

Our New Mission Statement

Introduction

The Text

¹ Now when Jesus learned that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus was making and baptizing more disciples than John ² (although Jesus himself did not baptize, but only his disciples), ³ he left Judea and departed again for Galilee. ⁴ And he had to pass through Samaria. ⁵ So he came to a town of Samaria called Sychar, near the field that Jacob had given to his son Joseph. ⁶ Jacob's well was there; so Jesus, wearied as he was from his journey, was sitting beside the well. It was about the sixth hour.

⁷ A woman from Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink." ⁸ (For his disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.) ⁹ The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria?" (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.) ¹⁰ Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water." ¹¹ The woman said to him, "Sir, you have nothing to draw water with, and the well is deep. Where do you get that living water?" ¹² Are you greater than our father Jacob? He gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did his sons and his livestock." ¹³ Jesus said to her, "Everyone who drinks of this water will be thirsty again, ¹⁴ but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never be thirsty again. The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life." ¹⁵ The woman said to him, "Sir, give me this water, so that I will not be thirsty or have to come here to draw water."

¹⁶ Jesus said to her, "Go, call your husband, and come here." ¹⁷ The woman answered him, "I have no husband." Jesus said to her, "You are right in saying, 'I have no husband'; ¹⁸ for you have had five husbands, and the one you now have is not your husband. What you have said is true." ¹⁹ The woman said to him, "Sir, I perceive that you are a prophet. ²⁰ Our fathers worshiped on this mountain, but you say that in Jerusalem is the place where people ought to worship." ²¹ Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. ²² You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. ²³ But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. ²⁴ God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth." ²⁵ The woman said to him, "I know that Messiah is coming (he who is called Christ). When he comes, he will tell us all things." ²⁶ Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am he."

²⁷ Just then his disciples came back. They marveled that he was talking with a woman, but no one said, "What do you seek?" or, "Why are you talking with her?" ²⁸ So the woman left her water jar and went away into town and said to the people, ²⁹ "Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ?" ³⁰ They went out of the town and were coming to him. (John 4:1–30)

New Mission, Logo, and Website

A. This morning, we're actually going to be unveiling a couple of things:

1. First, a new mission statement, which you see outlined there in your handout.
2. And then, second, a new logo, which I'll show you at the end of our service this morning.
3. (But, later this week, God willing, you should know that we'll also be unveiling a new church website.)

- a. So it's exciting stuff—foundational stuff that I hope will help us as a church extend our reach into the city around us for God's glory.
- B. Now, if today we're going to be talking about a new mission statement for our church, you might be wondering: "Why did we just read this text in John?"
 - 1. While I'm going to have to stay pretty hi-level with this text, I did think you might benefit from me baking my explanation of the new mission statement together with this story in [John 4](#). Because I think this story with Jesus and the woman at the well embodies, illustrates, fleshes out what our new mission statement is all about.
 - a. Plus, it encourages me to see that the mission we are on as a church is the very same mission our Savior was and is still on. I trust you'll come to see what I mean.
- C. This morning, I really just want to do two things: (1) I want to explain why I felt led to move us towards this new statement; and then (2) I want to explain the statement itself to you in more detail.
 - 1. But, before I do any of that, we should at least read it together here at the beginning: "Mercy Hill exists to help restore you to God, neighbor, and city through the good news of Jesus Christ."

Why the Change?

- A. Before I really unfold the new statement bit by bit, some explanations are called for, I think, as to why we are making this change in the first place. As I tried to boil down my reasoning here for you, three things really came to mind: (1) Accessibility; (2) Directionality; and (3) Coherency.

