

***A Note to Coaches:
What is Mercy for an Athlete?***

At first glance the discipline of mercy may not seem to have direct application to the high school athlete. Integrity, confidence, leadership, accountability, and others are all disciplines that immediately strike a chord as needs for members of a team sport. What the *Wellspring of Life Initiative* is attempting to encourage in the life of a young athlete is a groundedness in the word of God and growth into a Spirit-filled person. Accepting God's mercy (and then displaying mercy) is an integral part of building toward that goal.

This booklet defines mercy as the favor (grace) of God in *not giving* us what we deserve, and in *giving* us what we do not deserve. We do not first *do* mercy, but rather learn that our very existence and being is based on God's mercy toward us. Mercy is born in us when we receive with joy the gift *of* mercy, given through Jesus Christ. Understanding this truth allows a believer to encourage others, as well as to imitate God's mercy in the way he treats others. A team that practices mercy becomes a community of grace.

Coaches, please take the opportunity to share with your athletes what God's mercy has meant in your life. Interacting with your team on a personal level will show your athletes that you have a genuine concern for them; this will provide a tangible example of Biblical mercy, which may lead them to desire to seriously explore the implications of mercy upon their lives and athletic habits. We will pray that, as you move from week to week, Christ will be dwelling in your conversations and will be moving your athletes into a deeper relationships with Him — as well as to you, their teammates and families, and to a hurting world so desperately in need of a generation committed to mercy. Thanks for making this a priority for your season and your athletes!