

Life Group Notes 6/22/2025 Pastor Bill Pelletier

Discipleship: a call to mission Part 1 “Come and Follow—the call to relationship”

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 Bill has raised this week, 6/22. 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 apostleship, and when a disciple became an apostle.](#)
2. [On Peter and Andrew’s first meeting with Jesus.](#)

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 Bill begins today his series on discipleship, a call to missions.

1. Have you ever been “on a mission?” Where?
2. Do you have a testimony?
3. What was in your decision to go? How did you arrive at that decision?
4. Describe the total cost?
5. Describe the profit.

Bill says, “Discipleship is a hidden, behind-the-scenes thing we do to accomplish what God has established a church to accomplish.” He says, “God has a plan to transform the world, and discipleship is what happens under the surface to do that.”

1. Define discipleship.
2. Describe how you were discipled.
3. List the tools you use or that were used on you from most effective to least effective.

Bill presents a history: God sent Jesus into the world. He made twelve disciples. He sent them out. And then those, now apostles, disciplined an early church with the Holy Spirit. Then the church continues with the Spirit and the Word, to disciple one another to make disciples. That is the plan. That is God's plan for turning the world upside down (or right side up, depending on your perspective): to find a people who will follow Jesus and obey His commands.

1. What are your thoughts?
2. Bill spoke of discipling in terms of husbanding his own grape vines from their first planting to the full grown vines. Do you remember?
3. What work goes into husbandry? What is the ultimate goal?

Look up John 15: **1** *"I am the true vine, and My Father is the keeper of the vineyard. 2He cuts off every branch in Me that bears no fruit, and every branch that does bear fruit, He prunes to make it even more fruitful. 3You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you.*

1. What do you see?
2. Who does the husbandry in your life according to these verses?
3. Who does the abiding...and remaining?
4. What does this mean?
5. What fruit does the husbandman expect?
6. Pastor Bill says, "When you plant a vine it takes about three years before that vine begins to bear fruit." What is the commitment to his fruit that Bill is describing?
7. How is this true for discipleship?

Pastor Bill previews his four points:

- ✝ "Discipleship begins with a **relationship** with Jesus."
- ✝ "That relationship with Jesus brings us into **proximity** with Him on a daily basis as friends of God."
- ✝ "And that daily proximity brings **transformation**."
- ✝ "Transformation **equips us for** the mission."

Relationship: Look up Matthew 4: **18** *As Jesus was walking beside the Sea of Galilee, He saw two brothers, Simon called Peter and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. 19"Come, follow Me," Jesus said, "and I will make you fishers of men." 20And at once they left their nets and followed Him.* Pastor Bill says, "I don't know if you've noticed this, but when God chooses people to do extraordinary things, He usually chooses ordinary people. Jesus, walking on the shore, sees ordinary people doing ordinary things. He focuses on them, thinking, 'These are the people I want.'

1. What do you see?
2. Have you ever smelled fishing nets after a day in use? How ordinary were you when He called you?
3. Think of this...what does it take to drop your means of livelihood to change course in your life? Do you have a story? Have you ever "dropped your nets?"
4. How did Jesus know Simon and Andrew? Where did they first meet? (See [footnote 2 below](#).)
5. "He called them into a relationship, because discipleship begins with a relationship." Explain.

6. When the Son of God calls you and says, "Follow me!" what does that mean exactly?
7. When you first answered His call, what changes did you expect?
8. Pastor Bill says, "He doesn't just want to change you. He wants to transform you." How have things changed?
9. Think of what Peter and Andrew heard in the offer, "I will make you fishers of men." Describe what that involves. How did Peter become a fisher of men?

Continue reading in John 15: 4 *Remain in Me, and I will remain in you. Just as no branch can bear fruit by itself unless it remains in the vine, neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in Me. 5* *I am the vine, and you are the branches. The one who remains in Me, and I in him, will bear much fruit. For apart from Me you can do nothing. 6* *If anyone does not remain in Me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers. Such branches are gathered up, thrown into the fire, and burned. 7* *If you remain in Me and My words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. 8* *This is to My Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, proving yourselves to be My disciples.*

1. How does this describe the relationship between Jesus and His disciples? How important is the relationship of branch to vine?
2. Will a branch ALWAYS bear fruit?
3. Can you tell when a branch will NOT bear fruit? How?
4. What happens to that dead branch?
5. Look at verse four in terms of discipleship. What is the disciple committing to?
6. What is the vine's commitment to the branch?
7. How do you remain in Jesus? How does He remain in you?

Relationship enhances a sense of proximity: Pastor Bill traces Peter's steps from the day he met Jesus on the banks of the Jordan to the day of Pentecost where, in one sermon, Peter leads thousands to Christ, and asks, "How does that happen?" Answer him.

