

# STUDY NOTES

## A LETTER TO THE ROMANS *at* NEW CITY CHURCH

[www.newcityphx.com/sermons](http://www.newcityphx.com/sermons)

The following content is based on the message “Deceptive Doctrine Divides” on 7/30/17 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 the Holy Spirit to lead the discussion as everyone gets to share.*

### SCRIPTURE: ROMANS 16:17-27

### CREATING DIVISION

Paul has one more word to the Roman church regarding unity. This time he speaks directly about those who create division.

**If there is one thing, actually six things the Lord hates, it is one who divides God’s people.**

Read Proverbs 6:16-19. This is why Paul says, I appeal (urge, implore you, plead) to you, not to create obstacles and cause division CONTRARY to what you’ve been taught. Why? This principle goes back to the first time Satan shows up on the earth: he divides: mankind from God, mankind from itself, and mankind from creation.

- *From your experience when people talk about God hating something, how is this Proverbs passage different from what you usually hear about God hating?*
- *Why do you think Satan’s strategy is so successful to divide mankind from God, mankind from itself, and mankind from creation?*

### SOME OBSTACLES ARE FROM GOD

Some obstacles that might be divisive are actually from God. Christian beliefs are an obstacle. Jesus is actually considered a stumbling block (1 Corinthians 1:23). Christian

behaviors are also an obstacle. For instance, Romans 13:12-13 taught us to “(12) put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light. (13) Let us behave decently, as in the daytime, not in wild parties and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and debauchery, not in dissension and jealousy.”

**Removing behavioral restraints that God demands often creates obstacles to knowing God and is typically done to satisfy selfish desire.**

- *What does it mean when scripture teaches that Christ crucified is a stumbling block?*
- *How do we/why do we often want to remove behavioral restraints that God teaches?*

### AVOID OBSTACLES FROM MAN

Paul isn’t talking about innocent mistakes. This is referring to a conscious effort to **serve self** in someone’s teaching. The root of most division is selfish pride. This where some personal responsibility comes in. Paul says to be “be wise!”. Pastors need to teach sound doctrine so you’ll know the heart of God. However, everyone in the church must pursue Him as well. Why do we need to be wise and know good doctrine? Because...

**Bad doctrine divides the people of God, and bad doctrine diverts the movement of God.**

- *Why do you think Paul says to avoid teachers who are self serving? When should we confront them? When should we avoid them?*

### GOD IS ACTIVE

God is using us, but He is the one acting! Jesus defeated Satan. Romans 16:20 says, “the God of PEACE will CRUSH Satan under YOUR feet.” On our own, we are no match for the evil one. However, we have been given weapons of warfare to win. This is why we need to live in unity to hold each other accountable.

**When you are a party to division, unless the division results from sound doctrine, you are a tool in the hand of the enemy.**

**Don’t be a tool.**

- *What a fitting way to end Romans! Talk with each other about what you have learned, or what was encouraging to you, about the importance of unity in the church.*
- *Pray with each other that we’d all move forward united as one.*