

STUDY GUIDE

I QUIT (Week 1)

A MESSAGE SERIES AT NEW CITY CHURCH (Fall 2011)

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The following content is based on the message “What about Heaven?” spoken on 11/06/11 by Brian Kruckenberg at New City Church in Phoenix, AZ. The following is not meant to be a full synopsis of the message but rather a brief look at the main concepts. For more context and understanding, please visit www.newcityphx.com/media and listen to the message in its entirety.

Leaders using this Study Guide for groups should read the text thoroughly before beginning, using this resource as assistance and not relying solely on this material for insight.

Ephesians 4

17 Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. 18 They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. 19 They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity. 20 But that is not the way you learned Christ!—21 assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, 22 to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, 23 and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, 24 and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

The Key Ideas:

1. **Philosophy of Change for the without Jesus.**

In the first part of this passage, Paul tells us how those who don't know Jesus approach change:

Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. 18 They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. 19 They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity.

Those without Jesus, or those living like they don't know Jesus, do the same things over and over and expect a different result. This is the definition of insanity.

2. **Truth is Jesus.**

Paul then tells the church that true change comes when we know Jesus and find our truth in Him.

But you did not learn Christ in this way, 21 if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, just as **truth is in Jesus.**

Jesus is an historical figure and person. He is not just an idea or set of beliefs. Christianity a set of doctrine, yes, but it is much MORE than that. Jesus, is the truth. (See John 14:6)

3. **Renewing Your Mind.**

Once we understand that truth is Jesus, we must renew the SPIRIT of our minds, that is, how we view facts and how we allow truth and facts to shape our lives.

that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the

lusts of deceit, 23 and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, 24 and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth

4. Why do you want to change?

Wanting to change is great but just as important is WHY we want to change. We cannot change to “justify” ourselves, to “make ourselves feel worth,” or to “earn” our own salvation. Doing that makes us like the Pharisees:

Luke 18:9 He also told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and treated others with contempt:10 "Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector.11 The Pharisee, standing by himself, prayed thus: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector.12 I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I get.'13 But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me, a sinner!'14 I tell you, this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted.

We should want to change in light of what Jesus did for us.

5. The Enemy Will Attack.

When we decide to change, the enemy, satan, will attack us. Satan and his demons want nothing less than to destroy your lives. Once you decide to change, expect to be met with challenge and disappointment, but commit to seek God and push through it.

“Work hard, then, on the disappointment or anticlimax which is certainly coming to the patient during his first few weeks as a churchman. The Enemy allows this disappointment to occur on the threshold of every human endeavor. It occurs when the boy who has been enchanted in the nursery by Stories from the Odyssey buckles

*down to really learning Greek. It occurs when lovers have got married and begin the real task of learning to live together. In every department of life it marks the transition from dreaming aspiration to laborious doing. The Enemy takes this risk because He has a curious fantasy of making all these disgusting little human vermin into what He calls His ‘free’ lovers and servants – ‘sons’ and ‘daughters’ are the words He uses, with His inveterate love of degrading the whole spiritual world by unnatural liaisons with the two-legged animals. Desiring their freedom, He therefore refuses to carry them, by their mere affections and habits, to any of the goals which He sets before them: He leaves them to ‘do it’. And there lies our opportunity. But also, remember, there lies our danger. If once they get through this initial dryness successfully, they become much less dependent on emotion and therefore much harder to tempt.” -
C.S. Lewis in the Screwtape Letters.*

Questions for Reflection

1. What do you want to change? What is your “change project?”
2. How are you going to change it?
 - a. have you tried things before without results?
 - b. have you considered looking more at the truth of Jesus before you start your change project again?
 - c. have you ever thought about “renewing the spirit of your mind?” talk about what that means.
3. Why do you want to change?
 - a. do you have something to prove?
 - b. are you doing it “for your family?”
4. How will you respond when you get discouraged?