

STUDY NOTES

VISION 2019

a series at New City Church

www.newcityphx.com/sermons

The following content is based on the message “New Life in Your Core” on 1/6/19 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: EZEKIEL 36:22-32

GOD SAID WHAT?

When we read today's passage, it is easy to miss all of the things that God promises and focus on what seems to be harsh at the end of the passage. He says things like “Be confounded and ashamed” or “loathe yourself” for your actions. At first glance, that is shocking, but God isn't promising to heap shame, confusion, or self-hatred onto you. What he is promising is that those feelings will be the result of living for yourself.

If we live for ourselves, we will be crushed in shame as we find out that our selves won't fulfill ourselves.

- *What are your experiences with the feelings of shame and self-anger?*

THE CYCLE OF FAILURE

As most people pursue things to try to fulfill themselves, they find that they are left wanting more. As long as the things that you do, are only for you, then you will never have enough. Even though the things that we pursue for ourselves leave us feeling unfulfilled, we keep trying to pursue them harder. Even though we do that, the experience for most of us is that we feel even more inadequate and lifeless. It is exhausting.

- *What is something that you keep pursuing, but you can never get enough? Work? Money? Recognition? Likes on social media?*

Feeling inadequate and lifeless from chasing after ourselves is exhausting is because our hearts were never meant to feel lifeless. We were created to be filled with life. Only God, as the Author of Life, will be able to fill our hearts with life. But rather than turning to him, we try to numb the pain of feeling lifeless.

- *People numb their hearts in different ways like mindless scrolling on their phone, binge-watching Netflix, drugs or alcohol, or by staying too busy. How do you numb the pain of lifelessness in your heart?*

HERE'S YOUR PLAN: DO NOTHING

So how do we get out of this cycle of failure? From this passage, we can see that there is nothing that we should do to get out of this cycle. Only God promises to act. God calls us to do nothing—which is a change from how we usually act. Doing nothing actually means life change, but it is a refreshing life change.

The Christian cannot mistake doing nothing to mean remaining unchanged.

- *Why is doing nothing to receive life so counter-human?*
- *How is doing nothing a big change for you?*

RECEIVING NEW LIFE

For the you to change your ways to do nothing, it means that you have to actually trust God to fulfill his promise to breath life into your core. When we do that, the Spirit of God can indwell our lives and change our hearts from hearts of stone to living, breathing hearts.

The flourishing life that Jesus want you to experience is a life that has his Spirit living inside of you.

- *What scares you about doing nothing? Or what excites you about doing nothing?*
- *How can you implement “nothing” in your life in 2019?*
- *Ask the Holy Spirit to breath life into your heart.*