1. How long did Peter walk with Jesus?
2. What events in Peter's life can you list from those days of Jesus' presence?
3. How does proximity teach? What do you learn from close up?
4. Pastor Bill says, "When you come into a relationship with Jesus you receive the Holy Spirit." What does that do? What does it change?
5. How is proximity enhanced?

Bill says, "When you respond, that God Who was distant, Whom you might meet when you die, is suddenly right here. God dwells in you. And that God in you gives you everything you need to please God." Look at Colossians 1: 26 *the mystery that was hidden for ages and generations but is now revealed to His saints. 27* To them God has chosen to make known among the Gentiles the glorious riches of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. 28 *We proclaim Him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ.*

1. Is it still a mystery to you?
2. What does "Christ in you" actually mean?
3. Look at how Peter explains this mystery in 2 Peter 1: 3 *His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through the knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. What do you see?*

4. How is "Christ in you" the same as His divine power?
5. What do we need for life and godliness?
6. How is what we need for that life acquired?
7. How do we obtain the knowledge of "Him who called us by His glory and grace?"
8. How do you establish proximity and relationship and gain knowledge?
9. Pastor Bill asks, "How does Jesus disciple? Does He have classes? DVD's you can order online?" Answer him.
10. Look [at footnote 1 below](#) to see the progression from disciple to apostle, from Mark 3: **13** *Then Jesus went up on the mountain and called for those He wanted, and they came to Him. 14* *He appointed twelve of them, whom He designated as apostles, to accompany Him, to be sent out to preach, 15* *and to have authority to drive out demons.* Trace the progress from disciple to apostle/getting sent out on your own. How long did it take for them to go from observer/apprentice to minister?

Bill says, "Jesus' presence brings power," then he lists ways for us to buttress our sense of proximity to Him, through prayer, and worship, bible reading, fellowship, discipling groups, discipling one another...and serving."

1. Do you have a testimony?
2. Can you describe a time where you sensed His presence unexpectedly, and overwhelmingly?

Proximity brings transformation. Bill says, "Not a better you, but a new you. There's a change in our thinking." Paul says it like this in Romans 12: **1** *Therefore I urge you, brothers, on account of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. 2* *Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what is the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God.*

1. List what changes. Describe the transformation.
2. How do you renew your mind?
3. How do you learn what is pleasing to God?
4. Look how Jesus describes the change, John 15: **14** *You are My friends if you do what I command you. 15* *No longer do I call you servants, for a servant does not understand what his master is doing. But I have called you friends, because everything I have learned from My Father I have made known to you. 16* *You did not choose Me, but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit—fruit that will remain—so that whatever you ask the Father in My name, He will give you. 17* *This is My command to you: Love one another.* What changes in our actions and in our reactions?
5. In our relationship with Him? With each other?
6. What is our duty?
7. What is the anticipated fruit?

"God doesn't call the equipped. He equips the called," says Pastor Bill.

1. What does that mean?
2. Look up Philippians 2: **12** *Therefore, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not only in my presence, but now even more in my absence, continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling. 13* *For it is God who works in you to will and to act on behalf of His good purpose.* How does God transform us according to Paul, here?

3. What changes?
4. What is our task?
5. How does He equip us for that task?
6. How have your desires changed since you were called?
7. How has He equipped you?
8. What type of “equipment” comes from a relationship through proximity that transforms us?
9. Look at 2 Corinthians 1:5*For just as the sufferings of Christ overflow to us, so also through Christ our comfort overflows. 6 If we are afflicted, it is for your comfort and salvation; if we are comforted, it is for your comfort, which accomplishes in you patient endurance of the same sufferings we experience. 7And our hope for you is sure, because we know that just as you share in our sufferings, so also you will share in our comfort.* Do you understand how we are equipped to endure?
10. Pastor Bill points to the story in Acts 3 and 4, where Peter and John healed the lame man, and then are taken by the same leaders who crucified Christ into council to try them. Describe the source of their courage. Who was their inspiration? Explain.
11. Look at Acts 4:13*When they saw the boldness of Peter and John and realized that they were unschooled, ordinary men, they marveled and took note that these men had been with Jesus. 14And seeing the man who had been healed standing there with them, they had nothing to say in response. 15So they ordered them to leave the Sanhedrin and then conferred together.* Explain how their courage also inspires.
12. Look at how Paul disciplined the Corinthians 11:1*You are to imitate me, just as I imitate Christ.* Can you say this to your disciples? Your children? Your friends?
13. Look at Philippians 1:9*And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, 10so that you may be able to test and prove what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, 11filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.* What does an answer to this prayer look like?
14. Pray this daily, for you and any group you are working with. What changes?
15. Describe the relationship Paul had with the Philippians.
16. Do you have relationships like this? Bill asks, “Are you in a relationship with Jesus?” Answer him.
17. Are you following? Are you a disciple?
18. Bill says, “The gospel is not the end. It’s the beginning. It’s not just to be saved. It’s to be saved, then transformed...so you can be sent.” Respond. What do you see?
19. He asks, “Are you discipling anyone? Are you surrendering yourself to be disciplined?” Answer him.

