

What Did We Expect?

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 13:10-21



Big Idea

Few things in life are more distressing than unmet expectations. In the gap that forms between our expectations and reality a war is waged. We must decide in those moments whether we will open to God in trust or turn against Him in bitterness. His kingdom comes in unexpected ways and forms.

(1) What Should We Expect?

(1) Organic—I suppose this idea of an organic, slowly developing, kingdom shouldn't surprise us. After all, that's how Jesus, the King of this kingdom, has been doing things from the very start, right? Think of it. He's born to a poor family, in an unimpressive little town, in an animal trough, with no one celebrating His birth at first except some grungy shepherds. And this is His grand entrance into the world?!

(2) Internal—The kingdom of God is first and fundamentally an internal reality. It is something that begins inside a person, with transformation of the heart, and moves out from there.

(3) Universal—Though it starts small, and begins with the internal, even invisible, realms of the heart, it will eventually spread and expand to universal proportions.

(2) Why Do We Often Push Back?

Why, when that gap starts to form between my expectation and reality, do I often find it easier to blame God and argue with Him than to open my heart to Him and let Him realign me with reality and the ways of His kingdom? My sense is that, if you're willing to look behind that stuff you're feeling, you'll likely find these two things lurking in your heart: (1) There are sins that you don't want to own up to and face and these unmet expectations are bringing that out. You're not willing to own it yet and let God talk to you about it. (2) And there are plans that you had for your life that you don't want to release and with these unmet expectations God's calling you out on it. "Will you trust Me to do what's best for you?"

When we become overly fixated on what God is not doing for us we miss all that He really and truly is doing. We can't see it. We won't see it. We miss the seed and leaven. We miss the growth of God—the advance of His kingdom around us. And we run the risk of being left behind. Like a train pulling away from the station, the kingdom of God just moves on without us, because we wouldn't get on board.

(3) How Can We Bridge the Gap?

(1) Read Your Bible—When we read our Bibles we see this play out again and again. God is not doing less here, but more. I might not see it yet, but I will soon. Jesus I'm open to you. Talk to me, teach me, show me where your kingdom is moving, because I've lost sight of it, but I know it's here.

(2) Name Your Struggle—The Scriptures teach us to doubt and struggle *towards* God rather than away from Him. Tell Him where you are struggling. He can handle it. He can help. Share with God's people. They can pray. They can help you locate the kingdom once more.

Reflection Questions



- Describe a time recently when you were struggling with unmet expectations. How did you respond? What was going on in your heart? Thinking about it now, were there sins you weren't wanting to face or plans you weren't willing to release? How do you think God's kingdom was on the move even in that place of letdown?
- What does the kingdom of God as organic mean to you? How does that revelation transform what could be moments of discouragement into moments of hope? Where do you need this truth in your life most right now?
- How do you feel about sharing your doubts and struggles with others in the church? How has this been hard for you? How has it helped? How can you be a safe place for others?