

# STUDY NOTES

## ADVENT 2019

A Series At New City Church

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

The following content is based on the message “Joy of the Slow Life” on 12/16/19 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: PHILIPPIANS 3:17-4:9

## FINDING JOY

In the Christmas season, we are reminded of the joy that we should be experiencing. All throughout the Biblical story, God asks his people to find joy in Him. We even know the end of the story—Jesus wins and restores all things. This should lead us to be joyful even if our circumstances don't make us happy.

**Joy is an attitude that God's people adopt, not because of our circumstances, but because we believe God's promises.**

- *It's probably easy for you to **know** that you need to find joy, but in reality it is difficult for you to experience. Sometimes it's helpful just to verbalize why you should find joy. In your own words, tell the group why Jesus's life and sacrifice should cause you to be joyful.*

## WE HAVE TO PAUSE

Even though we know the end of the story, experiencing joy may not be the reality that most of us face. Probably the main reason that we don't experience joy is because we are too busy. We are too busy to focus on the blessings. We have to learn to say, “No.”

**We get frustrated and frenzied, even in good things, because we are too busy.**

- *How do you find yourself in a frenzy even in good situations?*
- *When was the last time you were able to intentionally take time to pause from the busyness of your life? What did that look like? How did you feel afterwards?*

## TAKING TIME TO ACTUALLY PRAY

If we are too busy, then we definitely aren't praying; and if we aren't praying, then we are probably worrying instead. So of course we aren't experiencing joy! We are taking time to talk with God and rest in His peace. Praying is an essential part of the Christian's ability to experience joy.

- *How is the Holy Spirit leading you to find time to pray? When would you like to intentionally set time aside?*

## PRACTICING THE SLOW LIFE

Everything—and everyone—around us wants us to be on the go. But we have to slow down and intentionally put pausing and praying into practice. Practicing means actually doing. It doesn't mean hoping to see the slow life come to fruition. That means we have to intentionally find ways to begin living a slower life. A good way to put these things into practice is to show hospitality and to begin taking a sabbath, a day of rest. Without these things, we will just keep running at a frantic pace.

**To experience joy, we have to practice the slow life.**

- *Why won't the slow life happen unless you intentionally make moves to practice it?*
- *How would hospitality and sabbath lead to a slower life?*
- *Pray with each other to begin practicing the slow life.*