

Scribe's appeal: Unlike any other human endeavor, there is a reward beyond measure in studying the Word of God, and no other way to get to know Him. If these notes are useful to you, and you've enjoyed them, please send me an email at tbeachhead@comcast.net. If they raise any questions or if you get inspired, share this with me...and we can encourage each other! –Pete Mehegan, the Scribe.

(This is written to give you good things to enjoy, because look again at what Paul told Timothy (1 Tim 6:17-18)! I think he was thinking of us at the time: **17 Instruct those who are rich in the present age not to be conceited and not to put their hope in the uncertainty of wealth, but in God, WHO RICHLY PROVIDES ALL THINGS TO ENJOY. 18 Instruct them to do good, to be rich in good works, and to be generous and ready to share...**)

The following ice breaker is just a starter for your group. The message comes after the bar. Please enjoy!)

CROWD BREAKER Did you do anything for lent? Do you have a testimony? Whom did you text and invite? How can we pray for them?

Note: 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. The purpose is to unite, not divide; to proclaim fearlessly the freedom the gospel brings. Any part of these notes might be appropriate as a crowd breaker for your own group. The goal is to create memories from Sunday that will serve for a long time. 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. This study is also a great devotion, taken slowly through the week.**

Note: I have highlighted suggested discussion questions raised by Pastor Mark's message from this Palm Sunday. 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.**

Have you ever been disappointed by Jesus? Did you ever receive a promise, have a thought, receive a prophecy that God was going to do something, and it did not turn out as you were told? Share the testimony. What happens next? What happens between the moment of the disappointed expectation and recovery? Do you have steps to take to get to recovery?

What do you know about Palm Sunday? What did that day involve? How many people were involved? Why were they excited? How many days until the entire crowd changed their chant?

The Last Supper (Setting the context for Mark's message)

(Matthew 26:20–30; Mark 14:17–26; 1 Corinthians 11:17–34)

14When the hour had come, Jesus reclined at the table with His apostles. **15**And He said to them, "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before My suffering. **16**For I tell you that I will not eat it again until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God."

17After taking the cup, He gave thanks and said, "Take this and divide it among yourselves. **18**For I tell you that I will not drink of the fruit of the vine from now on until the kingdom of God comes."

19And He took the bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is My body, given for you; do this in remembrance of Me."

20In the same way, after supper He took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is poured out for you. **How do you understand this ritual? Take a moment to talk about it.**

21Look! The hand of My betrayer is with Mine on the table. **22**Indeed, the Son of Man will go as it has been determined, but woe to that man who betrays Him." **Of whom is Jesus speaking? How can it be that Judas' hand was with them? What does this say of trust at the table? When did Jesus know that Judas would betray him? Look up Psalm 41:9** Even my close friend whom I trusted, the one who shared my bread, has lifted up his heel against me. **So, when did Jesus know?**

23Then they began to question among themselves which of them was going to do this. **Imagine the conversation. How could they not even suspect? What do you think the next topic of conversation would be? In other gospels, each of the disciples is questioning himself, "Is it I Lord?" What is their degree of self-confidence?**

Who Is the Greatest?

24A dispute also arose among the disciples as to which of them would be considered the greatest. **Are you surprised after they each question his own integrity? Imagine the conversation. How moved were they really about the betrayal? Who wins this one? How often has this topic come up? What is their degree of self-confidence? Look closely at Jesus' response.**

25So Jesus declared, "The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them, and those in authority over them call themselves benefactors. **26**But you shall not be like them. Instead, the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who leads like the one who serves. **27**For who is greater, the one who reclines at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines? But I am among you as one who serves. **What do you see? Who wins that argument? What does it take to be the greatest?**

28You are the ones who have stood by Me in My trials. **29**And I bestow on you a kingdom, just as My Father has bestowed one on Me, **30**so that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. **Don't miss this promise. What is Jesus bequeathing to his disciples at the table of the last supper? Why? If a kingdom is bestowed on you, what is your next step, according to Jesus' revelation of "greatness?"**

Jesus Predicts Peter's Denial

(Matthew 26:31–35; Mark 14:27–31; John 13:36–38)

31 Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift each of you like wheat. **32** But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith will not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers." **See footnotes below. This is an excellent translation. Why is it enough to pray for Peter alone? How can Satan ask for anything? How did the answer to Jesus' prayer turn out for the rest? Who spoke at Pentecost?**

