

Life Group Notes 3/1/2026 Pastor Bill Pelletier

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.

Leaders: *please pre-read these notes and choose the direction that is appropriate for your group. Scan the detailed questions that follow the AI-generated study questions, to see if you want to add any more detailed questions.*

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, 3/1 as Pastor Mark returns from Rwanda. 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***

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.

This format begins with a summary of the notes, followed by study questions. This week, notes in full detail can be found beginning on page 3:

Section I: Summary

Here's "co-pilot's" AI summary of the Sermon Lifegroup Notes, being a concise summary of Pastor Bill Pelletier's message:

Pastor Bill emphasized that life groups are central to the identity and mission of the church, not an optional program but the primary context where discipleship truly happens. He explained that from the very beginning, the church was formed around believers who were deeply devoted to one another, sharing life, faith, and responsibility for spiritual growth. This devotion created a community marked by unity, generosity, spiritual power, and visible transformation that drew others toward God.

He described discipleship as a whole-person process involving the head, heart, and hands. Following Jesus begins with understanding truth, continues with inner transformation, and results in obedient action. Life groups are the environment where this process is nurtured, where believers move from merely attending church to genuinely

belonging to one another. Through shared teaching, prayer, service, and accountability, people are shaped into followers of Jesus who live out their faith daily.

Pastor Bill stressed that discipleship cannot happen in isolation. He illustrated how spiritual life fades when people separate themselves from Christian community, not through rebellion but through neglect. Just as coals cool when removed from a fire or branches wither when cut off from a vine, believers grow vulnerable when disconnected from others. Life groups protect against this spiritual drift by fostering mutual care, encouragement, and perseverance.

He also highlighted that discipleship is not neutral territory. Everyone is being shaped by something, and without intentional submission to God and Christian community, people are gradually enticed away from Him. True discipleship requires humility, repentance, and a willingness to be known and corrected within relationships.

Drawing from the broader message of the gospel, Pastor Bill reminded listeners that obedience flows from gratitude, not obligation. Because of God's mercy, forgiveness, and the new identity given through Jesus, believers are called to offer their lives fully to God. Life groups are where this response takes practical form, producing sincere love, devotion to one another, spiritual passion, and faithful service.

Finally, he challenged the church to embrace multiplication. When life groups grow healthy and full, the question becomes who will go and start new groups. This call mirrors God's ongoing invitation to send willing people into new places of service, even when it is costly. Pastor Bill concluded by urging the church to respond with openness and courage, trusting that God works powerfully through believers who say yes to being sent.

Section II: Study questions

Below is a **facilitator-ready set of discussion questions** designed to guide a **60-minute small group conversation** around Pastor Bill Pelletier's message. The questions are ordered to move the group from **understanding** → **reflection** → **personal application** → **communal response**, and they intentionally echo the **highlighted themes** of the message (life groups, discipleship, community, drift, obedience from gratitude, and multiplication).

You do **not** need to use every question. Choose based on your group's size, maturity, and pace.

Opening (5–10 minutes): Setting the Tone

Purpose: Create safety, shared focus, and engagement

1. What stood out to you most from Pastor Bill's message this week?
 2. Was there a phrase, image, or idea that stayed with you after the sermon? Why do you think it resonated?
 3. On a scale of 1–10, how connected do you currently feel to Christian community? What makes you choose that number?
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Understanding the Core Message (10–15 minutes)**Purpose: Ensure shared understanding before application**

1. Pastor Bill emphasized that life groups are not optional but central to the church. In your own words, why do you think he stressed this so strongly?
 2. How would you summarize what Pastor Bill means by “discipleship”?
 3. He described discipleship as involving the **head, heart, and hands**.
 - What does each of those represent?
 - Which one do you tend to focus on most? Which one least?
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Community vs. Isolation (10–15 minutes)**Purpose: Explore spiritual drift and the role of relationships**

1. Pastor Bill said that spiritual decline often happens through **neglect rather than rebellion**. How have you seen that play out—either personally or in others?
 2. He used pictures of drifting, cooling, and withering to describe life apart from community.
 - Which image do you relate to most, and why?
 3. Why do you think isolation makes believers more vulnerable, even when they still believe the “right things”?
 4. What makes it hard for people to truly belong rather than just attend?
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Obedience, Gratitude, and Transformation (10–15 minutes)**Purpose: Move from theology to personal reflection**

1. Pastor Bill emphasized that obedience flows from **gratitude, not obligation**.
 - How does that change the way you think about following Jesus?
 2. How does understanding what God has done for us motivate real-life change?
 3. What does offering your life fully to God look like in everyday terms—not just spiritually, but practically?
 4. How does being known by others help produce sincere love, humility, and spiritual growth?
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Mission and Multiplication (10 minutes)**Purpose: Challenge the group toward outward movement**

1. Pastor Bill challenged the church to think about multiplication rather than comfort. What emotions does that idea stir in you?
 2. Why do you think growth and multiplication often feel costly or uncomfortable?
 3. What might it look like for ordinary believers—not pastors—to be “sent”?
 4. How does a healthy life group naturally become outward-focused?
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Personal Application and Response (5–10 minutes)**Purpose: Move from discussion to action**

1. What is one area where you sense God inviting you to take a next step in discipleship?
2. How can this group help you move from attending to belonging more deeply?
3. What would it look like for us, as a group, to protect one another from spiritual drift?
4. Who might God be asking you to invest in, invite, or walk alongside?

