

Life Group Notes 8/3/2025

Pastor Mark Warren

Stand Firm...Week 4

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, 8/3. 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.

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 Mark opened with this comment: "I believe that if you are going to sustain an ideology or a belief system, I believe that it would be important that you believe in something that didn't stay dead. You need to believe in something that is actually alive. We have already talked about the theme that Jesus is alive. The contrast is important, when you look at all the other world religions, all of their prophets and all of their spiritual leaders are dead. Jesus Christ is the only exception. He rose from the grave. Paul wrote to make sure that we start with that fact."

1. What do you see? What do you know of Paul's teaching and preaching?
2. What did Paul always start with?
3. Have you ever looked at or studied other world religions? Which?
4. Do you know where Buddha is said to be buried? Mohammed? Confucius?
5. Can you prove beyond reasonable doubt that Jesus rose from the dead? How?
6. Look at what Paul told the Corinthians in 1 Corinthians 2:
***1**When I came to you, brothers, I did not come with eloquence or wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God. **2**For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified. **3**I came to you in weakness and fear, and with much trembling. **4**My message and my preaching were not with persuasive words*

of wisdom, but with a demonstration of the Spirit's power, 5so that your faith would not rest on men's wisdom, but on God's power. What do you see?

7. Why is Jesus' resurrection an important starting point?
8. What does your faith rely on? Man's persuasive words of wisdom or God's power that manifests itself?
9. Which has been more reliable from your experience? Explain.
10. How does your faith make you "elect?" How do the elect receive the message?
11. Look at Romans 8: 28 *And we know that God works all things together for the good of those who love Him, who are called according to His purpose. 29 For those God foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brothers. 30 And those He predestined, He also called; those He called, He also justified; those He justified, He also glorified. Who are the elect?*
12. Whom did God foreknow? List what He did with this foreknowledge.
13. What is our job, knowing some will believe and some will not believe?
14. Look up what the prophet Hanani told King Asa in 2 Chronicles 16: 9 *For the eyes of the LORD roam to and fro over all the earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose hearts are perfect toward Him. You have acted foolishly in this matter. From now on, therefore, you will be at war.* What do you see?
15. God's eyes are on whom in this prophecy? Who is excluded? Explain.
16. Do you know what Asa did wrong? Why did he seek help elsewhere, beyond God?
17. How is your own heart?

Pastor says, "Our job is to share the good news with as many people as we can. And we know that some words will land on good "soil," and some will not. Some folks will be receptive and some will not. But our job is to plant the seed of the gospel."

1. What do you see?
2. Do you have a testimony?

He continued, "I think though that somehow [like Asa, above--Scribe] we fear that we're going to face rejection. We might get in somebody's face that doesn't want anything to do with the gospel. That's fine. It happens. You need to respect them. This is not a call to go crazy in this, but to ask...are you even sharing the good news?

1. Is there an easy way to share?
2. Do you have a testimony?

Pastor returned to 1 Timothy 2: 8 *Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, descended from David, as proclaimed by my gospel, 9 for which I suffer to the extent of being chained like a criminal. But the word of God cannot be chained! 10 For this reason I endure all things for the sake of the elect, so that they too may obtain the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory.*

1. What do you see? What is Paul reminding Timothy of, and why?
2. Where is Paul being held "...in chains like a criminal" as he writes these words?
3. What else has Paul endured? For whose sake does he endure? Name names.
4. Why is it worth it for Paul to endure? How did you benefit from Paul's endurance?

Now read what Paul writes next, 2 Tim 2: 11 *This is a trustworthy saying: If we died with Him, we will also live with Him; 12 if we endure, we will also reign with Him; if we deny*

*Him, He will also deny us; **13**if we lose faith, He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself.*

1. Go point by point. What is Paul saying?
2. Pastor says, reading this, “We know we have to die to ourselves. Dying to ourselves equals real life?” Explain.
3. How do we die with Him? What do we lose when we die with Him?
4. What do we endure? What have you endured?
5. When does endurance end?
6. What is the purpose of endurance? Who benefits?

Pastor says, “We’re watching folks trucking down the wrong road that leads to hell. God’s not sending them there. They’re walking under their own volition, and we need to be the friend that shouts, ‘Hey. There’s a cliff there. You’re walking off a cliff.’”

1. What do you think? For whom are you praying?
2. Share concerns and take a moment and pray for those going over a cliff.
3. In what way does “dying to ourselves” make it more comfortable to share the gospel?
4. Who matters more in this life? The dead or the living?
5. If we truly die to ourselves, who matters more?
6. Pastor says, “If I see someone walking toward destruction, I should care.” Explain.
7. Review a fact: to what degree does God love the world? To what degree does He care?
8. How did He prove this fact?