33 "Lord," said Peter, "I am ready to go with You even to prison and to death." **How is Peter's self-confidence at this moment? Did Peter's self-esteem get him through the trials? What does get Peter through those trials? How many trials will Peter face before he stands up at Pentecost?**

34 But Jesus replied, "I tell you, Peter, the rooster will not crow today until you have denied three times that you know Me." **React to Jesus' words. What is Jesus doing? Do the disciples get sifted like wheat? Why did Satan's plan fail?**

35 Then Jesus asked them, "When I sent you out without purse or bag or sandals, did you lack anything?"

"Nothing," they answered. **How sure can we be of God's provision when He sends us out? All the time?**

36 "Now, however," He told them, "the one with a purse should take it, and likewise a bag; and the one without a sword should sell his cloak and buy one. **37** For I tell you that this Scripture must be fulfilled in Me: 'And He was numbered with the transgressors.' For what is written about Me is reaching its fulfillment." **Look at this in terms of selling all you have and giving to the poor. How is this different? Are the instructions to "sell all" appropriate every time? How is one to know? Look at what Paul tells the Philippians in Philippians 4:12. I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. Do you know the next verse? What is it? ("I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.") If the promise is not perpetual abundance, and it's not perpetual poverty...what is the promise in Christ according to this verse? How does this verse from Ecclesiastes apply here? "To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose unto heaven." Why is it important to remember the verse Luke cites, "And He was numbered among the transgressors?" (Trivial pursuit...Without peaking ahead, what chapter from the OT is this verse drawn?)**

Look up Isaiah 53:12 Therefore I will allot Him a portion with the great, and He will divide the spoils with the strong, because He has poured out His life unto death, and He was numbered with the transgressors. Yet He bore the sin of many and made intercession for the transgressors. **How much of this verse is being fulfilled in this passage? With whom did Jesus just divide His portion of the kingdom (v. 29)? Who are the strong?**

38 So they said, "Look, Lord, here are two swords." **Do these swords ever help the apostles' cause? Why did Jesus say to bring them? What weapons help most in times of persecution?**

"That is enough," He answered. ***Do you think He smiled when He said that? How ready to obey are the apostles at this moment? How ready were they when the crowds came to arrest Jesus?***

What are the weapons we fight with? Look up 2 Corinthians 10:3-5 ³For though we live in the flesh, we do not wage war according to the flesh. ⁴***The 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....***How appropriate to that moment are these words from Paul? What sword do we fight with? What is the "sword of the Spirit"? How does the Word of God demolish strongholds? If faith is our shield, how does faith come, according to Paul in Romans 10? Look up Revelations 19:13.*** ¹²He has eyes like blazing fire, and many royal crowns on His head. He has a name written on Him that only He Himself knows. ¹³***He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and His name is The Word of God.*** ¹⁴The armies of heaven, dressed in fine linen, white and pure, follow Him on white horses.... ***Who is the rider on the White Horse? What is His name? What do the armies follow?***

Jesus Prays on the Mount of Olives ([Matthew 26:36-46](#); [Mark 14:32-42](#))

³⁹Jesus went out as usual to the Mount of Olives, and the disciples followed Him. ⁴⁰When He came to the place, He told them, ***"Pray that you will not enter into temptation."*** ***What is about to happen to the disciples? Did they pray this, or did they sleep? Did they enter into temptation? What happens when we do not pray?***

⁴¹And He withdrew about a stone's throw beyond them, where He knelt down and prayed, ⁴²***"Father, if You are willing, take this cup from Me. Yet not My will, but Yours be done."*** ***Look at this prayer: Does Jesus know the answer before He prays it? How? Why? In addition to the prophecies of the Old Testament, who has already forewarned Him? If Jesus had not said, "Yet not My will but Yours..." what do you think would have been the result?***

⁴³Then an angel from heaven appeared to Him and strengthened Him. ⁴⁴And in His anguish, He prayed more earnestly, and His sweat became like drops of blood falling to the ground. (Scribes note: Luke is the only one who recounts this phenomenon. He is a physician by practice. ***Why does this matter?*** See footnotes below.)

