

Title: **How to Be a Local Church with a Global Impact**
Text: **Acts 13:1-3**
Date: **January 26, 2025**

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Big Idea

If we want to be a local church with a global impact, we need to do what we see the church in Antioch doing here. We need to press up, press in, and press out!

1. Press Up (i.e. Faith)

Prophets and Teachers

All throughout the book of Acts, the growth of the church in Luke's accounting is synonymous with the growth of the word of God. If the church is growing the word is growing. If the word is growing the church is growing. This was hinted at just a few verses prior in Acts 12:24. But it comes out especially clear in Acts 6:7, when he elaborates on that same idea a bit further: "And the *word of God* continued to increase, and the *number of the disciples* multiplied greatly in Jerusalem." The implication in all of this is clear: if you want to grow the church of God you have to be devoted to the word of God.

Praying and Fasting

Fasting is a way of expressing just how badly you want to meet with God on a particular issue at a particular time. It's a way of confessing: "You can have all this world, even my food, but just give me Jesus." It says, "I want less of me and more of you" in a tangible way. It puts our own skin in the game, literally. It puts a physical exclamation point at the end of our spiritual sentences.

Worshiping (i.e. Serving) the Lord

Until we're on that altar (Rom. 12:1), we're not ready to hear. We won't be able to discern where God is calling us because we're not fully surrendered. We'll twist what he's saying to serve what we want. Our "yes" has to already be on the table before the revelation comes. That's what it means to be a living sacrifice. "The answer is 'yes'—now what were you wanting me to do, where were you wanting me to go?"

2. Press In (i.e. Community)

There's a deep and surprising community here in Antioch that's being formed in and around the gospel. This is obviously just a sampling of the kinds of people that were a part of this church. But even with a small list, we have incredible diversity.

So first there's "Barnabas". He was a Jew, a Levite from Cyprus (Acts 4:36), and a man marked out for his generosity and gentle and encouraging manner. Then there's "Simeon." It is assumed he was likely a black African, since "Niger" is the Latin word for "black" or "dark". Then, we have "Lucius"—a man now who certainly was African. Cyrene was a city on the coast of northern Africa. Then there's "Manaen." Luke tells us he's "a lifelong friend of Herod the tetrarch . . ." Jesus called Herod a "fox" (Luke 13:32), but Manaen, at least at one point, called him "friend". And then of course there's "Saul"—a Pharisee from Tarsus, a hyper-religious once vehement persecutor of the church, a recovering murderer of Christians (Acts 8:1-3).

Bottom line: this is a very diverse group—socially, culturally, racially, religiously, economically, politically. And there would have, therefore, been many opportunities for division and misunderstanding and hurt feelings and suspicion. And yet, there is unity. Because of the gospel! The gospel *humbles* us, *frees* us, and *inspires* us to press in!

3. Press Out (i.e. Mission)

Where is God sending you? What is God calling you to do? Open yourself to him now and ask. It might mean he's calling you into something new, to go somewhere else. But it also might mean he's calling you to go back into the same places you've always gone but this time with renewed gospel intentionality.



Reflection Questions

- When is the last time you fasted? What might that reveal about your desire (i.e. 'hunger') for God above all else?
- Why do you come to Mercy Hill's Sunday "Service"? How does Acts 13:2 when read alongside Rom. 12:1 potentially change your approach? What would it mean to put your life on the altar for Jesus today?
- Look at point three above again. Where is God sending you? What is he calling you to do? Let's go!

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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

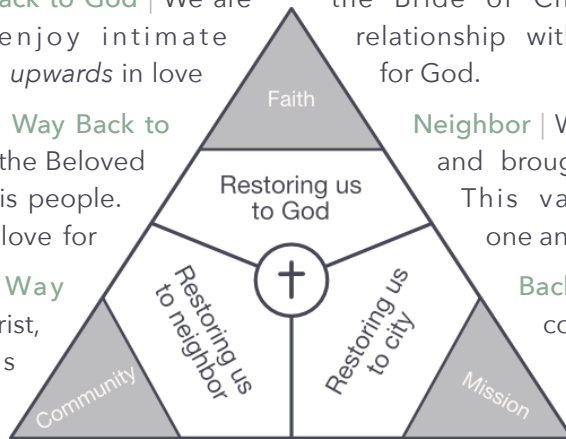
the Bride of Christ, created and relationship with him. This value for God.

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!



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

Announcement Spotlight

All Church Campout - Save the Date!

We are excited to announce that we will again be hosting our All Church Campout at Mount Madonna County Park! This year, it will take place over the weekend of **June 20-22**. Mark your calendars. We have a huge group campsite all to ourselves and lots of options in the park for having fun together. Whether you love to camp or you'd rather still sleep in your own bed, we have something for everyone. More info to come as the day gets closer!

For more information, please contact us at info@mercyhillchurch.org.

Sunday Prayer Walk - Today after the Service!

Men's DNA Group - Frontline Men!

Short-Term Missions Trips Interest Meeting - Tonight on Zoom!

Barnabas Team for New Missionaries

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.