

STUDY NOTES

A LETTER TO THE ROMANS at NEW CITY CHURCH

www.newcityphx.com/sermons

The following content is based on the message “Unnatural” on 2/27/17 at New City Church in Phoenix, AZ. The following is not meant to be a full synopsis 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 community groups.

PRAYER

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

SCRIPTURE: ROMANS 1:26-32

****Leader Note:** If the conversation seems to escalate to something beyond your comfort level. Please feel free to refer someone to the sermon podcast or to one of the pastors. You aren't expected to have to handle this alone.**

GOD CREATED SEX

God revealed himself in how he made us. He made humans male and female with his image in all of us. As a part of this, God created the passion (pathos) to bring male and female together as a way of pleasure and procreation. However, sin has fractured the way humans have acted out that design. That doesn't change God's purpose for that pleasure though. Jesus reaffirmed Genesis by saying the same thing in Matthew 19:3-5 (Read). Anything outside of this design is considered unnatural because it is outside of God's created order.

- *Why is it easier to look to culture for our sexual ethics rather than the One who created sex?*

SEXUALITY AS IDENTITY?

Our culture tells us that we can only be human if we express ourselves sexually. We've allowed the sexual revolution to say more about how we perceive and practice sex than the God who created it.

- *How have we as a culture placed identity in sexuality?*
- *How have we as a global Church placed identity in sexuality?*
- *Why does this type of identity cheapen our humanity as a whole?*

RESPONDING WITH COMMUNITY

“Christians will fall prey to the world's view of sex unless we create a community, an alternative city. In this alternative city, singles enjoy their kingdom mission and peace sexual abstinence joyfully. They live in community with Christian families, who don't make an idol out of family or make singles feel abnormal. One of the reasons it's hard to practice the discipline of sex-free romantic involvement is that we don't have a sufficiently large community of people creating this alternative city.” - Tim Keller

- *Why is it important to see that Jesus (as a sexually abstinent, single human) reaffirmed the original definition of marriage?*
- *People are quick to sympathize with the heterosexual who is struggling to do what's right, but not the homosexual who is struggling to do what's right. How can we live as this community that Keller is describing?*
- *How can our community group be a place of love for someone struggling with sexuality, without making a idol out of sexuality?*

COMMUNITY BECAUSE OF JESUS'S WORK

The reason we can be united in our church and in our community is because of what Jesus has done for us. We all have fallen short. We all are on the list in verses 28-32 (Read again). We all have sinned in a sexual way. We all deserve to be punished—and that punishment being death. Yet, despite that, Jesus took that punishment for us. This is mercy, and as we found out last week, God's mercy should lead us to repentance.

- *How does our common death sentence lead us to have compassion for one another?*
- *How does Jesus's mercy lead each of us to repentance?*
- *Pray that our group treats sexuality in a Godly way.*