⁴⁵When Jesus rose from prayer and returned to the disciples, He found them asleep, exhausted from sorrow. ⁴⁶***"Why are you sleeping?"*** He asked. ***"Get up and pray so that you will not enter into temptation."*** ***When is the last time the disciples slept through deeply spiritual times?***

The Betrayal of Jesus ([Matthew 26:47-56](#); [Mark 14:43-52](#); [John 18:1-14](#))

⁴⁷While He was still speaking, a crowd arrived, led by the man called Judas, one of the Twelve. He approached Jesus to kiss Him. ⁴⁸But Jesus asked him, ***"Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?"*** ***Luke is the only Evangelist who relates this comment from Jesus. Why is the irony important to remember?***

49 Those around Jesus saw what was about to happen and said, "Lord, should we strike with our swords?" 50 And one of them struck the servant of the high priest, cutting off his right ear. ***If you have a sword, what is your first response? Is it always helpful?***

51 But Jesus answered, "No more of this!" And He touched the man's ear and healed him. (Scribe's note: See footnote below.) ***Why did Jesus tell them to bring swords?***

52 Then Jesus said to the chief priests, temple officers, and elders who had come for Him, "Have you come out with swords and clubs as you would against an outlaw? 53 Every day I was with you in the temple courts, and you did not lay a hand on Me. But this hour belongs to you and to the power of darkness." ***Why is this last statement so interesting?***

Remember what Satan offered Jesus in the temptation? What did Jesus know then that Satan clearly did not grasp? For how much time will this "power of darkness" have this control? Look at what Paul tells the Corinthians in 1 Cor 2:7-9. ...7

No, we speak of the mysterious and hidden wisdom of God, which He destined for our glory before time began. 8 ***None of the rulers of this age understood it. For if they had, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.*** 9 Rather, as it is written: "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no heart has imagined, what God has prepared for those who love Him." ... ***How does this***

relate to what Jesus says here? How aware is Jesus of this at this moment?

Peter Denies Jesus

(Matthew 26:69-75; Mark 14:66-72; John 18:15-18)

54 Then they seized Jesus, led Him away, and took Him into the house of the high priest. And Peter followed at a distance.

55 When those present had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and sat down together, Peter sat down among them. 56 A servant girl saw him seated in the firelight and looked intently at him. "This man also was with Him," she said.

57 But Peter denied it. "Woman, I do not know Him," he said.

58 A short time later, someone else saw him and said, "You also are one of them." But Peter said, "Man, I am not."

59 About an hour later, another man insisted, "Certainly this man was with Him, for he too is a Galilean."

60 "Man, I do not know what you are talking about," Peter replied.

While he was still speaking, the rooster crowed. 61 And the Lord turned and looked at Peter. ***Think about this: What motivated Peter to take up the sword and cut off Malchus' ear? What came over him when Jesus stopped him and healed Malchus? Now what is going through his mind? Can you guess? Can you relate? Did Peter reach the place Pastor Mark talks about, where Peter is thinking, "Maybe Jesus isn't really who I thought he was"? How is this, as Mark says, "...actually denying Jesus"?***

Then Peter remembered the word that the Lord had spoken to him: "Before the rooster crows today, you will deny Me three times." 62 And he went outside and wept bitterly. (Scribes note: See footnote below!) ***How poignant is the detail Luke adds that Jesus "...turned and looked at Peter"? What happens to Peter?***

What has happened to Peter's self-confidence? Have you ever prayed for healing over someone, and nothing happened? Are you encouraged to pray? Or do you feel discouraged from praying? Look up Mark 16:17-18. 17 And these signs will accompany those who

believe: In My name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; ¹⁸they will pick up snakes with their hands, and if they drink any deadly poison, it will not harm them; they will lay their hands on the sick, and they will be made well.” ***What do you need to keep on doing, if you are going to keep “laying hands on the sick,” especially when nothing happens the first time? How do we encourage one another in this? How can you encourage one whose trust in God has been damaged by their circumstances? What is the best proof we have that Jesus IS Who He says He is?***

Is this the end of the story for Peter? Does he lose all hope and wallow in self-pity? What happens in the end? Why?

Look up John 21:15-17. (Scribe’s translation. See footnotes below) ¹⁵When they had finished eating, Jesus asked Simon Peter, “Simon son of John, do you **love** (agapao) Me more than these?” “Yes, Lord,” he answered, “You know I **like** (phileo) You.” Jesus replied, “**Feed My lambs** (young sheep).”

