

7-20-2025 Sermon Lifegroup Notes

Mark Warren Stand Firm Week 2

“Guard the Gospel in a Culture of Compromise.”

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, 7/20. 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 footnote speaks:

1. [On patterns of sound doctrine/teaching/words.](#)

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 reviewed who the historic writer, Paul is, and the story of his life that led him to this prison epistle, said to be his last, or one of his last, written from prison in Rome before he was beheaded. He's writing to Timothy ([see last week's footnotes](#)), his son in the faith, writing his final, powerful words to this disciple, who is now Bishop and overseer in Ephesus facing his own struggles in leadership. He says we're focusing on these two verses: 2 Timothy 1:13-14 **13** Hold on to the pattern of sound words you have heard from me, with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. **14** Guard the treasure entrusted to you, with the help of the Holy Spirit who dwells in us.

1. What do you remember from last week?
2. What did you learn about Paul's and Timothy's relationship?
3. See [footnote 1 below](#). What is in a pattern?
4. Where does the pattern come from? Is it easy to follow?

Pastor's introduction took us tubing down the Saco River.

1. Have you ever? Can you describe it?
2. What does the tuber have to do to get to his destination?
3. What's the difference between a tuber on the Saco, and salmon swimming to their breeding ground?
4. What does the salmon face to reach its destination?

5. What happens after that salmon deposits its eggs?
6. What reward does either party, the salmon or the tuber, gain?
7. Which species would suffer from failure to reach the destination?

Mark says, "Our faith is very much like that: God has given each of us direction and a purpose to go, and it requires energy. It requires us to fight upstream in a culture that wants us to flow with the current, saying, 'It's OK. Be complacent. Just drift through life.'"

1. Does this fit? Explain.
2. What happens to someone in this culture when he resists the flow? Do you have a testimony?
3. What happens to us when we drift?
4. What happens when we swim upstream?
5. How does the pattern Paul passes on to Timothy represent swimming upstream?
6. Describe the lazy river drifting that Satan's offering. What is at the end?
7. How are you doing?

✚ Follow the pattern.

Look again at Paul's admonition: **13** "Hold on to/follow/retain the pattern of sound words you have heard from me, with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus."

1. Do you have the strength to swim upstream?
2. What does Paul say gives Timothy that strength?
3. How does faith help?
4. How does it help to know where you are going?
5. How does love help?
6. How does it help to be highly motivated?
7. Where do that faith and love come from? Are they yours?
8. Who gave us the pattern of faith and love?
9. How did He give us that pattern? In what form?
10. Look up Hebrews 4: **12** *For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it pierces even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow. It judges the thoughts and intentions of the heart.* **13** *Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight; everything is uncovered and exposed before the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.* **14** *Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to what we profess.* What do you see?
11. How does the word form the pattern? What is the blueprint?
12. How does the word reveal the plan God has for us? Do you have a testimony?
13. Can you list the issues that the pattern of this world draw people to?
14. Is the Bible clear? Or do you think it could be clearer?
15. Look up James 1: **13** *When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He tempt anyone.* **14** *But each one is tempted when by his own evil desires he is lured away and enticed.* **15** *Then after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.* Where does the confusion come from?
16. How do our evil desires lead to confusion and rationalization, and away from the blueprint?
17. Look again at Paul's words to Timothy in verse 13 above. Where did Timothy first find the blueprint?

18. Where is the pattern/blueprint found?
19. Review again what Paul told the Romans, chapter 10: **16** *But not all of them welcomed the good news. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed our message?"* **17** *Consequently, faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.* Why does faith always come from hearing?
20. What prevents a person from hearing?
21. Why does Paul remind Timothy to review the blueprint he heard from Paul?
22. How do we apply this lesson in practice at Grace? Explain.

✠ **Practice living by faith.**

Looking again at the key verse: **13** "Hold on to/follow/retain the pattern of sound words you have heard from me, **with the faith** and love that are in Christ Jesus."

1. Time to review: Define faith. What do we believe in?
2. James says the demons believe in God. How is our faith different from that of the demons?
3. Look up 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. 3 For the LORD will comfort Zion and will look with compassion on all her ruins; He will make her wilderness like Eden and her desert like the garden of the LORD. Joy and gladness will be found in her, thanksgiving and melodious song."* What did Abraham do?
4. Look up Genesis 15: **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.* What did Abraham do to gain the verdict "righteous?"
5. Review Romans 4: **16** *Therefore, the promise comes by faith, so that it may rest on grace and may be guaranteed to all Abraham's offspring—not only to those who are of the law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham. He is the father of us all. 17 As it is written: "I have made you a father of many nations." He is our father in the presence of God, in whom he believed, the God who gives life to the dead and calls into being what does not yet exist. 18 Against all hope, Abraham in hope believed and so became the father of many nations, just as he had been told, "So shall your offspring be." 19 Without weakening in his faith, he acknowledged the decrepitness of his body (since he was about a hundred years old) and the lifelessness of Sarah's womb. 20 Yet he did not waver through disbelief in the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, 21 being fully persuaded that God was able to do what He had promised. 22 This is why "it was credited to him as righteousness."* How do we know Abraham believed God? What did he do that proved he believed?
6. What pattern do we hold on to and obey? Is it possible for saving faith not to respond to the pattern in action?
7. Review Hebrews 11:1 "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." What evidence did Abraham have that He would have a son?
8. How substantial was that evidence?