(1) Accessibility

- A. Make no mistake, I like the statement we've had up to this point, with its acronym and all. I still stand behind it and want us to live in light of it, but I was always a little concerned it was a bit too hard to explain, and the words were a bit too far removed from everyday language.
 - 1. I think we want people to be able to look in from the outside and (1) not only understand what our mission as a church is, but also (2) see how or why they personally might need what we as a Church have to offer in Jesus.
- B. From the standpoint of understanding, we wanted to use words that were simpler, common—going so far as to even break down a somewhat churchy word like "gospel" into the more common vernacular of "good news".
- C. Now, from the stand point of them seeing how they need what we as a church are all about, think about this with me. While they might not grant us that they need to be restored to God, I'm willing to bet that in the realms of neighbor and city they feel it.

1. With regard to neighbor, no doubt they feel estranged from other people sometimes and lie awake at night wondering why their relationship are so riddled with conflict, so hard. Why don't my kids just listen to me? Why is my spouse laying right there in bed next to me and yet it feels like there might as well be a brick wall running down the center of this mattress? How do we break through? Why does it seem like everyone I ever let into my heart, hurts me in the end?
 - a. They live in a fallen world. They experience it. They might not know why, or how to get it right, but they do experience it. "I want to be restored to neighbor."

2. With regard to city, the same sort of things could be said. A city is the place you inhabit—the place you work, rest, play, live. The idea of being restored to city then is this idea of being restored to a sense of purpose and life in the place you occupy. It's gaining a clearer sense of why you're here, what you're doing, and who you're doing it all for.
 - a. So do you think the people in the neighborhoods around San Jose need to be restored to city? You better believe it. No doubt, they experience life in a fallen world on this point as well. We all live under the curses of [Gen 3](#). Surely they experience the thorns and the thistles, the fruit that comes only by the sweat of one's brow and the breaking of one's back.
 - i. That guy that rises at 6am, gets in the car, sits in traffic for a good hour, then works in the office for another 10, then turns around, comes home and prepares to do it all again . . . don't you think sometimes he finds himself wondering: "What am I doing here? What's the point? Why am I in Silicon Valley? Yeah sure, it's great to work for this startup or that fortune 500 company, but I feel like I'm on my way to a stomach shot through with ulcers just trying to keep up. Is this what life is all about? I want to feel a sense of purpose and peace in a place. I want to be restored to city."

D. The hope, then, is that our mission statement—because it's accessible both in the everyday language it uses and in the everyday experience it points to—actually starts to awaken deep and ancient longings in the hearts even of unbelievers. And it points them in the way of help.

(2) Directionality

- A. What I simply mean here is that I think this statement sends out clearer lines for our church to march in. The three words there—God, neighbor, and city—really serve as three arrows pointing us in three particular directions.
 1. Restoring you to God through the good news of Jesus Christ directs our energies as a church upwards. If we are not restored to God through Christ, we cannot even begin to be restored in these other directions.
 - a. So we have sermons, musical worship, prayer meetings, etc.
 2. Restoring you to neighbor through the good news of Jesus Christ directs our energies as a church inwards—because we believe that the only way you are truly going to be restored to

neighbor, to other people, is if you come into the church and establish community around the gospel.

- a. So we have Home Groups, Covenant Membership, First Sunday Funday, camping trips, etc.
3. Restoring you to city through the good news of Jesus Christ directs our energies as a church outwards. We're not just about connecting you to God and one another and then hunkering down until Jesus returns. No! We go back into the city with a renewed sense of purpose and mission. You start to see so much more worth living for. Even common, everyday activities start to shimmer with eternal significance.
 - a. So we talk about faith and vocation, missional motherhood, we do local evangelism, we partner with other ministries like Kids Club, Real Options, Foster the Bay, Teen Challenge, Sihora Clinic, etc.—so that you start to see your life coming into the grander story and purpose and mission of God.
- B. So do you see how this statement provides clearer direction for our energy and labors as a church?

(3) Coherency

- A. This mission statement is just cleaner overall when it's packaged with the rest of our church's vision and values and things. I don't have time to go into this one, but you'll probably be able read about it on our new website, or we'll discuss this sort of thing in our Covenant Membership classes.

