



# COMMUNITY GROUP NOTES + QUESTIONS

FRUITFULNESS | OCTOBER 4, 2020

MARK 4:1-20

GUEST SPEAKER: ANTHONY MELICHAREK

# 02

## INTRODUCTION

Icebreaker: Anthony referenced Romans 8:28 and said “We are going to look back and we are going to realize just how God used 2020 to make us, to sanctify us, and to prepare us for glory and so he is working”

Have you been able to see God working in your life during this tumultuous year? If so, what has he revealed to you or how has he spurred you to prepare you for glory?

John 15:1-16 all Christians bear fruit whether abundantly, sparsely, or somewhere in between; it is the will of God for us that we bear fruit in whatever we do because that’s what we were chosen and appointed for: fruitfulness should be the position of our heart & a demonstration of our understanding that we are to serve as Christ served.

When you hear Jesus speaking about bearing fruit do you consider it an honor or a burden (i.e. another expectation that has to be met)? How does knowing that it is God’s will for you to bear fruit encourage you or help you in your decision making?

Anthony gave us some guidelines to follow as we assess the fruitfulness of our lives -

Daily demonstration of the fruits of the spirit (Gal 5:22-23) as you:

- Love one another (Gal 5:13)
- Use or operate within your giftings (Romans 12:6-8)
- Making Disciples (Matt 28:19-20)
- Participating within your sanctification (1 Peter 1:15-16 & John 14:21)

Based on this would you say that your fruit production is abounding, a bumper crop (usual season of growth), sparse (struggling), or thin (close to extinction)?

What is your biggest area of weakness? How is God showing you that through your weakness he is strong to continue to bear fruit no matter how sparse?

Read Mark 4:18-19; describes a believer that is walking the fence between earthly kingdom and heavenly kingdom. How does “fence walking” exhibit areas of unbelief? What are some examples of this type of living from your own life or scripture?

## 03

**ANTHONY MELICHAREK**

*If we can trust God with our eternity, we can trust him now.*

**SPIRITUAL CHOKING HAZARDS****Choking on the Cares of this world**

90% of Christians she knows are just as afraid, anxious, insecure, and impatient as unbelievers: Kathy Keller

Thoughts? Why do we pound the machine so hard to get the coin to drop? What makes it difficult for the word to go from head to heart?

Matthew 5:2-11; Matthew 6:25-34; 1 Peter 5:7; and many other others (feel free to list some) all speak to how to manage the cares of this world; what makes it difficult to believe these words? In what ways can you begin to bring the Gospel center stage so that the cares of the world will go backstage where they belong?

**Choking on the Deceitfulness of Riches**

“A checkbook (bank/credit card statement) is a theological document, it tells you who and what you worship” - Billy Graham

What are you worshipping? Are you building up the kingdom with your finances or is money your master?

Money is deceitful in that it can convince you that you are self-sufficient and Martin Luther said “there are three conversions necessary: the conversion of the heart, mind, and wallet” - how does having a converted purse change your perspective on money?

The story of Zaccheus and The Rich Young Ruler demonstrate the significance of money on your salvation - how can money, a neutral currency, have such power over us that it can keep us from the saving grace of Jesus?

Reference verses:

Luke 16:13, Mark 8:36-37, 1 Tim 6:6-10,  
Matt 6:19-21, Acts 20:35, Luke 19:8

## 04

## SPIRITUAL CHOKING HAZARDS CONT.

### *Choking On the Desires for Other Things*

The Lust of other things, Pleasures of life (Luke 8:14); all the “little gods” that distract us from the one true God.

What are some of the things good or bad that tend to distract you from your relationship with God?

God instructs us to be about His business first then everything else will fall into place - why do our fickle hearts have such a hard time believing and trusting in that command and promise?

*“Aim at Heaven and you will get earth ‘thrown in’. Aim at earth and you will get neither.” (CS Lewis):* What does aiming at heaven look like? What are some ways that we can change our aim from earth to heaven?

Reference verses: 2 Tim 4:10; Matt 6:33; 1 Corinthians 2:9; Zeph 3:17; Psalm 103

## CONCLUSION

How does turning your eyes upon Jesus release the choke hold that the cares of this world, money, and desires for other things have on you? How does your belief about God’s character affect your ability to submit to His word instead of just agreeing with it (see Dan Ortland’s quote below)?

How does John 16:33 encourage you as you begin to cut through the thorns that have gotten into the way of your fruit bearing?

The Christian life, from one angle, is the long journey of letting our natural assumption about who God is, over many decades, fall away, being slowly replaced with God’s own insistence on who he is. . . . The fall in Genesis 3 not only sent us into condemnation and exile. The fall also entrenched in our minds dark thoughts of God, thoughts that are only dug out over multiple exposures to the gospel over many years. Perhaps Satan’s greatest victory in your life today is not the sin in which you regularly indulge but the dark thoughts of God’s heart that cause you to go there in the first place and keep you cool toward him in the wake of it.