

Life Group Notes 7/13/2025

Pastor Mark Warren—Stand Firm: Faithfully Living in Unfaithful Times

Week 1

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, 7/13. 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 Timothy and Paul's relationship.](#)
2. [On a spirit of fear and a sound mind.](#)

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 opened with a video evoking the tragic floods in Texas. Take a moment to pray for those impacted by last week's weather disasters. Does anyone know anything current or recent? Share.

We're diving into the book of 2 Timothy, Paul's final words from a Roman prison to his spiritual son, Timothy. It's a message about courage, calling, and holding on to faith in a world that wants you to let go. In his morning missive, Pastor Mark told us we'll discover:

- ✠ How do you find your purpose?
- ✠ Do you know you have a calling?
- ✠ Do you know why suffering is a part of your Christian walk?
 1. What do you remember?
 2. What struck you?
 3. Did you take notes?

Look at 2 Timothy 1: **1** *Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, according to the promise of life in Christ Jesus,* **2** *To Timothy, my beloved child: Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.* **3** *I thank God, whom I serve with a*

clear conscience as did my forefathers, as I constantly remember you night and day in my prayers. 4Recalling your tears, I long to see you so that I may be filled with joy. 5I am reminded of your sincere faith, which first dwelt in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am convinced is in you as well.

1. What do you see?
2. What would it be like to be able to say, "I serve God with a clear conscience?"
3. What are the steps to having a clear conscience?
4. What does it take to constantly remember someone...day and night with prayers? Do you have a testimony?
5. Look at [footnote 1 below](#), and describe the backstory to Paul's and Timothy's relationship. How does Paul know Lois and Eunice?
6. What makes these women famous?
7. How far back do Paul and Timothy go, and what adventures did they share?
8. Describe the steps in Timothy's discipleship. Where did his lessons in discipleship begin?
9. How did he learn to obey everything that Christ taught? From lessons from a workbook or from observing examples and hearing?
10. Where did the tears come from in v. 4? Write the story. What conversations might have brought tears?
11. Mark says, "Our 'teaching' is more caught than taught." How did that work with Timothy?
12. Where was Timothy the night Paul and Silas were locked in a Philippian jail cell, singing?
13. What do you think he learned that night, and the next day, after the earthquake?
14. How many of Timothy's life's lessons in discipleship were planned and drawn from a workbook? He didn't run away that night. What does that say?
15. How many lessons were spontaneous ones drawn from unforeseen experiences?
16. Mark asks, "Is your family seeing you in God's Word? Is your family watching you as you say, "How do I walk in integrity? How do I walk with Jesus? How do I forgive?" Answer him. How are you doing?
17. Does your family see your effort? ...an active faith?

Continuing in 2 Timothy 1: [6For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands.](#)

1. What do you see?
2. What does it mean to fan your calling into flame? What happens when you do?
3. According to this, how did Timothy receive that calling? From whom? By what means?

Now, look at what Paul reminded Timothy of in his first letter, 1 Timothy 1: [18Timothy, my child, I entrust you with this command in keeping with the previous prophecies about you, so that by them you may fight the good fight, 19](#)holding on to faith and a good conscience, which some have rejected and thereby shipwrecked their faith.

1. Explain again: How did Timothy receive that calling?
2. Do you have a testimony? Have you ever been prophesied over? Had hands laid on you?

3. Who do you think might have prophesied over Timothy? Write the scenario.
4. Can you explain the principle of prophesying with the laying on of hands? How does it work? Why is it vital to remember and stir to flame?
5. How did it work with Timothy? Can one forget the importance of the moment?
6. Explain why Paul might bring back to mind Timothy's calling in his second epistle as well? Is it easy to forget you've been called?
7. How does one do war using prophecy previously spoken? How does one win that war?
8. Where does faith come from? What happens when you hear prophecy?

Mark says, "God has placed something inside each and every one of you, but guess what: it's like a seed. It's like an ember. It's like that little baby burning coal."

1. Explain. How is the word like a seed?
2. What do seeds do?
3. Have you ever started a fire by placing new wood on embers?
4. Did it work? Explain.