Making Sense of the Mission

- A. Now, let's make sense of this statement. I want you to see it. In particular, I want you to see it fleshed out in this story with Jesus and the woman at the well. Let's take our statement piece by piece.

To Help Restore You

- A. So first, we say that "Mercy Hill exists to help restore you . . ."
1. The idea of restoration here implies the repairing of something broken, the return to something that once was. It presupposes the fact that the way things are is not the way things are supposed to be, not the way things were designed to function. It touches on the idea that this world, and even we ourselves, are fallen, distorted, broken. And we need help, we need rescue, we need restoration.
 - a. Well, that's what Jesus has come to do!
- B. And that's what He's doing here with this woman at the well. Like you and I and everyone in this city, this woman too is broken. Many commentators have pointed out a couple things that seem off about her behavior from the start.

1. For one thing, it is very strange that she has come to draw water at “about the sixth hour” of the day (v. 6), which by the Jew’s counting was noon. This is the hottest time of the day. Most women would come to draw water for their households either in the cool of the morning or the evening. So why is she arriving here at noon?
 2. Beyond this, it is a strange thing that this woman has come alone. Most women would travel together with friends or family. But not her.
- C. Such observations have caused most all commentators to conclude that here we have a woman who must be dealing in one way or another with shame.
1. The clear indication is that this shame is resulting from the matter Jesus goes on to speak with her about. “[Y]ou have had five husbands, and the one you now have is not your husband” (v. 18). Perhaps in our day sleeping around in some circles actually makes you even more popular or cool. But in this woman’s time and culture, such behavior was a disgrace. You would be ostracized for these things.
 - a. So she comes alone to the well at a time when all the other women would be in their homes . . . why? Because she doesn’t want to be seen. She is hiding, as it were, even as she is here standing in broad daylight.
- D. And Jesus knows all about it. He’s come to bring restoration. And we as a church exist to partner with Him in this mission.

Through the Good News of Jesus Christ

- A. But how’s He going to do it? How are we going to do it? Well, to jump to the end of our statement there, restoration comes through, or by way of, “the good news of Jesus Christ.”
- B. Now, honestly, it may sound silly, but I thought long and hard about whether we should say “gospel” or “good news” here in our statement. But one of the reasons I opted to go with good news here is because of the fact that it emphasizes what we are so often prone to forget.
- C. It was really a sermon by Tim Keller that tipped the scales for me on this. He was talking about what gospel-centered ministry looks like and then he went into this idea of the gospel as news: “Some years ago, I heard a tape series . . . by David Martyn Lloyd-Jones, an evening sermon series on 1 Corinthians 15. In it, he made a distinction that was extremely clarifying, how the gospel is based on historical events in a way that other religions just aren’t: he said that there is a big difference between . . . good advice and good news.

The gospel, he would say, is good news, not good advice. Here’s what he said about that: ‘Advice is counsel about something to do and it hasn’t happened yet, but you can do it. . . . News is a report about something that has happened—you can’t do anything about it—it’s been done for you and all you can do is respond to it.’

Now think this out: here is a king and he goes into a battle against an invading army to defend his land. If the king defeats the invading army he sends back to the capital city messengers, very happy envoy. He sends back, ‘good news-ers’ with his report. They come back and they say, ‘It has been defeated! It’s all been done! Therefore respond with joy and now go about your lives. Conduct your lives in this peace which has been achieved for you.’ But if the invading army breaks through,

the king sends back military advisers and says, 'Swordsmen over here and marksmen over here and the horsemen over here. We're going to have to fight for our lives.'

Dr. Lloyd-Jones says that every other religion sends military advisers to people. Every other religion says, 'You know, if you want your salvation, you're going to have to fight for your life.' Every other religion is sending advice, saying, 'Here are the rights, here are the rituals, and here are the laws and regulations. Earthen works over here, marksmen over here. Fight for your life.' We send heralds; we send messengers . . ."

