

Title: **Critical Characteristics of a Christian Influencer (Part 4)**
Text: **Acts 20:28-32**
Date: **February 15, 2026**

Find the sermon manuscript to follow along with online at mercyhillchurch.org.

Big Idea

In our text, Paul gathers the Ephesian elders to say goodbye and encourage them one last time. As we overhear their conversation, we learn what it looks like to be a healthy disciple of Jesus making healthy disciples of Jesus. We see the critical characteristics of a Christian influencer. This morning we see that Christian influencers “shepherd others” and “center on the gospel.”

Characteristic #11: They Shepherd Others

Mark #1: Impartiality

Paul doesn't say: “Pay careful attention to yourselves and to *some of the flock*.” “Pay careful attention to yourselves and to *those in the flock for whom you have a particular liking*.” No! “Pay careful attention to yourselves and to *all the flock* . . .” You can't pick favorites. You can't say: “I think I'll love on these sheep but not those. These sheep smell nice. They've got soft wool, good manners. But those ones . . . they bite. They've got bugs all up in them. They stink. No thanks.”

Mark #2: Humility

How did these elders come to occupy the positions of influence that they did? The Holy Spirit put them there (v. 28). Certainly it had something to do with their character and competency as we see in the elder qualifications Paul gives us in 1 Timothy and Titus. But it all ultimately has its source in the Holy Spirit.

“What do you have that you did not receive? If then you received it, why do you boast as if you did not receive it?” (1 Cor. 4:7).

Mark #3: Charity

The value that God places on you is as inestimable as the value of the blood of his only beloved Son. One drop of Jesus' blood is worth more than all the money in the world. And he spent it, every last drop

—not to get mansions, or yachts, or vacation packages, or whatever else—but to get you (cf. 1 Pet. 1:18-19)!

If you want to influence others for Jesus you have to treat them like that—like you know something of how invaluable they are to God, no matter how unvaluable they may be to the world. He cares for them. So you care for them. He shed his blood to be with them. So you can shed yours as well.

“Did I die for them, and wilt not thou look after them? Were they worth my blood and are they not worth thy labour?” (Richard Baxter, The Reformed Pastor).

Characteristic #12: They Center On the Gospel

It doesn't matter if you already “know” the gospel, you always need the gospel—every day, now and forever. It's not something you merely put in a tract and hand to an unbeliever. It's something for the most seasoned believer to take in again and again and again. You don't begin with the gospel and press on to other things. No! You begin and you end there. As Tim Keller has said: “The gospel is not just the A-B-C's but the A-Z of Christianity.” Or as I've put it before: “The gospel is not merely the starting line of a much longer race. It's more like the hub of a wheel. Without the gospel always at the center, nothing in the Christian life turns. Everything stalls out. You go nowhere.”

Every sin I ever commit is a breakdown of gospel embrace. It's evidence that I still don't fully get it; or, even if I do get it, it's at least evidence that I'm not fully believing it.

The gospel doesn't just get you started, it builds you up, and it takes you home! It's the gospel that gets you going, gets you growing, and gets you glowing! It's the gospel that you and I need—from the beginning to the end . . . and all through the middle!



Reflection Questions

- Which of the marks identified under Characteristic #11 is hardest for you and why? What steps can you take to pursue growth in it?
- Identify one sin you've struggled with lately. Trace it down. In what way is it the result of a breakdown in “gospel embrace”?

W

E

L

C

O

M

E

SCAN TO FILL OUT A



CONNECTION CARD

Give your offering online at mercyhillchurch.org/give or place it in the dropbox at the back.

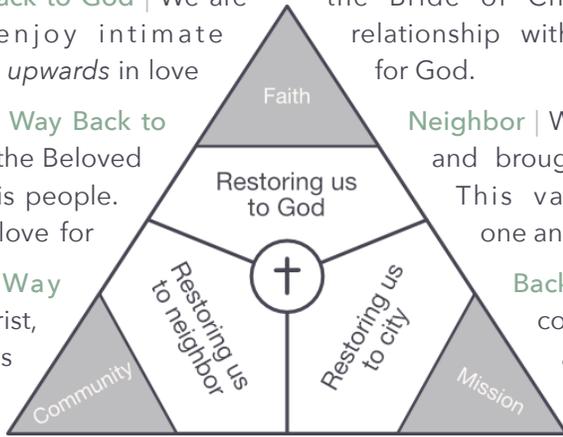
Our Mission & Values

Mercy Hill Church exists to help restore us to God, neighbor, and city through the good news of Jesus Christ.

FAITH: The Way Back to God | We are the Bride of Christ, created and redeemed to enjoy intimate relationship with him. This value presses our church *upwards* in love for God.

COMMUNITY: The Way Back to Christ, adopted in the Beloved relationship with his people. This value presses our church *inwards* in love for Neighbor | We are the Family of and brought into covenantal relationship with his people. This value presses our one another.

MISSION: The Way the Embassy of Christ, Savior to be his ambassadors. This value presses our church *outwards* in love for the Back to City | We are commissioned by the ambassadors. This church *outwards* unbelieving.



Your Next Steps

When approaching the Christian faith and life, it can be confusing to know where to even begin. Come find us at the Next Steps Table after the service—it would be our joy to help you along in the journey! And if you're a visitor, we have a special gift bag for you. Don't miss it!



Mail: PO Box 23806, San Jose, CA 95153
Phone: (408) 320-7080
Email: info@mercyhillchurch.org
Web: mercyhillchurch.org



Welcome to Mercy Hill Church.
We are so glad you've joined us today!

Announcement Spotlight

Nicaragua Short-Term Missions Trip - Applications Due ASAP!

Applications for our Nicaragua short-term missions trip in partnership with Arms of Love this summer are due ASAP! The tentative trip date will be ~6/3 - 6/11 (exact dates will be confirmed soon!). This is a great opportunity to grow in Faith, Community and Mission as we go and serve the staff and children with Arms of Love.

Scan the QR code below to find a link for the application.

Please reach out Joey at joey@mercyhillchurch.org with any questions.

All Church Prayer - Tonight!

All Church Campout - June 26-28

Scan the QR code below for more info and clickable content!

SCAN FOR THE



SUNDAY SIDEBAR

A digital space designed to supplement your Sunday Service experience.