**Sermon-Based Community Group Discussion Guide**

**1 Peter 2:1-8**

**Sermon overview**: At Fegenbush campus Pastor Mark Bishop will preach on Jesus as the living stone and what that means for us as the church.

**Context**: Peter was one of Jesus’ original 12 disciples and the person God used to begin the church at Pentecost. (Acts 2:14-41) His letter is written to persecuted believers, encouraging them to live victoriously in the midst of hostility. In this passage, Peter exhorts followers of Christ to crave God’s Word. Peter closes the chapter speaking on how God’s Word produces salvation. “***Since you have been born again, not of perishable seed but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God; for “All flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, and the flower falls, but the word of the Lord remains forever.” And this word is the good news that was preached to you***.” (1 Peter 1:23-25) He also shows how it is the Word of God that causes us to grow into salvation and experience the goodness of the Lord. It is for this reason we should desire God’s Word as newborn nursing babies desire their mother’s milk. There is also a call for believers to put off sin from our lives as we come to Christ. Peter pulls from Old Testament prophecy showing that Jesus is the promised cornerstone of God. (Isaiah 28:16) This cornerstone, our Lord Jesus, was the one who would be rejected by those who are perishing as a rock of offense, but a precious deliverer to those who trust in him. Upon coming to Jesus, who is currently the living stone, believers are built into the temple of God and given gifts to minister together as a royal priesthood. This passage is a picture of how Jesus is the foundational rock of the church. As we come to Him by craving his word and putting off sin, He builds us into a spiritual house, able to minister to others in His power.

**Key Points:**

-God’s Word is our life source, it saves us, and grows us into salvation. We are commanded to hunger for it.

-Jesus and his message of the gospel are either a rock of stumbling or eternal salvation to those who hear.

-As believers are brought into the family of God, they become part of a living organism called the temple of God or the church. We each have some kind of gift, to contribute to the common good of other believers.

**Discussion/Application Questions:**

1. Describe what someone’s life in Christ would look like if they craved the Word of God.
2. Would you say you crave God’s Word? If no, what hinders craving? If yes, what ignites hunger? What changes should you make to crave It more?
3. If God’s Word brings people to salvation and grows them into salvation, how does that affect how we seek to make disciples?
4. In verse 1 there are specific sins mentioned that need to be put off. What are some specific sins that you need to put off in order to come to Christ, the living stone? How will you do that?
5. If we are all meant to be living stones, and we are all called to put away sin coming to Christ, how should you view someone’s unrepentant sin in your community group? What steps will you take to help a brother or sister put off these things?
6. How does the gospel truth of acceptance as a part of God’s house through simply coming to Jesus compel worship in your heart?
7. How does this acceptance through Christ give you hope as you fight to put of any of the specific sins mentioned in v.1?
8. What practical things can you do to be reminded of the preciousness of Christ and the gospel daily? How will you do these things?
9. In what ways does a member of a royal priesthood minister within the body? As a believer, what will you do to fulfill this calling on your life?
10. If someone in your community group is struggling to see their part to play in the royal priesthood, how could you spur them on to discover their gifts and use them for the common good of the group?
11. Peter shows a clear distinction in how Christ is received by those who disobey the word and those who believe. How will that impact your approach to prayer and evangelism?
12. When sharing Jesus with a friend, how could you use the prophecy of Christ being the cornerstone to speak on the necessity of repentance and faith in the gospel?
13. The body of Christ is the spiritual house of God. What difference does that make in how you value engaging in authentic community? What do we need to put off in order to better prioritize community and sharing life with each other?

**Prayer Guide**:

Pray for our church, that God would build us into a strong house for himself, that every living stone in our body would discover, develop, and use their gifts to do the work of the ministry. Pray that God would give a supernatural craving for His Word to all of our church family.

Pray for our city, that unbelievers would be drawn to the Christ they see in us as living stones in the community. Pray that those who are currently rejecting Christ would humbly receive him as the precious cornerstone who gives life to all who trust Him.

Pray for our world, that God’s Word which brings salvation and growth would be translated and distributed in every language and people group that the gospel has yet to reach. Pray that churches would be planted as people come to Christ and become living stones in their own cultural contexts.