

# DISCUSSION GUIDE

MYSTERY OF MERCY: A SERIES IN 1 PETER

April 23, 2023

## MYSTERY OF MERCY

This Discussion Guide is designed to help you **think more deeply** about the sermon and **engage with others** through thoughtful conversation, biblical exploration and **allow God to work** in your life as you apply what you discover.

### ➤ CONVERSATION STARTERS

**If someone were going to make a film of your life story, what would the title be?**

### ➤ EXPLORATION

This week we continue our sermon series on the book of 1 Peter. As we look at chapter 2 we see God's mercy in powerful ways.

Last week we defined the subtle difference between mercy and grace.

GRACE: God giving us what we do not deserve

MERCY: God not giving us what we do deserve.

What we deserve is punishment and separation from God because of our sins. Instead God gives us grace, which is something we don't deserve.

**1 Peter 2:24-25 (From your bible, read aloud)**

### What stands out to you from these verses?

When was the last time you did a spiritual audit, or a spiritual inventory of your life? When was the last time you took a really good look at the real you? What motivates you? What irritates you? What are you like when you are tired or stressed? What are you like at your best and at your worst? In what ways are you different today than you were before you started following Jesus?

### In light of these questions, where have you seen growth in your life? Where do you still need to grow?

Looking back at 1 Peter 2:24-25 you will see that Jesus "bore our sins" so that we might "live for righteousness." The work of Christ on the cross paved the way for us to live differently. We also see Jesus referred to as the "Shepherd and Overseer of our souls." He guides our steps and moves us forward in spiritual health and vitality.

If we are willing, Jesus can be the center of our lives. Even in light of all we have been through, Jesus offers us mercy so that we can share our lives with others displaying his hope and light in our stories.

### When was the last time you shared your salvation story with someone?

## Are you comfortable sharing your story, or is it difficult for you to articulate?

***“The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases;  
His mercies never come to an end;  
they are new every morning;  
great is your faithfulness.”***

***Lamentations 2:22-23***

What a beautiful reminder of God’s mercy being available to us each and every day as we turn our hearts and minds toward him.

### ***1 Peter 2:4-5 (From your bible, read aloud)***

In biblical times, stones had great value. There was not a lot of wood available because their land was in the desert, but there were stones available. Stones were used at that time to build just about everything; fences, walls, buildings, furniture, etc. Every structure of value was constructed of stones.

In verse 4, Jesus is called the “living stone” who was “precious” to God. Peter is letting us know that Jesus is what **ALL** important things are built upon.

Then in verse 5, those who follow Jesus (that’s us) are referred to as being “like living stones” that are being built into a “spiritual house” to be a “holy priesthood.” God is building his kingdom through the work of Jesus, using each one of us as living examples of his grace and mercy.

## How does the mercy of God fit into your story?

### ***1 Peter 2:9-10 (From your bible, read aloud)***

As followers of Jesus, we have an incredible identity given to us by God.

#### **You Are:**

- Chosen People
- Royal Priesthood
- Holy Nation
- People Belonging to God
- Receivers of God’s Mercy

This identity gives purpose to our lives. As God’s chosen people, we are called to live in a way that demonstrates God’s mercy to those around us.

### ***1 Peter 2:12 (From your bible, read aloud)***

## Who is someone in your life that still needs to experience God’s mercy?

There is a common misperception that the “church” is the building that we visit for worship services. The verses we have studied today illustrate that the church is not a building. It is the people who are part of the family of God, working together to share God’s mercy. You are the church.

The Hillside Community Church building is located at 5354 Haven Avenue. But Hillside Community Church is made up of people who are forgiven, filled with mercy and who share the love of God everywhere they go.

## ➤ TAKE AWAY

Take a few moments to examine your life. How are you doing? Where have you seen growth over the last year? What areas still need improvement?

No matter how you answered those questions, the mercy of God is available to you. You are not expected to live a perfect life. If you could live a perfect life, there would be no need for God’s mercy.

Keep in mind throughout this coming week that you are chosen as part of a royal priesthood and a holy nation. You belong to God and you have been given God’s incredible mercy. You Are The Church!

**Take some time to pray together, thanking God for his mercy and asking God to show you where and how you might share your experience of God’s mercy with someone in your life this week.**