

Title: **The Many Marks of a Gospel-Formed Church (Part 2)**
Text: **Acts 11:19-30**
Date: **December 15, 2024**

Find the sermon manuscript to follow along with online at mercyhillchurch.org.



Big Idea

As we follow along with the early church in the book of Acts, a lot of times we'll get pictures of what a healthy gospel-formed church should look like even still today. In Acts 11, we see that a gospel-formed church is marked by: (5) Resilience; (6) Leadership; (7) Discipleship; (8) Holiness; and (9) Influence.

Mark #5: Resilience

There is always great need for the church to have resilience because there is always steady opposition against it. And this opposition comes at us both from within (vv. 1-3) and from without (v. 19)—both from fellow Christians, self-proclaimed believers in the church; and from those outside the church in the unbelieving culture around.

What is it that gets the gospel out of Jerusalem? What is it that propels the church onward in this mission? Interestingly enough, it's persecution at every point. Luke is jealous to make this connection plain for us (cf. Acts 8:1, 4; 11:19-20).

Trials are God's taxicabs. They're what he often uses to get his people where he wants them to go. What are you looking at and calling a roadblock when truly it's a guardrail? You think it's the end of the road—like he's putting a stop to all your hopes and dreams. But really he's just trying to get you to turn so he can take you somewhere even better.

Mark #6: Leadership

Jesus does not lead from somewhere high above us. He leads from down low. He doesn't lord it over. He comes to serve. And he doesn't just come down to our level. That would be amazing enough. But he actually comes down and gets beneath us. That's why he's in an animal's feeding trough on Christmas night. That's why he's on his knees at the Last Supper washing feet. That's why he's

hung on that cross in our place. He puts himself in the dirt, so he can put us in the sky! And any leadership in the church that bears his name ought to have that same kind of flavor to it (cf. 1 Pet. 5: 2-3, 5).

Mark #7: Discipleship

As there's this swelling movement happening in Antioch, with people coming to Jesus from all different walks of life, it's not as if the missionaries or the leaders there suddenly say: "Well, if they've been reached for Jesus now, I guess we'll move right along. Our job here is done." They didn't just blitz out of there. They set up camp and stayed a while. The Christian mission isn't just to reach and then release, it's to reach and then teach (v. 26; cf. Matt. 28:19-20). So there's discipleship happening in the church. People are not just coming to faith, they're growing in it.

Mark #8: Holiness

Are you so marked by Christ, that whatever else you are—American or immigrant; white or black; Republican or Democrat; white-collar or blue-collar; rich or poor; man or woman—underneath it all the thing that most defines you is that you're a "Christian" . . . you're a "Christ-person" (cf. v. 26)? He changes the way you hold your citizenship or your ethnicity or your race or your politics or your social status or your gender (cf. Gal. 3:28). You're in the world, but you're not of it. You're something new, something different, something *holy*.

Mark #9: Influence

When the church operates in accordance with each of the previous eight marks we've looked at—(1) Hospitality; (2) Pursual; (3) Generosity; (4) Joy; (5) Resilience; (6) Leadership; (7) Discipleship; (8) Holiness—it's going to attract and influence the culture around it (cf. vv. 21, 24).



Reflection Questions

- Which of the five marks mentioned in today's sermon seemed most relevant to you and why? Where are you strongest? Where do you need the most help? How does the gospel show you the way forward?

W
E
L
C
O
M
E

SCAN TO FILL OUT A



CONNECTION CARD

Give online at mercyhillchurch.org/give or text any amount to 84321 and follow the prompts.

Our Mission & Values

Mercy Hill Church exists to help restore us to God, neighbor, and city through the good news of Jesus Christ.

FAITH: The Way Back to God | We are redeemed to enjoy intimate presses our church *upwards* in love

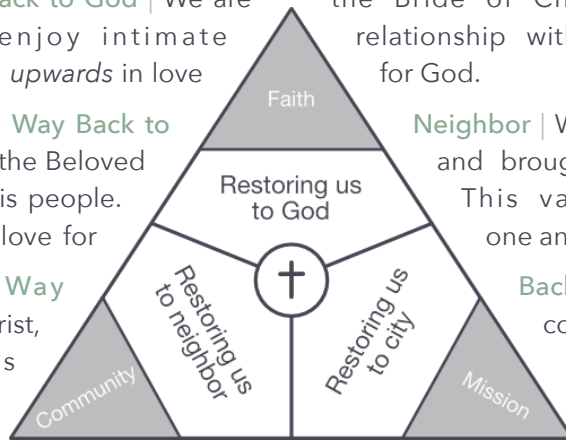
the Bride of Christ, created and relationship with him. This value for God.

COMMUNITY: The Way Back to Christ, adopted in the Beloved relationship with his people. church *inwards* in love for

Neighbor | We are the Family of and brought into covenantal This value presses our one another.

MISSION: The Way the Embassy of Christ, Savior to be his value presses our in love for the

Back to City | We are commissioned by the ambassadors. This church *outwards* unbelieving.



Your Next Steps

When approaching the Christian faith and life, it can be confusing to know where to even begin. Come find us at the Next Steps Table after the service—it would be our joy to help you along in the journey! And if you're a visitor, we have a special gift bag for you. Don't miss it!



Mail: PO Box 23806, San Jose, CA 95153
Phone: (408) 320-7080
Email: info@mercyhillchurch.org
Web: mercyhillchurch.org



Welcome to Mercy Hill Church.
We are so glad you've joined us today!

Announcement Spotlight

Mercy Hill Men's Christmas Gathering - This Saturday!

Men of Mercy Hill Church! We will be having our fourth-annual White Elephant Christmas gift exchange . . . with a twist! Each man will bring an old tool from your home (wrapped—not with pretty paper and bows, of course, but with things like garbage bags and duct tape) to exchange with the other men in the group. Pizza and cookies will be provided. Bocce ball will be played if the weather allows. Tools will be traded. And a very manly Christmas will be had by all!

- Date: Saturday, December 21st
- Time: 1:00pm
- Place: The Walton's backyard - 319 Fontanelle Dr., San Jose, CA 95111
- RSVP: Please scan the QR code below to find a link to sign up.

For more information, please contact Paul Walton
at pwwalton@comcast.net.

Christmas Service - Next Sunday!

All Church Prayer - Tonight!

Holiday Gift Baskets for Allen School Families

End-of-Year Giving

Scan the QR code below for more info!

For clickable content and
more announcements,



scan this code to head to
our Communications Hub!

Or find it online at mercyhillchurch.org/communications-hub.