

Lambs in the Midst of Wolves

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 10:1-3



Big Idea

Jesus sends us all out on mission. But if we are to see any fruit in the field, we must go out in reliance on Him and as reflections of Him. We must be ready to die in love for God and neighbor.

(1) Kingdom Expansions (v. 1)

Ministry—engagement in the mission of God—is not just for the few, the proud, the professionals—it’s for the church at large. Every saint is sent. Every Christian is a missionary—a sent one of God.

(2) First Principles (v. 2)

If we see the great harvest need and run ahead of God in attempt to meet it, we will spend buckets of sweat but see none of the fruit. Such a thing, as noble as it may first seem, betrays a self-reliance, a misplaced faith in what we can accomplish, and God will need to slow that down and teach us the secret of abiding prayer. Prayer should precede and then even permeate our doing. Prayer is often the thing we never get around to, but it is truly the thing we should be always giving ourselves to.

Our prayerlessness for the sake of pragmatism is ironic, because Jesus in our text is actually grounding His command to pray in the concern for pragmatism. If you really want results, if you really want fruit in the field, you have to talk to the Lord of the harvest. Prayer is not contrary to pragmatism but critical to it. In other words: prayer works!

(3) Eloquent Wounds (v. 3)

“Christ died for us so that we would not have to die for sin, not so that we would not have to die for others. Christ bore the punishment of our sin so that our death and suffering are never punishment from God. The call to suffer with Christ is not a call to bear our sins the way he bore them but [a call] to love the way he loved. . . . Because he took my guilt and my punishment and reconciled me to God as my Father, I do not need to cling any longer to the comforts of earth in order to be content. I am free to let things go for the sake of making the supremacy of God’s worth known” (John Piper, *Let the Nations Be Glad*, p. 77). So we are sent out “as lambs in the midst of wolves”, then, not as an offering for sin, but as tangible re-presentations of the Lamb who so loved the world that He gave His life as an offering for our sin on that cross. Our willing-to-die love declares to the world: “Jesus is alive and He loves you!”

Reflection Questions



- Have you been leaving the mission and ministry stuff to the professionals, the pastors, the guys with seminary degrees, or whatever—whether from fear or from apathy? Or are you on mission for Christ? Do you have a heart for the harvest? Explain.
- If you want to see your family member or neighbor reached for Christ, what do you think would be the most effective use of your time—an hour spent talking with them about the truths of the gospel, laying out evidence and arguments; or an hour spent in prayer to the Lord of all? Explain.
- Are you willing to be a lamb pointing to *the Lamb*? Do you see suffering as a hindrance to your mission or as a means of advancing it? Do you spend all of your resources and energy trying to avoid it? Or do you so spend all your resources and energy in love for others that you can’t help but encounter it? Explain. How can Jesus help?