

STUDY NOTES

THE WAY AND THE WORDS OF JESUS A SERIES *at* NEW CITY CHURCH

www.newcityphx.com/sermons

The following content is based on the message “Threading the Needle” on 2/18/18 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: LUKE 18:18-30

JESUS CHALLENGES OUR SIN

This rich ruler had everything that one could want—except escaping death. He knows that he is missing something, so he comes to Jesus seeking eternal life because he believed Jesus to be God. However, there was a fatal flaw in his question. He asked, “What must I do?”. Doing good doesn’t necessarily mean that someone loves Jesus. Jesus got to the rich ruler’s true need. Jesus always gets to the root of the problem—the sin beneath the sin.

Don’t come to Jesus if you want to go unchallenged and unchanged.

- *In what ways do you see humility in this rich ruler?*
- *How has Jesus challenged you since coming to him?*

IDENTITY AND FOLLOWING JESUS

The root cause of the rich ruler’s issues was not *what* he had done but *why* he did what he had done. Nowhere in scripture are we commanded to sell all that we have and give it to the poor. The “one thing” he lacked was not understanding or activity, but a trust in God that would allow him to abandon all his identity and follow Jesus.

- *Why is it so easy to find our identity in our accomplishments, money, or titles*
- *Where do you struggle with your identity?*

THE COST OF FOLLOWING JESUS

Jesus promises him he will get what he is searching for, and he has the ability to get what he desires, but he isn’t willing to pay the price for it! To lose his money was to lose his god—which was to lose what defined him.

We want our life now and Jesus' life later.

- *How did money get in the way of this man following Jesus?*
- *What, in this life, gets in your way of following Jesus?*

Jesus says it is so difficult for the rich to enter the kingdom. Why? The poor/persecuted have the myth of control removed from them in this life so they understand the concept of letting go much “easier.” However, anyone rich or poor, who can’t give up control in this life can’t enter the kingdom. Jesus says that it is “impossible”.

- *How does giving over control in this life lead to freedom both in this life and the life to come?*
- *Pray with each other that the Holy Spirit would lead us to give up control where we need.*