

# STUDY NOTES

## THE WAYS OF GRACE

A Series At New City Church

[newcityphx.com/sermons](http://newcityphx.com/sermons)

The following content is based on the message "Facing the Pain of Life" on 10/20/19 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: MARK 10:17-22

## TURNING OUR FLAWS TO GOD

The Enneagram offers nine mirrors for self-reflection. The goal of the Enneagram is to help you let go of the walls you've built because of sin and fear. It should guide you in learning to be more comfortable with your flaws and turning them over to God! The Enneagram type 7 is the "enthusiast."

## THE ENTHUSIAST

The enthusiast type desires to enjoy life and keep it open with endless possibilities. They are often spontaneous, versatile and optimistic. Their minds move rapidly from one idea to the next, making them gifted at brainstorming and synthesizing information. They can also be extremely practical and engaged in a multitude of projects at any given time.

**The enthusiast's basic desire is to be satisfied and content—to have their needs fulfilled.**

- *Do you know an enthusiast? What is it like interacting with that person?*
- *How have you seen the enthusiast's character traits used for good?*

## THE ENTHUSIAST AND AVOIDANCE

Enthusiast types have a basic fear of being deprived or being in pain. They will do almost anything to avoid pain. But life has painful parts to it, and for that reason, enthusiasts must force themselves to deal with the painful parts of life. The rich man who comes to Jesus in this passage probably acted similar to an enthusiast type. He stayed busy doing a lot of different things, but his busyness came with a caveat—he avoided the harder parts of life, which is exactly where Jesus took him. When Jesus deals with our sin, he must drive us to face the painful parts of our life.

**Confronting sin in our lives is painful.**

- *We all have a desire to avoid the painful parts of life—this is not limited to just enthusiast types. How do you avoid the painful parts of life? Maybe through busyness, achievements or addiction?*

## PAIN AND SUFFERING

Much like today, there was a common belief back then that if someone was successful, they were doing everything right. Yet, despite this belief, Jesus said that this rich man was lacking something: the willingness to put Jesus as the priority in his life. Jesus called this man into a loving relationship with him, but the rich man wasn't willing to surrender to Jesus. Doing things and accumulating things are not keys to the eternal kingdom. Instead, the key is letting go of things that bring us comfort and control.

**Dealing with the pain of life through human means always leads to greater pain in life.**

- *How do your actions show that you are pursuing your own comfort over surrendering to Jesus?*

## JESUS IN OUR PAIN

**READ MARK 8:31-37.** Jesus goes as far as to say that suffering is the key to entering the kingdom of God. Why? Because suffering often forces us to lay everything down and turn to Jesus for our hope, comfort and identity. Jesus offers the only place where we can truly deal with the pain of life.

- *Why do we believe that we are being punished when painful things happen in life?*
- *What does Jesus say happens to us when we give up our comfort and control to surrender to him?*
- *Pray with each other to surrender to Jesus continually this week.*