

Happy New You “Here to Stay”

PREPARATION

- Familiarize yourself with this Study Guide.
- If you missed it, watch the sermon online [HERE](#).
- Spend some time in prayer before your group gathers.
- As a leader you **always** have the option to use some or all the questions and/or prepare your own questions.
- Your task will be to review the learning objective to focus the conversation, read the primary scriptures, summarize the main points, ask the questions, and use supporting texts to enhance the concepts.

DISCUSSION

Opening Prayer: (1-5 minutes)

In light of what God is saying through this week’s message, here’s some suggestions of how your group can invite God into your time together.

Thank the Lord for a new year in 2020! Thank the Lord for everything that He is doing to make you new and more like Jesus. Finally, pray that the Holy Spirit would open our eyes to the reality of your new and permanent status in the righteousness of Christ!

Discussion: (30 minutes)

What’s Going on This Week

This Sunday, Pastor Larry led us into the second and final week of our mini-series titled *Happy New You*. Pastor Larry focused our attention on Paul’s words in 2 Corinthians 5:17 in order to explain how a Christian is made new when he or she is found in Christ. Pastor Larry uses excerpts from Paul’s writings to show how faith in Jesus and his work on the cross gives us new eternal life, the righteousness of God, and the

“Everyone says they look forward to going to heaven but no one seems very eager about going there any time soon.” – Mark Twain

Suggested Questions

Check-In: Review *2 Corinthians 5:11-21* – This short series has challenged you to reflect on the “old self” that God is calling you to leave behind and rejoice in God’s transformation that is making you into your “new self”. Share with your group one new year’s resolution for 2020, what you will need to leave behind to achieve these goals, and why you believe this will be a life-giving change for you?

Study Tip: Our key text this series was written to the church at Corinth. Paul spent a year and a half ministering as a tentmaker in the Roman port city that was founded by the Greeks and became a prominent center of culture and trade (Acts 18:1-11). After his brief stay, Paul writes 1 Corinthians to challenge the cities dependence on worldly wisdom (1 Cor. 1:18-31). However, Paul is rejected for his low status upon his “painful” return, causing him to write a “severe” letter that motivates Corinth to see the message and not the messenger (2 Cor. 1:15-2:4, 7:8-12). 2 Corinthians 5, then, is written as the conclusion of Paul’s encouragement urging cities of prominence (like the Bay Area) to adopt a spirit of humility lest we boast in anyone other than God. Throughout the study guide, recognize that Paul is writing to us so that we may boast in Christ’s work on the cross alone (2 Cor. 3:1, 6:4, 10:17, 11:30).

- **Objective #1: Collectively define “alive” in Christ and identify key invigorating disciplines.**

Primary Texts: Ephesians 2:1-10 – Pastor Larry mentions that when we are being made new in Christ, we enter into a continuous state of being made spiritually alive in Jesus. At the start of this New Year, how would you gauge your spiritual liveliness (low or high)? How does a hunger for God’s word, prayer, and community reinvigorate your sense of being alive in Jesus?

Supporting Texts: (Death to Life) Jn. 5:24, Gal 2:20 / (Our Response) Col. 3:1-17, 2 Cor. 4:7-18.

- **Objective #2: Explore the implications of God’s righteousness in our past and our future.**

Primary Texts – 2 Corinthians 5:21 – Next, Pastor Larry mentions that when we are being made new in Christ, God placed His righteousness in us as a free gift to us that is apart from the law. What are the implications of God’s righteousness when it comes to your past sins? What are some of the ways that God’s righteousness ought to change the way you live moving forward?

Supporting Texts: (Righteousness by faith alone) Rom. 1:16-17, 3:21-26, 4:1-5, Phil. 3:9.

- **Objective #3: Identify ways to deepen our relationship with God our Father!**

Primary Texts – Ephesians 1:3-14, Romans 8:15-17: Finally, Pastor Larry mentions that when we are being made new in Christ, we are adopted into God’s family which includes a promised inheritance and an eternal intimacy with Him. In the coming year, what are the ways in which you would like to grow in your relationship with your heavenly Father? How can we pray about these new resolutions?

Supporting Texts – (Inheritance) Gal. 4:6-7, Phil. 3:20-21, Jn. 14:1-5 / (Intimacy) 1 Jn. 3:16, 4:10.

Closing Prayer: (5-15 minutes)

In light of what God is saying through this week's message, here's some suggestions of what your group could talk about with God in prayer.

Thank our Heavenly Father for choosing to gracefully open our eyes and hearts to His truth! Pray that as we move into the new year, the Holy Spirit would continue to open our eyes to our next steps and how we can draw closer to Him! Finally, thank God for His work on the cross that makes us new each and every day!

THROUGHOUT THE WEEK

-Further Reading and Exploration! *Read Romans 1—8:* The first segment of the book of Romans explains a good amount of what it means to die to the flesh and live in the Spirit of God who dwells in us. Paul wrote Romans in order to show that there was no more division between Jew and Gentile, but all fell under the curse of sin. Jesus came to die on the cross so that our old self might die with Him and so that we might put on the life of Christ. As you read this selection this week, pay special attention to all of the attributes of the sinful nature that have been put to death and the new life that we receive in Christ!

- Find out how to pray for two people in your group this week! Pray that they would continue to find new ways to experience God's grace as they remember that God has decided to move His will forward through their humility!

- Sign-Ups for the New Community Group Season begin January 26th, 2020! If you have any questions, feel free to email AJ at avanegas@3crosses.org