

# STUDY NOTES

## A LETTER TO THE ROMANS *at* NEW CITY CHURCH

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The following content is based on the message “The Struggle of Sin” on 4/30/17 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. 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 7:7-25

### PAUL GETS PERSONAL

Paul gets personal in this passage. He uses the greatest concentration of “I” and “me” throughout the whole book of Romans right here in this section. You can sense the struggle that he faces as he talks around in circles.

- *How is it encouraging to you to know that Paul—one of the apostles—struggled with sin’s grasp on him?*

### A GRACIOUS LAW

With all the talk in Romans about how the Law is no longer needed now that we live by faith in Christ, it could be easy to think that the Law was a bad thing. However, if we say that, then what we are actually saying is that the very words of God are bad.. Paul is telling us that the Law pointed out sin which was already in existence in the world. People were living in sin AND the consequences that came with it.

- *Talk about what it would be like living in a world with no Law—a world that has sin running rampant with no accountability.*

Sin took the good and holy Law and used it to deceive and distort. Sin used the Law against itself. When the Law said, “You shall not covet”, sin pushed us to covet even more. When we covet we are over-desiring something. It only seems fitting that Paul uses this as his example as we all struggle with coveting in our own way.

**Sin uses not just the bad things, but the good things, to bring lifelessness and ultimately death.**

- *What is your reaction to when there is a law/rule that is placed in front of you? Do you want to break the rules? Do you follow all the rules with no question? Do you push the limits? What is your standard by which you judge whether or not a rule is worthy to be kept or not?*
- *Give specific examples of how “over-desiring” something pulled the life out of you in the past.*
- *How do you end up justifying when you “over-desiring” today?*

### FRUSTRATION, DEATH, AND SALVATION

Paul expresses his frustration within himself in this next section of Scripture. He feels the tension of sin warring against his desire to delight in God. Sin wins sometimes and other times his desire to follow God wins. However, he often feels like sin works harder than he does. So what does that mean for him? What does that mean for us? Should we just keep trying harder?

**If sin can use something as good and holy as the Law, then how dare we think that we can just keep trying to overcome sin with no help.**

- *How is it actually encouraging that God doesn’t just leave us to “try harder”?*

We get to submit to Jesus—the person who kept the Law fully. Through faith in him, we receive a new identity meaning that we are identified with his perfection. This is important because, with that new identity, God’s Holy Spirit now can live within us. God is always with us empowering us to live by what is good.

**Submitting to the Holy Spirit gives us the ability to live by what is life-giving and good.**

- *How do you need to change the way you think about “submitting to the Holy Spirit”? How is it actually life-giving?*
- *In what ways, can you practice listening and submitting the Holy Spirit?*
- *Pray with each other for strength to submit to the Holy Spirit.*