

STUDY NOTES

A LETTER TO THE ROMANS *at* NEW CITY CHURCH

www.newcityphx.com/sermons

The following content is based on the message “Changing the Reign” on 4/23/17 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 6:11-23

DEPTH OF SLAVERY

Paul makes a spiritual comparison to 1st century slavery. When people would get indebted to someone, they could offer themselves into bond-service to pay off their debt. Spiritually speaking, you are enslaved to sin (you’ve offered yourself to it and it owns you) or you’ve offered yourself to God and He owns you.

- *What would it be like to live under a master being enslaved to their every wish?*

Everyone lives for something. Everyone serves a god. This is why the first commandment was—and is—“you shall have no other gods before me”. The thing that we live for is the main way that we find significance or security. Sin is a harsh master. It uses things that we think that we want to kill us.

Sin is building your identity on anything other than God. - Soren Kierkegaard

- *Talk about the many different good things that we allow to become sinful things in our life.*

IDENTITY

We must live out of our new identity—the identity that Christ gives us. We were once labeled “SINNER”, but now, because of Christ, we are labeled “SAINT”.

Sinner + Jesus = Saint

- *Maybe you have a past of which you are really ashamed. How does this new label feel to you?*
- *How has realizing your new label changed your relationship with God? How has it changed your relationship with others?*

Daily living in our new identity means that we will change. But why should we change? Wouldn't it be easier just to be able to do whatever we want? Allowing something to control us will always lead to death. Even good things drain us of life when we give them sinful power over us. Here's what Paul says in verse 21:

But what fruit were you getting at that time from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death.

- *How is it helpful to you to view sin as a harsh master who pulls the life from you?*
- *When have you realized that something good had become sinful, draining you of life?*

God is the giver of life. He is the good master. When we submit to him, the fruit we see is life. This is what Paul says in verse 22:

But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life.

We still have to change who's reigning in our life. This will be a lifelong journey, but we have been given Help. When we received our new identity, we were given Power and Strength. The Holy Spirit lives within us.

- *Even though submitting to God leads to sanctification and life, why is it still so hard to change? What pulls us back to our old, harsh master? How have you experienced this?*
- *Pray with each other that we'd live in our new identity.*