

# For the Joy - Guide (March 31)

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## Part 2 / The Church

Go over the rules of Group Discussion:

- Use 'I' statements. These statements break denial structures.
- No rescuing people as they are speaking. Do not finish someone's sentence if they start struggling to find words. Let them fully process their thought; it might be the first time they are wrestling with something
- No side chatter.
- Pray. Invite God to further His kingdom in your group. Ask for blind spots to be revealed in your members' lives.

### Reading:

*4 As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, 5 you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. 6 For it stands in Scripture:*

*"Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone,*

*a cornerstone chosen and precious,*

*and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame."*

*7 So the honor is for you who believe, but for those who do not believe,*

*"The stone that the builders rejected*

*has become the cornerstone,"*

*8 and*

*"A stone of stumbling,*

*and a rock of offense."*

*They stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.*

*9 But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. 10 Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.*

*11 Beloved, I urge you as sojourners and exiles to abstain from the passions of the flesh, which wage war against your soul. 12 Keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable, so that when they speak against you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation.*

**- 1 Peter 2:4-12**

## Getting Started

**Read the above verses**

1. Where have you served within Hill City?
  - a. What was your experience?
2. Where have you served in Springfield?
  - a. What was your experience?
3. Where have you served in the World?
  - a. What was your experience?

## Going Deeper

*We want people to be able to voice their thoughts and questions; however, we do not necessarily want to fill those with answers. We will be confronted with what we think we already know about following Jesus versus what the bible says about following Jesus. We will be confronted with whether we are worshiping the Jesus of the bible, or a Jesus we have created in our head. Create an environment where people can just shout out a thought they have.*

1. Have you gone through a season of your life where you were essentially “lone-wolfing” your walk with Jesus?
  - a. What did that look like?
  - b. What did you experience in your life during that time?
2. Where, or what circumstances, are you most likely to talk about Jesus?
  - a. How much of your time is spent in that circumstance?

3. 1 Peter 2:9 states, “But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light?”
- What does this tell you about your purpose?
  - What are the excellencies of Him?
  - What darkness were you called out of?
  - What is His marvelous light?

## Application

*Confession and repentance is the ongoing theme of the believer's life. As God reveals truth to us, we confess where we have sinned against Him, and change our way to honor Him.*

- What is your current level of affection for the local church?
- What do you feel has led you to that current state of affection?
- Do you functionally live as though the local church is a gift of God for your joy?
  - What does that look like in your life?
- Daniel spoke about people disengaging over the summer because of various activities. Has that been, or is that, you? What do you need to confess you have made a greater priority than the local church?
  - What active steps do you need to take to make sure you are committed to the body of believers?
- Daniel talked about how if we are mere spectators at the local church, then we are missing out on so much of what God has for our life. What is your current level of “plugged-in-ness” at Hill City?
  - What is stopping you from being plugged-in more?
- 1 Peter 2:5 refers to believers as living stones being built up as a spiritual house. Daniel stated that we all depend on each other, and that we are part of a whole structure. What is your current level of comfort with depending on other people? Why is that?
- Do you love other covenant members well?
  - What does that look like?
  - Is God prompting you to love in a certain way?

## Transparency & Vulnerability:

If you haven't done so already, split up the men and women in your group.

- Ask if there is anything that needs to be dragged out and confessed before the light of God. Darkness cannot live in the light. Read James 5:16.
- Pray for each other; lay hands on and pray when needed.