bring them to the light and nail them to the cross. That's where it fully dies, where you can find healing and restoration."

- ✚ **Follow His guidance promptly.** “The Magi had to leave their homes to follow the star. When God guides he expects movement. Psalm 32: ⁸*I will instruct you and teach you the way you should go; I will give you counsel and watch over you.* ⁹*Do not be like the horse or mule, which have no understanding; they must be controlled with bit and bridle to make them come to you.* Jesus sees our situation and He wants to instruct us and give us guidance. Be willing to walk according to His instruction. Obey quickly. Delayed obedience leads back to shadows.”
- ✚ **Expect joy to rise.** (Note: Abraham looked at the sky, counting his offspring for twenty-five years before the birth of Isaac.) Look at Psalm 30: ⁵*For His anger is fleeting, but His favor lasts a lifetime. Weeping may stay the night, but joy comes in the morning.* What do you see? How important is the morning?
- ✚ **Christmas does not have be survived.** You can thrive this Christmas because you are going to be in Jesus’ company all season. There is a new day dawning. Keep the morning star central in your focus. Arise and shine.

Take the time to pray.

Follow up application:

1. Use the **Soap study below** to pursue your own understanding.
2. Take five minutes of stillness each morning. Take notes when you hear from God.
3. Daily pray this, “Lord, shine a light where I’m avoiding you.”
4. Name one answer to prayer, one joy, one blessing each day. Note the focus and the impact on you.

Footnotes:

1. **On the Morning Star in the scriptures**—I cannot do justice to the references to the Morning star in scripture without filling pages of notes. But this is a Word Study that is well worth pursuing, and you can begin with BibleHub’s thorough cross reference page to Revelation 22:16, [found here. \(Click for link.\)](#)

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: Revelation 22:16-17
Tuesday: Ephesians 5:13-16
Wednesday: Genesis 15:4-6
Thursday: Isaiah 51:1-2
Friday: Romans 13:11-14
Saturday: Numbers 24:15-17
Sunday: Psalm 2:6-9

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.