

NEW CITY DAILY DEVOTIONAL FOR WEEK OF 10/26/2020-10/30/2020

The following content is based on the message on 10/25/20 at New City Church in Phoenix, AZ. It is not meant to be a full synopsis, but rather a resource to help you analyze and apply the main ideas. To use this devotional effectively, please listen to the message found at <http://newcityphx.com/sermons/>.

MONDAY // WHERE IS YOUR CITIZENSHIP?

Read 1 Peter 2:9-10. Readers of Peter's letter were confused and discouraged by the persecution. Peter wrote to them to tell them what it means to be a Christian in a world that is often hostile to the things of God. Peter reminded them that they were a "chosen race" and a "holy nation." The same applies to us today, not as a political nation, but as followers of Jesus. Peter is telling us that our citizenship is first and foremost in the kingdom of God—not any kingdom of this world. The primary motivation for the citizens of the kingdom of God was that they had received mercy; and for that reason, they would treat others with mercy.

- *Christians are called to be united as the new people of God. How does Jesus unite people who are endlessly different?*
- *Set a timer for two minutes. Reflect on the mercy that you personally have received from Jesus. How does that mercy motivate you today?*

TUESDAY // CHARACTER TRAITS OF A CHRISTIAN

Read 1 Peter 2:11-17. At the time when Peter wrote this letter, Christians were known for the following actions. If we look at them today, we could possibly characterize them as typical of "liberal" or "conservative."

1. Didn't go to the bloodiest gladiator games (R-rated movies) – Conservative
2. Didn't serve in war to advance Caesars conquest – Liberal
3. Against abortion and infanticide – Conservative
4. Invited women into leadership – Liberal
5. Against sex outside of marriage – Conservative
6. Mixed-races together – Liberal
7. Believed that Christ was the only way – Conservative

You might say, "I care about all of this!" That's good, because Christians should not be characterized as a political party. This means that you should not be overly enraged at other Christians who vote differently than you vote.

- *How should the principles of God lead us to find both the good and the fault in political parties?*
- *Set a timer for two minutes. Ask the Holy Spirit to lead you and speak to you as you hold political tension.*

WEDNESDAY // JESUS AND POLITICAL PARTIES

Read Matthew 17:24-27. Jesus was constantly faced with political parties. Between the religious political parties and national political parties, Jesus was questioned about the role of His followers as citizens. So what does Jesus say? He tells His followers that they are free within the kingdom of God. They have already been bought with a price—the blood of Jesus. However, within the kingdom of this world, we are subject to the rule of the earthly kingdom.

- *As Christians, we already have experienced ultimate freedom in Christ. How can we rest in Christ even if the world around you feels oppressive?*
- *Set a timer for two minutes. Reflect on the freedom that you've received from Jesus.*

THURSDAY // IMPRINTED IMAGES

Read Mark 12:14-17. Jesus wouldn't be put into a category. Jesus reminds the people questioning Him that they are made in the image of God. Ultimately, as humans, we have God's image imprinted on us. Yet, the money that Jesus held had Caesar's image imprinted on it. This meant that the people questioning Jesus lived in an earthly kingdom. Jesus encouraged His followers to submit ultimately to God, because they belong to Him, and then secondarily to the kingdom of this world.

- *Jesus reminds us that we some of what we have is from an earthly kingdom. However, ultimately you belong to God. What does it mean for you to "belong to God?"*
- *Set a timer for two minutes. Reflect on the image of God imprinted on you.*

FRIDAY // KINGDOM LIVING

Read John 18:36. There were four political parties at work to try to kill Jesus. Each of them, even though they hated each other, worked together to kill Jesus. If Jesus ever would have changed His politics, it would have been at the end of His life. He was being questioned right before being put to death. But Jesus stayed true to the kingdom of God. Jesus was not building an earthly kingdom. He was building His church. The church has a different role than the government does. Christians can vote, but they have to ultimately remember that they are first and foremost a citizen of the kingdom of God. Here is some scripture to remind you about what Christ has done for you. When Christ died for his church (Ephesians 5:25), she died with him to the elemental things of this world (Colossians 2:20); died to the world (Galatians 6:14); died to sin (Romans 6:2). When Christ rose from the dead, she (the church) rose from the dead to walk in newness of life (Romans 6:4). They received a new birth (John 3:3), a new person (Ephesians 4:24), a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17), and new covenant (Hebrews 9:15). They became heirs of a new earth (2 Peter 3:13).

- *As the world divides over politics, how can you stay true to kingdom values—including the value of unity?*
- *Set a timer for two minutes. Reflect on the faithfulness of Jesus while He was under trial.*