

Pay Attention to Yourselves!

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 17:1-4



Big Idea

This is a world at war. Temptations are all around. Jesus calls us to pay attention to ourselves. Get in the Scriptures. Gather with God's people. And root yourself deep in the gospel.

(1) Temptations to Sin (vv. 1-2)

Observation #1: The Inevitability of It—Before coming to Christ, the idea of temptation to sin is, in many ways, a foreign concept. You didn't feel the need to fight or resist these things. You did what you wanted. When you sinned you were acting in accordance with your fallen nature. It all just felt natural. You were just going down with the current of the world, the flesh, and the devil. But then, suddenly, when you come to Christ, it's as if everything turns. In Him you have a new nature, a new Spirit, a new life-governing principle. And now, what you come to find is that, in many ways, you are swimming upstream. Now, you are no longer on the devil's team, you're on his hit-list.

Observation #2: The Personality of It—Satan disguises himself as an angel of light and he comes into the church veiled under the form of those who would seem to be righteous and knowledgeable and trustworthy. That's the scandal in all this. It's not the dude with a pitchfork in his hand. Nor is it the guy with a cold one in his hand. It's the guy up front with a Bible in his hand. That's the guy to watch out for!

Observation #3: The End of It—"Better to be dead than to be a false guide!" (PNTC).

(2) The Disciple's Self-Watch (vv. 3-4)

Suggestion #1: Make Space in Your Life for God's Word—In 2 Tim 3 Paul talks about the war around us, with its temptations and things, and, in light of that, he moves towards the importance of spending time in God's word. We are in a war. And the word of God is called "sword of the Spirit" (Eph 6:17). What kind of soldier forgets to bring his weapon to the battlefield?

Suggestion #2: Make Space in Your Life for God's People—Paying attention to one's self, while in one sense it is an individual matter between me and God, in another sense, it is a community project. I think part of what Jesus is getting at here is that it's part of the nature of sin to numb as it kills. What I mean is often when we're in the thick of it, we don't even know we're in the thick of it. We're so busy enjoying the bait, we don't even realize we're on the hook. And we need our brothers and sisters in Christ to help. We are in a war. What kind of soldier goes out to the battlefield alone?!

Suggestion #3: Make Sure You Get the Gospel!—The gospel is, as Paul says, "of first importance" (1 Cor 15:3). Everything hinges on this. All attacks from the enemy zero in on this. If the gospel can be distorted then the Christian can be discarded. When we make space in our lives for God's word, well His word is all about the gospel. When we make space in our lives for God's people, well this is a community centered around the gospel, constantly ministering and living in light of the gospel. So we've got to know what the gospel is.

Reflection Questions



- Are you a Christian? In what ways did coming to Christ make your life better? In what ways did it actually make things harder? Describe your experience of spiritual warfare. What temptations to sin have you experienced lately? Through whom did they come? In what ways do you fear you might be tempting others to sin? What needs to change?
- What do you think Jesus means when He says: "Pay attention to yourselves!"? How do you try to do this in your own life?
- Do you have any other Christians in your life who can help keep you on track, who can call you out when you're wandering into doctrinal or moral error? Do you seek people out? Do you let people in? Are you actively caring for others in this way and helping them along in their discipleship to Jesus? Or are you kind of going it alone? Why? What needs to change?