

STUDY NOTES

A LETTER TO THE ROMANS *at* NEW CITY CHURCH

www.newcityphx.com/sermons

The following content is based on the message “Longing for Home” on 5/6/17 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 8:12-27

GROANING IN THE FUTILITY OF THE FLESH

Living according to the flesh will lead us to live in legalism or in licentiousness. We have tendency to try to earn our position through legalism or we live licentiously indulging in things that end up hurting us. This tension is a constant reminder that this present age is still broken.

- *Share with each other about your experiences regarding how you lean towards legalism or licentiousness.*

SUFFERING IN THIS PRESENT AGE

There is a future glory that Paul says we can look forward to enjoying. This will be like a return to the original creation before all of it was “subjected to futility”. When we look around us, we see this futility (barrenness and unproductively). Summers are too hot. Winters are too cold. Tornados are destructive. Water isn’t drinkable. Nature joins us in longing—so deeply that Paul calls it groaning—for this future glory where all is made right.

- *Talk with each other about some times in your life when you felt like all you could do is groan for future glory.*

HOME MEANS BEING UNITED WITH OUR FATHER

Read vss 23-25 again:

23 And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. 24 For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? 25 But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

God is our true Father! He created us. We really have our genesis from him. And we’ve been separated from him, so we long to be with him. Paul says in essence we living in a tent and not fully united with our true Father, so we groan and lament and wait eagerly for the full-adoption. Part of our suffering is being away from home and separated from our Father. BUT God gave us a way to talk to Him. He puts his Spirit within us. Believers have the indwelling of the Spirit who is God and is a taste of what’s to come.

- *In what ways do you feel too at home in this world?*
- *What are some examples of things in the world that make you long for your eternal home?*
- *How do you balance caring for this world as your home and longing for your eternal home?*

SEEKING GOD

Paul wants us to seek God so much in our weakness that we can’t express it ourselves. He calls this speaking in tongues—groaning too deep for words. When we suffer, we cry deeper for God. It is no wonder that Paul say that suffering brings a closeness to God. It moves us to want to be connected with our true Father. It makes us long to go home.

You don't have to search for God, you just have to stop running from him.

- *How do you find yourself running from God?*
- *How has suffering pushed you to seek God more?*
- *What are some ways that you’ve found yourself crying out deeply to God? How can you foster that more in your regular routine of life?*
- *Pray with each other to seek deeply after God this week.*