Now look again at verse **12***if we endure, we will also reign with Him;*

1. What do you see? What is the promise that comes from endurance.
2. What does it mean to “reign with Him?” What is included?
3. What is not included?
4. Look at how Jesus described this reign, dictating to John the apostle a letter to the church at Thyatira in Revelation 2:**26***And to the one who overcomes and continues in My work until the end, I will give authority over the nations. **27**He will rule them with an iron scepter and shatter them like pottery —just as I have received authority from My Father. **28**And I will give him the morning star.* What is included in reigning with Him? What is not included?
5. Now see what Jesus told the Laodicean church in Revelation 3:**21***To the one who overcomes, I will grant the right to sit with Me on My throne, just as I overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.* What is included in reigning with Him? What is not included?
6. Does “reigning with him” sound like we made it in by the skin of our teeth? Explain.
7. Pastor says, “It’s better than job promotion. It’s better than a beach house. It’s better than the blue checkmark on X, because that means your famous.” Explain.

Pastor says, “If all it takes is that I endure a little hardship, sign me up.”

1. How do you feel about this? What did “a little hardship” mean for Paul?
2. List what needs to be endured to overcome?
3. At what point is quitting an option?
4. Look again at 2 Tim 2:**13***if we lose faith, He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself.* Does giving up happen sometimes? Does He ever give up on you?

Take a minute and look at Micah 7:**7***But as for me, I will look to the LORD; I will wait for the God of my salvation. My God will hear me. **8**Do not gloat over me, my enemy! Though*

I have fallen, I will arise; though I sit in darkness, the LORD will be my light. 9Because I have sinned against Him, I must endure the rage of the LORD, until He argues my case and executes justice for me. He will bring me into the light; I will see His righteousness.

1. What do you see?
2. Does it ever happen that we fail?
3. What can we do after we fail? (v.8) Is giving up an option?
4. Look at verse 9. What happens if we wait, endure...and do not lose hope?
5. What is the reward?
6. Why does this race require endurance? Is there someone who gloats over you when you fail?
7. How does Micah face discouragement, after his failure? What does he remember?
8. Look at 1 John 2: 1My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you will not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate before the Father—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. 2He Himself is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world. Who is our advocate with the Father? When does He take up our cause?
9. Finish this sentence: There is absolutely NO ROOM for sin in a believer's life, and when we sin ____.
10. What do we NOT do? What do we do?
11. What does an advocate do? What is his job?

Looking at the end of verse 12, *"if we deny Him He will also deny us."*

1. Look up Matthew 10: 31So do not be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows. 32Therefore everyone who confesses Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father in heaven. 33But whoever denies Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father in heaven. How does this relate to what Paul told Timothy?
2. Have you ever denied Him or been ashamed? What happened?
3. Have you ever wavered in your faith? Has He ever?
4. Has He ever wavered in His faith toward you? How do you know? (Take a minute and acknowledge that, and give thanks!)
5. Pastor says, "There are those who will not listen. They are not rejecting you. They're rejecting the lifeline of a Savior?" What do you do when that happens?
6. What would Jesus do? How faithful is He to forgive?
7. Psalm 150 says, "Let everything that has breath praise the Lord." What kind of a prayer is that? When do you give up praying that prayer? Who is not included?

Pastor says, "We need to do everything that we can to represent Jesus well. Here are three steps."

- ✠ **Speak up.** "I'm not suggesting that you be weird, but don't be silent. People around you need to hear the gospel. Start a conversation. Share your story. Drop a truth bomb every now and then, in love.
- ✠ **Die daily.** What distraction do you need to cut out? What is the Holy Spirit saying to you? One needs to die to live more fully.
- ✠ **Keep going.** As Dory showed us in week one. Keep swimming. Keep going. Life's a marathon not a microwave. Stay faithful. Surround yourself with believers to push you toward the goal. Find a lifegroup. Show up. Keep praying. Keep your eyes on the prize.

1. What are your thoughts?
2. List some steps.
3. Do you remember Mark's tale of the Vespa? What were your thoughts?
4. Have you ever been led by the Holy Spirit in circumstances like this? Do you have a story?
5. Pastor prophesied, "I believe that God is going to present opportunities for you to offer life where death hangs in the balance. I believe that you can do this." What is your response?

Mark continued, "The apostle Paul had no problem being in prison, because he knew that the power of the gospel would go out from there and rescue people from eternal damnation."

1. Explain.
 2. Who got rescued **because** Paul was in prison writing letters? Can you name a name? What did Paul's imprisonment do for you?
 3. Why is this, as Mark says, not merely "rescuing your friend from..." something? What is also happening?
 4. List again together the benefits for over coming. Write them down.
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Follow up application:

1. Use the [Soap study below](#) to pursue your own understanding.
2. Speak up. Imagine what that means, and pursue the skill.
3. Die daily. List the distractions that need to pass away. Write down what the Holy Spirit is saying.
4. Keep going. List what is discouraging you and holding you back. Face it. Confess it and write down what it will take to overcome discouragement.

Take the time to pray.

For further study:

Take a moment each day this week to apply the **SOAP method** (Scripture—Copy the scripture. / Observation—Write what you see. / Application—Write what God is saying. / Prayer—Write what your response is.) to some of the scripture we looked at this week:

Monday: 2 Timothy 2: 8-10
Tuesday: 2 Timothy 2:11-13
Wednesday: Revelation 2:26-28
Thursday: Revelation 3:21-22
Friday: 1 Corinthians 2:1-5
Saturday: Romans 8:28-30
Sunday: 2 Chronicles 16:7-9

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.