

STUDY NOTES

HONOR THE EMPEROR // A SERIES AT NEW CITY CHURCH
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The following content is based on the message “Honor The Emperor” spoken on 11/13/16 by Brian Kruckenberg at New City Church in Phoenix, AZ. The following is not meant to be a full synopsis of the message but rather a brief look at the main ideas. To use this Study Guide effectively you must listen to the message found at <http://newcityphx.com/sermons/>.

Leaders using these Study Notes for group study and reflection should read the Biblical text thoroughly before beginning, using this resource as assistance and not relying solely on this material for insight. We encourage all leaders to pray and ask the Spirit for revelation as they lead their respective communities.

PRAYER

Pray and ask God to lead the discussion as everyone gets to share.

THE SCRIPTURE: 1 PETER 2:13-25

HONOR, LOVE, FEAR, HONOR?

In our last week in this series, we saw the apostle Peter outline how Christians should act toward other people and toward God.

Honor everyone. Everyone is made in the image of God—yes, everyone. To honor someone is to give proper respect to them. It doesn't mean we don't call out sin, but we are called to honor every human being. We know life is complicated, so this means getting to know people—getting to know their stories.

- *In order to learn more about each other (not to compare with each other), take a minute to share where you were raised and what kind of life you had.*

Love the brotherhood and sisterhood. Jesus himself prayed that his followers would be united as one. When we don't love each other, we don't honor the prayer of our Lord and Savior.

- *Why do you think loving people **in the family of God** is so difficult?*
- *What kind of witness is it when the church truly loves each other despite its differences?*

Fear God. As Christians we should have a healthy fear of God. To fear means to have profound reverence and respect for, with the implication of awe bordering on fear—‘to reverence, to worship.’ A lot of people fear other people, but don't God.

- *Why could it be easier to fear man rather than God?*

Honor the emperor. Your vote isn't an out for you to just try to reform the political system and to stop caring about the church. Your vote isn't an out for you to not care about systems, laws and injustice. Your vote isn't an out to your behavior.

- *The president is an image-bearer of God. For us as Christians, what kind of honor is appropriate?*

SUFFERING AS CHRISTIAN

Suffering is part of the Christian life. Suffering comes from things outside of our control. Reaping the consequences of our own bad choices is justice, not suffering. The glory of Christianity is not that we escape suffering but that something in us can turn suffering into something great.

***Realize the others are suffering when you are not.
Realize that sometimes you cause suffering to others too.***

- *Why do we want to see hard things in someone else's life as justice, but we want to see hard things in our own life as suffering?*
- *How might we be able to see the difference between suffering and justice in someone else's life?*
- *Since we are Christians, and suffering is a Christian thing, how can we enter into suffering with our brothers and sisters, rather than simply pointing out that suffering can be a good thing for them?*

THE REWARD OF SUFFERING WELL

We have forgotten how to suffer well...and how to suffer well with each other.

Suffering reminds us of the grace we have received in Jesus because He suffered so well for us.

None of us will really know how much we needed Jesus until we meet God face to face. When we meet him we will know that Jesus will be enough and that God will not pick us apart because of our sin. We can live in that truth now.

- *How can we see the grace of God when brothers and sisters suffer together?*
- *Pray for each other and for our community.*