

A Father and His Three Sons (Part 3)

Luke: All Things New



Series Goal

That Mercy Hill Church would be made new as we follow the One who is making all things new!



Sermon Text

Luke 15:1-2, 11-32



Big Idea

Mercy Hill Church exists to help restore us to God, neighbor, and city through the good news of Jesus Christ. This parable embodies our mission wonderfully and helps us visualize a bit more just what it could look like to live this out together as a church.

(1) Restoring Us to God: *Entering into the Father's Party*

(1) We Must Repent Not Only of Whats but Also, and Especially, of Our Whys—The danger, when we only repent of our whats is we actually only move from the younger son lostness to older son lostness. We move from self-indulgence to self-righteousness. We move from license to legalism. clean up externally, but our hearts have not been cleansed by the blood of Christ and touched by the Spirit. We've not yet truly encounter grace and been transformed by it from the inside out.

(2) We Must Receive the Free Offer of Grace However Impossible or Offensive It May Seem—Your sin is not so bad that it can keep you from God and your righteousness is not so good that it can get you to Him. We need to repent of both and receive the free offer of grace in Jesus.

(2) Restoring Us to Neighbor: *Sitting with the Father's Family*

(1) It's Going to Get Awkward at Times—The cross of Christ crushes both kinds of sons to the ground and, from the wreckage of ego and self-centeredness, He creates a new community, a new family in its place, where, in spite of all the differences, we come to find that there is a fundamental similarity that keeps it all together. We are both sinners. We both need grace. And we've both found it in Jesus!

(2) It's Going to Get Costly at Times—Our sacrifices are nothing like what Christ our true older brother —“the firstborn among many brothers” (Rom 8:29)—sacrificed for us. He forfeited not just a portion but all of His inheritance, indeed, even His very life, so that we might be restored to His Father and, through that, to one another.

(3) Restoring Us to City: *Participating in the Father's Pursuit*

“People often complain that they lack time for mission. But we all have to eat. Three meals a day, seven days a week. That's twenty-one opportunities for mission and community without adding anything to your schedule. You could meet up with another Christian for breakfast on the way to work—read the Bible together, offer accountability, pray for one another. You could meet up with colleagues at lunchtime. . . . You could invite your neighbors over for a meal. Better still, invite them over with another family from church. That way you get to do mission and community at the same time; plus your unbelieving neighbors will get to see the way the gospel impacts our relationship as Christians. You could invite someone who lives alone to share your family meal and follow it with board games, giving your children an opportunity to serve others through their welcome. Francis Schaeffer says: ‘Don't start with a big program. Don't suddenly think that you can add to your church budget and begin. Start personally and start in your home. I dare you. I dare you in the name of Jesus Christ. Do what I am going to suggest. Begin by opening your home for community. . . . [T]here is no place in God's world where there are no people who will come and share a home as long as it is a real home’” (Chester, *A Meal with Jesus*, p. 92).

Reflection Questions



- Think of a time you committed sin this past week. How did you respond to it? Did you vow to “pay God back”? Did grace seem too good to be true, or too offensive?
- How do you feel about the idea that being a part of community in Christ will be costly at times? How have you experienced this? What's one way God is calling you to sacrifice in love for another even now?
- Read the quote from Chester again above. What are your thoughts? Can you do this? What's holding you back? Think of one person you might invite to share a meal with you this week.