

STUDY NOTES

A LETTER TO THE ROMANS *at* NEW CITY CHURCH

www.newcityphx.com/sermons

The following content is based on the message “The Road to Character” on 4/2/17 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 5:1-11

PEACE WITH GOD

As we have talked about in chapters 1-4, Christians are justified by faith, not by works that we do. This faith allows us to have peace with God where we can confidently stand firm in his grace and boast in the “hope of the glory of God”.

- *Talk about a time in your life when you felt like you had to earn your position. Were you successful? Did you fail? What were your reactions either way?*

BOASTING IN SUFFERING

It is probably pretty easy to boast in “hope” and “glory”, however Paul shares a tough word here as well. He also says that we should “boast in our sufferings”. Why? Because in the end, suffering leads to hope.

- *What is your go-to reaction to minor types of suffering (i.e., working out)?*
- *How have you responded to bigger types of suffering?*

You cannot have character without enduring suffering because character comes from testing and testing comes through enduring suffering.

- *How have you seen your character change as you’ve endured testing?*
- *How have you found Christ in these hard times?*

HOPING IN JESUS

Hope is not superficial optimism but the confident assurance of that which will surely come to pass. If your hope is in your stuff, you’ll have shame (disappointment).

Hoping in things that aren’t Jesus will always lead to various levels of discontent.

- *What is something recently that you hoped would bring fulfillment, but now you find yourself chasing after something else because it didn’t bring that fulfillment?*
- *We all find our hope in different things. What is something in your life that you would have to honestly say that you are placing too much hope in?*

Jesus suffered and died for each one of us in order save us from God’s wrath. There is no way to earn our way to God. Jesus did that for us. He reconciled us back to God. That is why we get to boast. We’ve already been given our position before God. We have it because Jesus earned it. This is a real hope in someone who is real, not a wishful hope in something that won’t last.

- *Why do you think we don’t feel the gravity of Christ’s work of reconciling us back to God?*
- *Pray with each other to see the importance of Christ’s work of reconciliation in our lives.*