Closing Prayer (5 minutes)

Optional prompts for prayer:

- Gratitude for what God has done
- Courage to be known and accountable
- Willingness to say yes when God sends
- Unity, sincerity, and spiritual passion within the group

Facilitator Tip

If time runs short, prioritize:

- One **community** question (7–10),
- One **obedience/gratitude** question (11–14),
- One **application** question (19–22).

Section III: Complete study notes

Pastor Bill began by describing his new role at GCC as the new Life Groups director. He said, “Life groups are a critical part of what we do here at GCC.” He said, “Life Groups/small groups are something the Church has been doing all throughout the New Testament. In fact, Life Groups are where discipleship happens.” Then he took us to the beginning of the first church, in Acts 2: *³⁷When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and asked Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?” ³⁸Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹This promise belongs to you and your children and to all who are far off—to all whom the Lord our God will call to Himself.”*

1. In your own words, describe what you see.
2. Why did the crowd ask what they should do?
3. What is Peter’s response? Is it enough?
4. Look at verse 39. What is this promise?
5. What does it include?
6. Who is included? When does it end or become obsolete?

Continue in Acts 2: *⁴¹Those who embraced his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to the believers that day. ⁴²They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. ⁴³A sense of awe came over everyone, and the apostles performed many wonders and signs.*

1. What do you see? Describe what happened in your own words.
2. Look at verse 42. What happened in a typical gathering?
3. How often did they meet? Why?

Continuing in Acts 2: *⁴⁴All the believers were together and had everything in common. ⁴⁵Selling their possessions and goods, they shared with anyone who was in need. ⁴⁶With one accord they continued to meet daily in the temple courts and to break bread from house to house, sharing their meals with gladness and sincerity of heart, ⁴⁷praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.*

1. What do you see?
2. Have you ever seen this with your experience in the church? Share your experience.

3. What is different? Why?
4. How often did they meet?
5. Where did they meet? Describe a typical meeting.
6. What happened in the temple? What changed there among the believers?
7. What do you imagine happened from house to house?
8. Who is included in this "...favor with all the people?"
9. Look at verse 47. What happens when people do things the right way? Explain.

Review Mark 16: ¹⁵*And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. ¹⁶Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned. ¹⁷And these signs will accompany those who believe: In My name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; ¹⁸they will pick up snakes with their hands, and if they drink any deadly poison, it will not harm them; they will lay their hands on the sick, and they will be made well."*

1. What do you remember of this passage?
2. How much of Acts 2 did Jesus foresee in Mark 16?
3. How much of Mark 16 did Peter quote in the first sermon in Acts 2?
4. Look at the Acts passage again. What happens when the members of the church are devoted to each other? What do others see?
5. Look closely: Are these pastor/leadership programs being described by Luke? Or is something else occurring?
6. To what degree are we different today? Why?
7. Have they seen something we have not yet seen that would compel them to behave differently?
8. Review John 13: ³⁴*"...A new commandment I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you also must love one another. ³⁵By this everyone will know that you are My disciples, if you love one another."* What does this commandment compel us to do, in your own words?
9. How is devotion to one another a tool for evangelism? Who is impacted?
10. What do you know of "Promise Keepers," the influential men's movement of decades back? What was the movement's goal?
11. How does discipleship work?
12. Bill began to define what it means: "We are called to follow Jesus." Explain.
13. What steps are included in your own discipleship?

Pastor Bill says making a disciple involves "**head, heart, hands.**":

1. Explain each.
2. Why the head? Why the heart?
3. What do the hands do?
4. Pastor Bill says, "It's receiving, transforming, working." Explain.
5. He continues, "Life group is where we are making missionaries to go on mission. We need people to be submitting themselves, to become disciples." Explain.
6. How are you becoming a missionary?
7. Review Matthew 28 again: "¹⁹Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰and teaching them to obey all that I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, even to the end of the age." What three tasks have we been assigned here?

8. If you are teaching another to “obey all” that Jesus commanded you, where would you start?
9. Pastor Bill says, “Baptism shows us that we are all teachers and we are all learners.” Explain what he means here.

Pastor Bill continued, “Satan also wants to disciple you. When I was not a part of any church, I was being disciplined. Satan wants to disciple you to not follow God.”