Look up Isaiah 42:3 *"A bruised reed He will not break and a smoldering wick He will not extinguish; He will faithfully bring forth justice. 4He will not grow weak or discouraged before He has established justice on the earth. In His law the islands will put their hope."*

1. What chances does the seed have of survival, given this promise?
2. What does the harvest look like? How far will the harvest extend?
3. What hope for warmth from embers do these verses offer?
4. Do you see any reason to lose hope?
5. Do you understand the need for "fanning to flame?" Explain.
6. Pastor says, "A calling must be developed." Explain. Why does the log need to be fanned into flame?
7. He listed steps after God placed an ember in you: "You need to practice, prepare, pray, stretch, serve, and yes...sometimes fail." Have you seen these steps?

He continues, "You have to realize that God has put something of faith inside of you that you need to develop, and it's attached to your calling and your purpose."

1. James 1 puts it in these terms: "*2Consider it pure joy, my brothers, when you encounter trials of many kinds, 3because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance. 4Allow perseverance to finish its work, so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.*" What is the process James describes? This is the verse to which Pastor Mark referred. What do trials produce?
2. Is that a reason to "count" the trials as "all joy?"
3. Remember, 2 Peter 1 puts this development in these terms: "*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; and to brotherly kindness,*

love. **8***For 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.* What steps in developing your call does Peter enumerate?

4. What is the first step? What do you add once you believe/have faith?
5. Try to explain this: Why do you add virtue to your faith before adding knowledge?
6. How do you arrive at knowledge just by *practicing* virtue?

Now Pastor looks at what comes with the calling, back to 2 Timothy 1:7*For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power, love, and self-control.*

1. What do you see? (See [footnote 2 below](#).)
2. Where does power come from, if it's not our own?
3. How is this power "grace?" Is it of ourselves or is it a gift?
4. What does a spirit of love bring with it?
5. Look at the definition of "self-control/sound mind" in the [footnote 2 below](#). How does it differ from the "fruit" listed as a fruit of the Spirit in Galatians?
6. Pastor Mark talked about the cleansing quality of a flame. Do you remember? What does the flame do to what is in our lives?

Mark continues reading from Paul's letter, "**8***So do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, or of me, His prisoner. Instead, join me in suffering for the gospel by the power of God.*"

1. What do you see?
2. Why would one be ashamed of Paul's testimony, or the testimony of Jesus?
3. Read Revelation 19: "**9***Then the angel told me to write, 'Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.' And he said to me, 'These are the true words of God.'* **10***So I fell at his feet to worship him. But he told me, 'Do not do that! I am a fellow servant with you and your brothers who rely on the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.'*" What does the testimony of Jesus bring with it?
4. If we do not carry with us the testimony of Jesus, who will instead?
5. Where does the suffering come from? Why? Do you have a testimony?
6. Do you know anyone recently who has been imprisoned, or even lost their livelihood, for their faith? Can you share what you know?
7. Does darkness welcome the light? Look up John 3: "**19***And this is the verdict: The Light has come into the world, but men loved the darkness rather than the Light because their deeds were evil.* **20***Everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come into the Light for fear that his deeds will be exposed.* Now explain where suffering comes from. **21***But whoever practices the truth comes into the Light, so that it may be seen clearly that what he has done has been accomplished in God.*" What do you see?
8. How do you feel when light shines on your works? What do others see?
9. Does your light shine when you are with others? Do you have a testimony?

10. How does the world receive the light today?
11. Do light and darkness mingle well together? Explain.
12. Look at 1 Thessalonians 5:4 *But you, brothers, are not in the darkness so that this day should overtake you like a thief. 5 For you are all sons of the light and sons of the day; we do not belong to the night or to the darkness.* How does this fit?
13. Have you faced resistance to the message in your daily conversations? How do you handle that?
14. Describe your life's change before and after encountering Jesus. Is it dramatic? How is that powerful as a testimony?
15. Look at what Paul told the Colossians in chapter 4: *5 Act wisely toward outsiders, redeeming the time. 6 Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.* Does this help? Is this practical?
16. What does it mean? How does your speech toward outsiders rate in this light?
17. Paul puts it this way to the Ephesians in chapter 5: *15 Pay careful attention, then, to how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, 16 redeeming the time, because the days are evil. 17 Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is.* Why is this principle so consistently important in Paul's writings?
18. If the days are evil, and our behavior is inconsistent with the gospel, what happens? What happens on social media in real time?

