

Sin Persists but Grace Prevails! (Part 1)

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 9:37-56



Big Idea

Even after conversion sin still persists in the heart of the Christian. It can be quite ugly at times. But, because of Christ's commitment to bring to completion the work He's started, we can be sure that grace will ultimately prevail!

Sin Persists

Vignette #1: Independence (vv. 37-43a)

When we consider what Mark records in his version of this story, this idea of "Independence" becomes plain. You see Jesus comes out at the end when the disciples ask Him: "Why could we not cast it out?" (Mark 9:28b)—and He responds: "This kind cannot be driven out by anything but prayer [and the great majority of manuscripts include here: 'and fasting']" (v. 29). In other words: "You weren't relying on God for this, but on yourselves—your experience, your knowledge, your strength. And, therefore, you got nowhere with it.

Vignette #2: Deafness (vv. 43b-45)

The thing I really want to bring out here is actually found in the statement that follows this: "[T]hey were afraid to ask him about this saying" (v. 45b). To be sure, these disciples did hear something. Matthew's account of this says that upon hearing these things "they were greatly distressed" (Matt 17:23). So they got something of it. But they got enough to know they didn't want to know any more. "I don't want to ask Him about this saying. In fact, I think I want to plug my ears." And this is the convicting point. We have to admit that there is something in us that gravitates towards certain verses in Scripture and away from others. But when we press into these harder words we realize He tells us these things because He wants to prepare us, He wants to warn us, He wants to teach us . . . because He loves us.

Vignette #3: Rivalry (vv. 46-48)

We can take the message of the cross and make it a means of self-glorification. It's not just preachers who deal with this. It's everyone in the pew. We like to think that if we can get people from the world into the church that we'll solve the sin problem. But what we come to find out is that we take a lot of that same junk we had out there, and we just dress it up in religious robes.

But Grace Prevails!

Jesus doesn't see the sin in these guys and just leave them behind. He doesn't shrug them off or disown them. He's not embarrassed by them. He doesn't cut them from the team. He loves them! He sets His face not away from them, but "toward Jerusalem" (cf. vv. 51, 53)—where He knows He's going to die for them. Our sin may be stubborn but the Savior's grace is more so! Though our sin persists, grace will ultimately prevail.

Reflection Questions



- Are you sometimes discouraged with the sin that remains in you? Did you think it would be easier than this? Did you think sanctification would go faster? What other verses in Scripture prepare you for the process and the battle?
- Which of these three vignettes most captures what you've been struggling with lately? Explain. How can grace prevail over this?
- In what ways do you think you bring the values of the world into the church? Why is loving the least of these true greatness? How have you experienced this? Why is it still so hard to do?