¹⁶Jesus asked a second time, “Simon son of John, do you **love** (agapao) Me?”

“Yes, Lord,” he answered, “You know I **like** (phileo) You.”

Jesus told him, “**Shepherd My sheep.**”

¹⁷Jesus asked a third time, “Simon son of John, do you **like** (phileo) Me?”

Peter was deeply hurt that Jesus had asked him the third time, “**Do you like** (phileo) Me?”

“Lord, You know all things,” he replied. “You know I **like** (phileo) You.”

Jesus said to him, “**Feed My sheep.**” ***Talk about the disappointment. What is Jesus questioning this third time? How will Peter demonstrate his friendship with Jesus? How will this be THE answer to the prayer Jesus prayed for Peter?***

How many times does Jesus ask Peter the same question? How was the question slightly different the third time (see footnote below)? How do these three questions relate to the look Jesus gave Peter after the denial? Look at the three exhortations Jesus asks of Peter. How do they differ? How is each an answer to Jesus’ prayer for Peter that we read above? Does Peter return? Will he strengthen the others?

¹⁸Truly, truly, I tell you, when you were young, you dressed yourself and walked where you wanted; but when you are old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go.” ¹⁹Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. ***Do you remember what Jesus told the disciples to pray in the garden? When is the last time that you prayed that you would not enter into temptation? How has Peter been prepared for his destiny?***

And after He had said this, He told him, “**Follow Me.**” ***Church history says Peter was crucified upside down in Rome. How does this scene play into what we know of Peter?***

Scribe’s biblical notes:

On the meaning of “you”: The Greek language, as the language of our King James Bible, has two words for “you,” the first is singular, “thee,” and can apply only to one person. The second is plural, as “you” or “ye” in the King James and applies to more than one. In

the southern United States, folks have coined a plural form of you, “y’all,” which can only be applied to more than one person. When Jesus told Peter of Satan’s request to “sift like wheat,” translated in, say, Tennessee, the translation would read like this: “*Simon, Simon, Satan has desired and begged earnestly to sift y’all like wheat. But I have requested for thee, (you, Simon, and you alone) that your faith might not fail, and that when you have turned back...come to your senses...you might strengthen the others.*” The above translation used in the notes, *The Berean Study Bible*, found at biblehub.com, is excellent for its attention to this detail.

Jesus sweats blood. Hematidrosis is a condition in which capillary blood vessels that feed the sweat glands rupture, causing them to exude blood, occurring under conditions of extreme physical or emotional stress. This is an actual condition that a physician would recognize.

On the cutting of the ear: Luke is the only evangelist who relates the healing of the ear. John is familiar with the man, and relates his name, Malchus. John is also the only evangelist that pins the swordplay on Peter. The three others allow anonymity.

On Peter’s denial: Matthew and Mark relate that Peter denied Jesus vehemently with cursing and swearing. John merely relates the denial. Only Luke testifies that Jesus looked at Peter directly.

On “like” and “love”: The Greek has more than one word for “love,” two of which are used in this passage, though the distinction is rarely highlighted in English translation. *Agapao* is the word “love” that Paul describes so perfectly in 1 Corinthians 13. It relates to the Hebrew word “*chesed*” which is often translated “steadfast love,” that love that never ceases. This is that love that will lay down its soul for his friends. *Phileo* is derived from the Greek word for brother, and it speaks of a fraternal love that is committed, but not as deeply. John’s passage is all the more poignant when you realize that Jesus is even questioning Peter’s friendship. Can you understand better now Peter’s disappointment at the third question?

The extra measure. Take a moment: Watch how Peter understands the difference and tries to convey it to us. Look up 2 Peter 1:5-9 ⁵For this very reason, make every effort to add to your faith virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; ⁶and to knowledge, self-control; and to self-control, perseverance; and to perseverance, godliness; ⁷and to godliness, ***brotherly kindness (phileo love)***; and to brotherly kindness, ***love (Agapao love)***. ⁸For 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. ⁹But whoever lacks these traits is nearsighted to the point of blindness, having forgotten that he has been cleansed from his past sins. **How does this understanding get Peter through the trials?**

Speak of the progress of Christian maturity.