Go on to 2 Tim 1 verse *9 He has saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works, but by His own purpose and by the grace He granted us in Christ Jesus before time began. 10 And now He has revealed this grace through the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has abolished death and illuminated the way to life and immortality through the gospel, 11 to which I was appointed as a preacher, an apostle, and a teacher.*

1. Notice, Paul is a "preacher" (a herald who announces what is impending and approaching), and an "apostle" (an emissary, who has been sent), and a "teacher" (who lays down both background and principles). How does this describe your own calling?
2. Why does Paul say, "He has called **us**?" About whom is he talking? Who is **us**?
3. Were you called because of your good deeds? Explain.
4. How long ago did this call take place? (v. 9)
5. What are the odds of your call changing, if it was determined that long ago?
6. If the call was that long ago, how patient is God to see what He determined come to pass?
7. How did Mark say we find our calling and purpose? Why is the first step to submit our life to Jesus? Review again 2 Peter 1 above, and explain how *faith* is the necessary first step.
8. Notice in the next verses, how Peter describes the importance of applying these steps, "*10 Therefore, brothers, strive to make your calling and election sure. For if*

you practice these things you will never stumble. **11**and you will receive a lavish reception into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.” What would help you put Peter’s steps into practice?

9. Look again at that verse: Who needs to have *your* calling and election made sure for them? Does God have any doubts? But do you have doubts?
10. How does your determined practice contribute to your own assurance, thereby making your call and your election a more sure thing?
11. So, let’s go: How do you “practice” virtue?
12. Explain how “looking to Jesus, the *author* and *finisher* of our faith,” (Hebrews 12) is the only way to find our purpose?
13. How will a person putting virtue, etc. into practice bring hope to a world in darkness? What will the world see? Who will you begin to resemble?
14. Why does Paul call this a “holy calling?” (v. 9)
15. Mark says, “He has given us purpose. He has given us the grace to walk in it.” Explain.
16. How does that grace become the supernatural ability to handle all resistance?

Mark summarizes:

- ✚ Our purpose is found in Christ.
 - ✚ Our identity is rooted in grace.
 - ✚ You are not defined by what you do, but by whose you are. You belong to Jesus.
1. Explain. How is our purpose found in Christ. How does He make our own purpose known?
 2. Mark says, “The people who are struggling through life are the people who have lost their purpose.” Explain. What happens when you find your purpose?
 3. Do you have a testimony?
 4. How well do you handle challenges?
 5. Mark said, “If you’re at that place where you do not feel steady in your life, maybe you put Jesus as ‘one of the things you do,’ but Jesus *is* the thing you should be doing as you go to work, as you raise a family, even as you go into retirement and you golf all day long.” Can you explain this? How does one put Jesus in the middle of these activities?
 6. What reminders do you need, to bring back what you received on the day you first believed?

Follow up application:

1. Use the [Soap study below](#) to pursue your own understanding.
2. Look at 2 Peter 1:5-8 from above, and make a plan. How will you add virtue to your faith? What will others see?
3. Fan into flame the joy you had on the day you first believed. Write down the steps. Write down how that joy impacts those you meet this week.