Follow up application:

1. Use the [Soap study below](#) to pursue your own understanding.
2. Make a list of everything that pertains to life and godliness that His divine power has given us according to 2 Peter. What do you expect from this promise?

3. Pray specifically that you be transformed in this way.
4. As you read through Paul's epistles, note the ways Paul expresses love to each church to which he writes. Note especially his love for the Corinthians, the Philipians and the Thessalonians. Note what you learn.

Take the time to pray.

Scribe's Footnotes:

1. **On apostleship, and when a disciple became an apostle**—As Pastor Bill pointed out, Jesus chose twelve disciples. We have seen how they met, and how they learned from him, as they observed the miracles that flowed from his ministry. They were not as yet “apostles.” This designation is not a matter of office, but a matter of delegation or assignment. The word “apostle” comes from the Greek verb ἀποστέλλω (*apostello*—to send out/send forth, properly, on a mission.) A disciple becomes an apostle once he's been commissioned with a mission and a purpose. It happened in Mark 3 with the twelve like this: **13***Then Jesus went up on the mountain and called for those He wanted, and they came to Him. 14He appointed twelve of them, whom He designated as apostles (ἀποστόλους, apostolous, sent out ones/envoys/missionaries), to accompany Him, to be sent out (apostello) to preach, 15and to have authority to drive out demons.* At one point in Luke, Jesus “apostled” seventy. Paul became the Apostle Paul with Silas, when the Holy Spirit chose and designated them to be sent from Antioch on a mission. Apostleship is not a singular description of heroes of the faith from foregone times, never to return. Apostleship happens when the church, by the guidance of the Holy Spirit, chooses, sets apart and delegates and sends missionaries to go and make disciples. It's not a “magic” office. It's a delegation of tremendous weight and responsibility. Paul was sent with the full authority of the Holy Spirit by the church of Antioch.
2. **On Peter and Andrew's first meeting with Jesus**—Often, by reading the synoptic gospels, one can be misled to believe that the first disciples dropped their nets to follow a perfect stranger, and that was an act of faith that we have been called on to emulate. Pastor Bill pointed out that this was indeed NOT their first encounter with the Savior. They had all been disciples of John the Baptist and were with him at the Jordan when Jesus came to be baptized. This encounter was recorded by John, who was there, in the first chapter of his gospel. John 1: **35***The next day John was there again with two of his disciples. 36When he saw Jesus walking by, he said, “Look, the Lamb of God!” 37And when the two disciples heard him say this, they followed Jesus. 38Jesus turned and saw them following. “What do you want?” He asked. They said to Him, “Rabbi” (which means Teacher), “where are You staying?” 39“Come and see,” He replied. So they went and saw where He was staying, and spent that day with Him. It was about the tenth hour. 40Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, was one of the two who heard John's testimony and followed Jesus. 41He first found his brother Simon and told him, “We have found the Messiah” (which is translated as Christ). 42Andrew brought him to Jesus, who looked at him and said, “You are Simon son of John. You will be called Cephas” (which is translated as Peter). 43The next day Jesus decided to set out for Galilee. Finding Philip, He told him, “Follow Me.” 44Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the same town as Andrew and Peter. 45Philip found Nathanael and told him, “We have found the One Moses wrote about in the Law, the One the prophets foretold—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.” 46“Can anything good come from Nazareth?” Nathanael asked. “Come and see,” said Philip.* There are several observations that can be made here: First, it was John the

Baptist, whom the crew of Galileans trusted when the story begins, who pointed out Who Jesus was. Second, Jesus seemed to know them right away. Third, Andrew and Simon, whose mother-in-law lived in Capernaum, a town on an important north/south trade route from where it seems he would fish, was from Bethsaida, on the eastern shore of the Sea of Galilee. And finally...the folks from the fishing villages, like Nathanael, had an attitude toward the “city folk” of Nazareth...which lies miles west, away from the Sea. Notice, too, they all seemed to know who Joseph the carpenter was, and this is not the only time Jesus’ father is mentioned to help identify who this “Jesus character” was. All of this background lends poignant detail to the day Jesus invited them to join him. The choice was not difficult.

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: John 15:1-4
Tuesday: John 15:5-8
Wednesday: John 15:14-17
Thursday: Colossians 1:25-28
Friday: 2 Peter 1:3-4
Saturday: Romans 12:1-2
Sunday: 2 Corinthians 1:5-7

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.