

# STUDY NOTES

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

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The following content is based on the message “Law, Love, and Living in the Kingdom of God” on 6/25/17 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 13:1-7

## RE: GOVERNMENT

No matter who is in office, human government is ordained by God. The purpose of human government is keeping order. Public officials are God’s servants for this task. It is a duty for believers to obey civil authority with a proper reverent attitude, and it is proper for believers to support human government through taxes and prayers.

- *What are some things that you can be thankful for with government?*

## CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE?

Paul was both protected and persecuted by the government. There are times when Christians need to disobey the government. Human government is not ultimate. It is limited in its authority. Believers must act for their conscience’s sake in rejecting civil authority when it oversteps its divinely appointed bounds.

**The believer’s ultimate allegiance is to God.**

- *How should Christians handle things that you think we should stand for that would go against God?*

## MISTAKES THE CHURCH MAKES

The Church should not become obsessed with the government trying to reform the political system to reach its ends; BUT the Church also must care about systems, laws, and (in)justice. Institutions do matter, and laws that are unjust need to be changed. We should encourage believers in a democratic system to actively participate in the process of government and to implement, when possible, the teachings of Scripture.

- *What are some times in history that the church used government to reach its own ends (i.e., tried to use the government to make disciples)? What were the results?*
- *How has the church stood up for things that it should stand up for, but has ruined its witness by the way that it has stood for them?*

## LOVE IS THE LAW OF THE KINGDOM

God’s “government” and “law” goes far beyond this world’s law. **Read Romans 13:8-10.** If you love your neighbor, this keeping of the law will pretty easy.

- *How should a deeper neighborly love change the way you interact with others?*
- *How would a deeper neighborly love change the way you keep/reform civil laws?*

We are to be good citizens of this world, even going beyond love of neighbor. We must realize where our citizenship is and that the calling in the Kingdom is much greater. It’s not just obeying the rules, not just loving your neighbor, but living as if we are a citizen of the Kingdom of heaven. **Read Romans 13:11-14.**

- *What are some ways that you need to reorient yourself to being primarily a citizen of the Kingdom of heaven rather than a Phoenician, an Arizonan, or an American?*
- *Pray with each other for the civil leaders on a local, national, and global level.*