Take the time to pray.**Scribe's Footnotes:**

1. **On Timothy's and Paul's relationship**—The Bible is rife with examples that support the exhortations of Jesus and the apostles. We are called to love one another. In fact, relationships are key to the prosperity and effectiveness of the Church. To understand how this works, there are examples of great, loving relationships throughout the Old and the New Testaments. The love between Jonathan and David is typical. The love between the master/father, Paul and the disciple/son Timothy is another from which much can be learned. Paul is Timothy's elder. We know this, because when in Acts 14, Paul first traveled to Timothy's hometown Lystra, in southern Galatia, after healing a crippled man, and he was stoned and left for dead, he came to the city. Timothy is not mentioned, but the relationships Paul made after these events are evident by his intimate words to the Galatians in his epistle to them. He writes in chapter four, "[13](#)*You know that it was because of a [weakness/frailty/injury] that I first preached the gospel to you. [14](#)And although my weakness was a trial to you, you did not despise or reject me. Instead, you welcomed me as if I were an angel of God, as if I were Christ Jesus Himself. [15](#)What then has become of your blessing? For I can testify that, if it were possible, you would have torn out your eyes and given them to me.*" Paul preached in Lystra the day after he was stoned and left for dead, illustrating the grace in suffering of which Pastor spoke today. This would likely be where Paul met Lois and Eunice, Timothy's grandmother and his mother. Eunice had married a Greek man whose name we never know, but that necessitated Timothy's circumcision, "for the sake of the Jews," on Paul's second trip through, years later, in fact two chapters later in Acts 16. Timothy, the young "disciple" from Lystra, joined Paul and Silas, and remained with them as their mission expanded to Europe. Timothy was with them in Philippi, although there is no evidence that he spent the night in jail with them. Timothy was very useful in Corinth, and he is so frequently mentioned in the New Testament, his own travels would make an interesting study. Hebrews 13 states that he was released, suggesting three points: Timothy was likely imprisoned, Timothy was well known, and he could solve the mystery as to the author of Hebrews. The church recognizes Timothy as one of the historic bishops/overseers of the church in Ephesus, ranking him with Paul and the apostle John in the history of Ephesus. This also suggested that Paul, remembering what he had prophesied over the elders in Ephesus in Acts 20, and the dangers wolves in their very midst presented, had sent Timothy to mitigate the fallout that was to come on them. Jesus' letter to the Ephesian church in Revelation 3 came decades after Timothy's efforts, adding more detail to a decent study. When you read Paul's letters to Timothy with this history in mind, the degree of shared and vital intimacy that transcended decades is easier to appreciate. This is a very personal letter between two dear friends, a spiritual father and his spiritual son.
2. **On a spirit of fear and a sound mind**—The noun δειλία (*deilía*) appears here, and only this one time in the New Testament in Paul's final letter to his protégé: "For God has not given us a spirit of fear (*deilía*), but of power, love, and self-control" ([2 Timothy 1:7](#)). "The word denotes cowardice or craven fear, a shrinking

back that is incompatible with faith.” It sometimes gets translated “fear” or “timidity,” but there is no positive take on the word. There are other Greek words for fear that can have positive aspects: one means caution, another means fear as in the fear of the Lord, *phobos*. That fear marks the beginning of wisdom. But here, cowardice or reticence is suggested, the unwillingness to set the gospel forth due to intimidation. Paul speaks of a sound mind/self-control using the word σωφρονισμός (*sophronismos*) “properly, safe-minded, issuing in prudent (“sensible”) behavior that “fits” a situation, i.e. aptly acting out *God’s will* by doing what *He* calls sound reasoning. Strong’s Greek 4995 speaks of that sound-minded, disciplined inner posture that resists panic, aligns thought with truth, and orders behavior toward holiness. Rather than a mere human temperament, Scripture presents it as a grace imparted by God’s Spirit, enabling believers to live courageously and responsibly in the face of opposition. Scripture distinguishes between sinful fear and the reverential fear of the LORD. Whereas δειλία is condemned, reverence is commended ([Proverbs 1:7](#); [Psalm 111:10](#)). Cowardice distrusts God’s character and power; reverence embraces them. Paul’s triad—power, love, self-control—identifies the Spirit’s antidote to cowardice:

- Power supplies courage ([Acts 1:8](#)).
 - Love casts out fear ([1 John 4:18](#)).
 - Self-control steadies the believer when threatened ([Galatians 5:23](#)).
- (<https://biblehub.com/greek/1167.htm>) This is not to be confused with the fruit of the spirit called “Self-control,” from the Greek word ἐγκράτεια (*engkrateia*) “denoting the Spirit-enabled mastery of desires, impulses, and habits so that they serve rather than rule the believer. It is not mere human asceticism but a grace-driven capacity to bring every faculty under the lordship of Jesus Christ for holy living and effective service.” It is this self-control that is the fruit of the spirit, and which is added after knowledge in Peter’s list of qualities to work on.

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 1:3-5
Tuesday: 2 Timothy 1:6-7
Wednesday: 1 Timothy 1:18-19
Thursday: Isaiah 42:1-4
Friday: Revelation 19:9-10
Saturday: John 3:19-21
Sunday: Colossians 4:5-6

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.