

STUDY NOTES

A SERMON *at* NEW CITY CHURCH

www.newcityphx.com/sermons

The following content is based on the message “God's Kingdom in the City” on 8/13/17 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: JEREMIAH 29:4-9

THE CITY IS...

- 1) A place of justice
- 2) A place for cultural development
- 3) A place for spiritual seeking

This sounds great, but it isn't what we experience. Under sin, racism, classism, violence, greed, and over-work abound.

- *How do you see these three things in our city?*
- *How do you see these three things perverted under sin in our city?*

OUR CITY

Phoenix has a population of 1.61 million (valley 4.6) It is the 5th largest city in the United States. The forecast is for Phoenix proper to be at least #4 by 2020, and for the valley as a whole to have 6.3 million people by 2020.

- 50% of valley residents say they seldom or never GO to a religious service.
- 18% of valley residents agree strongly that the Bible is God's Word.
- The valley ranks 9th in least Bible mindedness (that means that people don't agree that the Bible is God's word nor do they read it weekly).

- Only 61% of people in the valley who identify as Christian believe that Jesus was without sin.
- Only 59% of people in the valley who identify as Christian believe that the Bible is accurate.
- *Do any of these statistics surprise you? If so, which one(s)?*

THREE WAYS TO TREAT THE CITY

- 1) False prophets told God's people to stay outside the city and keep their own identity. People would use the city for their own agenda.
- 2) God's people could have responded like the Babylonians. This would mean that they would assimilate into the city and lose their identity.
- 3) God's way for his people was to move into the city, BUT to also keep their identity as his people. It was in this that they could seek the shalom of city.

This is why we exist as New City Church. We exist to make disciples who take the Gospel to the places they live work study and play. Why? Because doing so leads to the flourishing of our homes, neighborhoods and city.

- *How have you seen God's people want to isolate from the city around them?*
- *How have you seen God's people assimilate into the city and lose their identity?*

JESUS LOVES THE CITY

Luke 19:41 And when he drew near and saw the city, he wept over it, saying, “Would that you, even you, had known on this day the things that make for peace!”

Jesus brings light to see that people aren't the enemy. The city isn't the enemy. We are to live in the city and love it because Jesus does.

- *Why would it be easy for Christians to see people (or the city) as the enemy?*
- *Before we can “make disciples”, we have to love the city around us. How can you fall more in love with the people around you?*
- *What does it mean to you that Jesus knew the people of the city fully and still wept over it, allowed those people to beat him, and then went to the cross for the people of the city?*
- *Pray for each other to fall more in love with the people in the city around you.*