

STUDY NOTES

A LETTER TO THE ROMANS *at* NEW CITY CHURCH

www.newcityphx.com/sermons

The following content is based on the message “God’s Plan for Israel” on 6/4/17 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 11

CHOSEN BY GOD’S GRACE (read 11:1-10)

Israel was chosen by God to be his people. They didn’t do anything to earn God’s choice. It was solely based on God’s grace. What is grace? It means “free and unmerited favor”. This was a privilege, but also required responsibility on Israel’s part. They were responsible for being a blessing to the nations around them. Israel enjoyed the privilege, but usually forgot about the responsibility.

- *Talk with each other about a time in your life when you received true grace from someone (other than from God).*

Read Romans 11:11-24.

Israel’s unbelief is just the opportunity the Gentiles need to come into God’s family. God will then use the Gentiles to make Israel jealous. Did God give up on the Jews? No. Just like he didn’t give up on Paul, God didn’t give up on the people of Israel. There is a future for Israel. God has a plan to bring them back into the family.

- *What does it mean to you to see the lengths to which God went to include the Gentiles in the family of God?*
- *What does it say about God that he didn’t give up on the people of Israel?*

MORE ON GRACE

Grace is not about our works, but about what God has done. It is all God and has nothing to do with our own efforts. It’s not about us. So that should keep us from arrogance.

God’s grace should make God’s people humble

- *How should God’s grace make people humble?*
- *How have you seen Christians become arrogant instead of humble? What kind of damage has that done?*

JEALOUS OF THE COMMUNITY

Paul’s primary ministry was for the Gentiles, but in doing so, he desired to make his fellow Jews jealous. The new Gentile believers were living in a community that should have been attractive to the Jews. They could see the love of Jesus being lived out in this community.

- *How should the Christian lifestyle make people jealous?*
- *In what ways is the Holy Spirit convicting you of how you should be living a more attractive life?*

FAITH IN GOD’S FAMILY TREE (read 11:25-36)

Paul uses the illustration of an olive tree to explain what God has done.

Olive tree - promises of Abraham
The root - Abraham
Branches from the tree - Israelites
Wild olive shoots - Gentiles

The Gentiles are grafted into the tree through faith. Everyone now enters God’s family through faith in Jesus. Faith is what keeps us connected to the root. God used his son, Jesus, to bring that salvation to the whole world—Jew and Gentile alike.

God’s grace is for the most unlikely people.

- *Why is it important to see both the privilege AND responsibility that we have been given as people in the family of God? What is the responsibility?*
- *What happens when we forget the privilege and focus on responsibility?*
- *What happens when we focus on the privilege and forget the responsibility?*
- *Pray with each other that we’d live in both the privilege and responsibility that we’ve been given.*