9. Explain this principle: "We obey because we believe. We believe because we obey."
10. Pastor Mark says, "This is not about do's and don'ts. This is where life is found. This is where our full life is found." Explain.
11. He says, "When I follow the pattern in the Word of God, I gain a confidence that will grow my relationship with Jesus." Explain.
12. He continues, "Faith is also learning to let go. Releasing the drive to control. Relinquishing the drive to be a type 'A' player." What does he mean?
13. Why does this type of surrender NOT involve flowing down the Saco River?
14. How is it different? When you surrender to God, what do you pursue?
15. What drops away? How? (Sing the chorus, "Turn your eyes upon Jesus... Look full in His ...") Why do the things of the world grow dim? Do you have a testimony?
16. How have your tastes changed.

✠ **Grow in Love.** V. **13** "Hold on to/follow/retain the pattern of sound words you have heard from me, with the faith **and love** that are in Christ Jesus."

Pastor says, "If your doctrine is sharp, but your words are salty, we have a problem."

1. What does he mean? Do you have an example? A testimony? A confession?
2. He continues, "If your words are sweet, and your doctrine is sloppy, we also have a problem." Explain with an example?
3. He says, "The principle here involves speaking the truth in love." Have you ever seen this work? Can you describe it?
4. Look up 1 Corinthians 13: **4** *Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. 5* *It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no account of wrongs. 6* *Love takes no pleasure in evil, but rejoices in the truth. 7* *It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. 8* *Love never fails.* How do you do?
5. Look at verse six. How does one "speak the truth in love," with this in mind?
6. Look at verse 7. Answer why for each point. Why does love "bear all things?" etc.

✠ **Guard the Good Deposit.** **14** **Guard the good deposit/treasure** entrusted to you, with the help of the Holy Spirit who dwells in us.

1. Where did the "good deposit/treasure" come from? Who entrusted it to you?
2. Do you do this alone? Explain.
3. Mark talks about avoiding the stuff that makes your soul wince. What does this mean?
4. He says, "Be mindful of what you consume. The shows. The social media posts. A lot of that stuff is cultural flow going down the lazy river to No Good." Do you have a testimony?
5. What happens when the box of crumble cookies come to your lap?
6. Look at how Paul describes what happens when we go with the flow, speaking to the Galatians, 4: **9** *But now that you know God, or rather are known by God, how is it that you are turning back to those weak and worthless principles? Do you wish to be enslaved by them all over again? 10* *You are observing special days and months and seasons and years! 11* *I fear for you, that my efforts for you may have been in vain. 12* *I beg you, brothers, become like me, for I became like you. You have done me no wrong.* What currents hit the Galatians?
7. What distractions were making them change course?

8. Have you seen friends or family lose course? Take a moment to pray for them. (Paul did not give up on the Galatians!)
 9. Did Dorey in finding Nemo speak to you? Is there a good time to give up?
 10. Have you ever watched the introduction to *The Chosen*? What does one fish swimming against the current do for the other fish?
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Follow up application:

1. Use the [Soap study below](#) to pursue your own understanding.
2. Be introspective: Where is the current misleading you today? Write down our thoughts, and remove a distraction. Write down that intention. Refer to your notes this week.
3. Determine that you're going to join a life group this fall. Make your choices this week.
4. If you haven't been baptized, find when the next baptism is, and sign up.
5. If you haven't been baptized in the Spirit, pursue it until He floods you.

Take the time to pray.

Scribe's Footnotes:

1. **On patterns of sound doctrines/teachings/words**—When Paul exhorts Timothy to “Hold on to the pattern of sound teaching...” that he heard from Paul, the Greek word for pattern is instructive: ὑποτύπωσις, (*hypotyposis*). It means (concretely) a sketch (figuratively) for imitation -- form, pattern. Paul's words are the blueprint for building, or the pattern for constructing the garment we are to wear, and this blueprint is formed in sound *word* (*logos*).
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For further study:

Take a moment each day this week to apply the **SOAP method** (Scripture—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: 2 Timothy 1:13-14
Tuesday: Romans 10:16-17
Wednesday: James 1:13-15
Thursday: Hebrews 4:12-14
Friday: Genesis 15:5-6
Saturday: Isaiah 51:1-3
Sunday: Romans 4:18-22

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.