1. Do you have a testimony?
2. How have your priorities changed?
3. How has your judgment changed?
4. Why can you not be disciplined alone, by yourself?
5. Pastor Bill made this extraordinary statement: “In the early church, disciples disciplined the early church.” What does that mean?
6. What services were available to the first church? What services and programs were probably not available?
7. How large do you suppose the small groups were? Why?

Pastor Bill says, “Life group is where we move from attending to belonging. Then he spoke several parables to show the fallacy of thinking that we can “disciple ourselves alone.” Look at each:

- ✠ Coal pulled from a fire does not rebel. It just cools off. It fades.
 - ✠ When a sheep leaves the flock it becomes vulnerable. The lion/devourer doesn’t attack the flock. It attacks the sheep that is isolated and alone.
 - ✠ Branches cut from a vine don’t die immediately. They shrivel as their sap dries up. Then they die.
1. What do you see?
 2. Discuss each. Have you ever experienced the slow fading that comes from isolation?

Pastor Bill then takes us on a review of the book of Romans as few can do:

- ✠ The first eleven chapters teach who Jesus is, and what he has done for us.
- ✠ They show that we cannot be saved on our own. We cannot live up to the standard of the Law. There is not one righteous, no not one. We have all fallen short of the glory of God.
- ✠ We cannot meet God’s standard of righteousness. The Law was not given as a means of clawing our way upward to heaven. It’s a mirror to prove it cannot be done.
- ✠ But, now, apart from the Law, God has made a way whereby we can put on the righteousness of God. And that way is by faith in Jesus Christ.
- ✠ God says, “I’m going to take your faith in God’s promise, and your trust that He will redeem you, and I’m going to turn that into righteousness.”
- ✠ He is going to take your belief, and he’s going to treat you as if you have been walking righteous every day of your life; by Jesus work on the cross, He makes this happen.
- ✠ Then Paul says, “While you were yet sinners, Christ died for you. In the midst of your rebellion, Jesus died for your sake.”
- ✠ “Not only that,” Bill continues, “if Jesus died for you while you were yet enemies, how much more will He advocate for you, now that you are friends of God?”
- ✠ Paul goes on to say, “He has freed you from the penalty of sin and the power of sin. You are no longer facing death. That the wages of sin is death, this wage is no longer yours, but the free gift of God, even your salvation.”

- † “There is now no longer any condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. You are free from the penalty and the power of sin. You will have victory over sin through Jesus Christ.”
 - † Not only that, God says, before the foundations of the world He knew you and predestined you to be His. And when He predestined you, He called you to draw you to Him. Then He saves you, reveals Himself to you, and adopts you as His sons. If we are sons, we are also heirs. We have a destiny that cannot be lost, it cannot rust, it cannot be stolen. We have a destiny with God throughout eternity.
 - † Romans 9-11, God shows his faithfulness to keep His promise, even to the Jews.
 - † Then Pastor Bill reviews our required, rational response in Romans 12, in view of all that we have been told in the previous eleven chapters: ¹Therefore 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. ²Do 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.
 - † Pastor Bill contends that this is the fruit of Life Groups. Look at Romans 12: ⁹Love must be sincere. Detest what is evil; cling to what is good. ¹⁰Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Outdo yourselves in honoring one another. ¹¹Do not let your zeal subside; keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord.
1. What do you see?
 2. What has Romans meant to you over the years?
 3. What part stands out?
 4. Look at the last bullet note: How does Romans 12:9-11 reflect what happened after Pentecost in Jerusalem?
 5. How do you maintain what began at Pentecost? What does it take to maintain it
 6. Bill asks, “Whom can we send to make new life groups, when ours are packed?” Answer him.
 7. Look at what happened to Isaiah in chapter 6: ⁵*Then I said: “Woe is me, for I am ruined, because I am a man of unclean lips dwelling among a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the LORD of Hosts.”* ⁶*Then one of the seraphim flew to me, and in his hand was a glowing coal that he had taken with tongs from the altar.* ⁷*And with it he touched my mouth and said: “Now that this has touched your lips, your iniquity is removed and your sin is atoned for.”* ⁸*Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying: “Whom shall I send? Who will go for Us?” And I said: “Here am I. Send me!”* Describe the scene in your own words.
 8. What do unclean lips have to do with obedience?
 9. Why is Isaiah’s offer extraordinary?
 10. Why is it costly?
- Take the time to pray.**
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Follow up application:

1. Use the **Soap study below** to pursue your own understanding.
 2. Review the book of Romans this week. Take notes, when God speaks to you.
 3. List the steps necessary to obey Paul's exhortation in Romans 12:1-2. Take the first step.
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For further study:

Take a moment each day this week to apply the **SOAP method** (**S**cripture—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: Hebrews 13:7-10

Tuesday: Acts 2:37-39

Wednesday: Acts 2:44-47

Thursday: John 13:34-35

Friday: Romans 12:1-2

Saturday: Romans 12:9-11

Sunday: Isaiah 6:5-8

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.