

STUDY NOTES

ADVENT 2019

A Series At New City Church

www.newcityphx.com/sermons

The following content is based on the message “The Hope That Sets Us Free” on 12/1/19 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: ROMANS 8:18–25

MOST WONDERFUL TIME OF THE YEAR?

We have entered into Advent season. The singer Andy Williams describes it as the “most wonderful time of the year.” But for many people it doesn’t feel like the most wonderful time of the year. Washington is still fighting, refugees are still fleeing, disease is still diagnosed, and millions of Americans go to sleep hungry every night. Clearly, things are not supposed to be like this.

The Bible paints an honest picture of a world that is not as it should be.

- *What are some ways that you are currently experiencing specific effects of sin more strongly than at other times?*

WE NEED HOPE

We need hope in our lives. Without hope, we would live in despair. For this reason, many people try to find hope in things like work, pop culture, or government. While those can be good things, they can’t ultimately free us from the effects of sin. Only Jesus can truly free us from the effects of sin. Jesus promises to return and completely liberate us from sin when He fully establishes his kingdom.

- *What are some ways that you’ve put your hope in things that have ultimately let you down?*

- *What are some things that you personally look forward to in a world that is free from sin?*

WAITING FOR HIS COMING

We don’t live in the sin-free reality yet. We have to wait for it. Much like a child who has to wait for his or her Christmas gifts, we wait with eager expectation of the coming King. **Read Titus 2:11-14.** The apostle Paul tells Titus that God’s grace came to us in the first coming of Jesus. That grace is the gift of salvation to anyone who believe in Jesus. But Paul goes on to say that the glory of God will appear at Jesus’s second coming. That glory will be seen when all of Jesus’s followers live in harmony with each other in this sin-free age.

God’s grace appeared at the incarnation of Jesus and God’s glory will appear at the second coming of Jesus.

- *How does everything about Jesus’s first coming prove to you that Jesus will return again at a second coming?*

WHAT DO WE DO?

So what do we do while we wait? Paul tells Titus that we should train ourselves to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions. God’s grace trains us to say no to ungodliness. In other words, we don’t just sit back and wait. The life that we live now can begin to look like the life that we will live in the coming kingdom of God. Our life can be characterized by joy, peace, and love. We can serve others in kindness because we know that Jesus served us. When we live like this, we are bearing witness to the hope that Jesus provides to the world.

Jesus is training us to say no to ungodliness and to say yes to holiness.

- *In the coming age, we will all live in complete holiness. Knowing that, why should it motivate us to strive for holiness today?*
- *How does godly living show the world around us the hope of Jesus?*
- *What is one specific way that you want to pursue holiness during this Advent season?*
- *Pray with each other to be strengthened to renounce ungodliness.*