

# In the Spirit and Power of Elijah

Sermon Series: **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!



## Key Text

Luke 1:17

→ "...and he will go before him in the spirit and power of Elijah, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready for the Lord a people prepared."



## Big Idea

All that Elijah and John were laboring for has at last been realized in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ! A sinful people can now be fully and finally reconciled to a holy God!

### (1) Elijah in Historical Memory (Kings)

Elijah parallels John in description, mission, and succession. Both were prophets who would spend their lives engaged against the idols of the land in an attempt to bring the people back to YHWH. Both anointed a successor who would follow after them and bring to completion the mission.

### (2) Elijah in Prophetic Hope (Malachi)

The return to YHWH brought in by Elijah and Elisha proved to be a temporary one. The people's obstinance in sin sends them into exile. But God still pursues them even there. And He brings them back. They rebuild the temple, but by Malachi's day, disillusionment had already set in thick. Worst of all, their hearts seem to be no better! They're back in the land and their still doing the things that got them expelled in the first place! But the book of Malachi, largely full of rebuke, holds out one massive promise in its last verses: "Behold, I will send you Elijah..." (Mal 4:5).

### (3) Elijah in Johannine Ministry (Luke/Gospels)

It is no coincidence that this last promise, this oracle from Malachi of a coming Elijah, is the very first promise picked up in Luke's gospel! God is on the move again! And He's bringing His people home! We can sum up what God has been after with the historical Elijah and now with John the Baptist in a single word: reconciliation. The whole history from Elijah to John emphasizes one preeminent point: Though you persist in sin I will yet persist in grace! "Where sin increased, grace abounded all the more" (Rom 5:20). Because I want you with Me! And it is Christ who would finally and fully accomplish this glorious reconciliation for us in His death and resurrection (Col 1:21-22)!



## Critical Action

Be reconciled to God and be reconciling with one another.



## Reflection Questions

- Why do you think John comes "in the spirit and power of Elijah"? How does the OT background help you better understand John's ministry and connection with Jesus?
- Read Luk 7:18-23. Why do you think John seems to be doubting here? Have there been times in your life where you've doubted along similar lines? Explain. How was Jesus' response intended to help John? How would such a response help us in our doubting?
- Are you reconciled to God? Are you enamored with the Baals of our culture? How so? Are you overwhelmed with the weight of your sin? Do you try to buy indulgences or do penance to get back to Him? What does justification by faith alone mean to you?
- Are you reconciling? Do you have the balance sheet? How has it shown up in your relationships this week? What would it look like to burn it and be a conduit of grace?