1. We send "good news-ers": "The battle has been won for you in Jesus' death for your sin and resurrection for your justification. Receive it and rejoice!"
- D. Now, note this: It's good news not good advice that Jesus brings to this woman in our text. He doesn't approach her in her sin and give her all the ins and outs of how she needs to wash up and make things right. He doesn't give her some action list to complete. He doesn't try to shame her into shaping up.
1. All He does is invite her to come and take a drink—living water. And He calls all of this a "gift". Did you catch that? "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water" (v. 10).
 - a. "I know you are thirsty. I know there are things in your heart that aren't right. And I've come with good news. I've come with the gift of God. I've come with living water. All you've got to do is ask for it."
- E. This is the good news we've been commissioned by God to herald in this broken world. "Yes we know that you are lost and broken in your sin. But we know One who is able to restore!"
1. We can be restored upward to God, inward to neighbor, and outward to city, because Jesus has come down to us. He meets us in our brokenness and changes everything.

(1) To God

- A. "Mercy Hill exists to help restore you . . . through the good news of Jesus Christ . . . to God."
- B. Most everybody in our day would admit that there is something wrong—not just out there, but in here. But, if we were to go out and talk to people on the street, my sense is that hardly anyone would say they think this is resulting from some fundamental fracture in their relationship with God.
 1. They're not thinking about God. They don't care about God. They're thinking on purely physical, earthly, materialistic terms. My circumstances are bad. My health is bad. I'm struggling with anxiety because my chemical composition is off.
- C. In other words we can identify the thirst—that we are needy, empty, and broken—but we don't know how to fix it, and we can't identify exactly what's gone wrong in the first place.
 1. So we try everything. New career. New diet. New pill. New woman. New man. Anything. We look to physical things to try to fix a fundamentally spiritual problem.

- D. And it's the same thing this woman is doing right? She knows she's thirsty. But she doesn't know what to do with it. She's fixated on physical water.
1. When Jesus starts talking with her about living water she goes: "Man you don't have a jar to draw water with" (v. 11). Even after He's explained some more, she comes out of the conversation there in v. 15 saying: "Sir, give me this water, so that I will not be thirsty or have to come here to draw water."
 - a. She's still thinking in physical, earthy categories.
 2. And then, in v. 16, Jesus just shifts gears on her. And He shows her how all of this talk of thirst and water is really a metaphor for what's going wrong in her life, in her heart.
 - a. "Go get your husband." "I don't have a husband." "You're right. You've had five husbands. And the dude your living with now isn't even your husband. What are you doing? You're looking for to satisfy a spiritual thirst with earthly water. A man can't satisfy that." Unless, of course, we're talking about the God-man Jesus Christ.
 3. And by the end of all this, she gets it. Did you catch it? "[T]he woman left her water jar and went away . . ." (v. 28). "I've been looking for water in all the wrong places. I don't need this jar anymore."
- E. That is our mission as a church: "Put the jar down. Come to Jesus. He can restore you to God!"

(2) To Neighbor

- A. When you've been restored to God in Christ, you can finally start to enter into relationships with other people. Until then, O sure, you have relationships, but it's all ultimately still about you. You need something from them.
1. You hang out with those cooler than you because it helps your image. You hang out with those more needy than you because it makes you feel better about yourself. You hang out with those like you because they enjoy the same sorts of things as you do.
 - a. Every relationship is run through the grid of self-concern—"What am I going to get out of it?" Because you're still thirsty at a fundamental, soul level.
- B. But then you meet Jesus, and He plugs you into God, into living water—you know that, even though you're a sinner, you are loved and secure and forgiven in Him.
1. So you know what happens? When you come into relationships, no longer do you have something to prove, something to get. Now you actually have something to give!
- C. We get a window into the new sort of community Jesus is forming around Himself here in our text. Jesus is breaking through countless barriers in this single exchange.

1. For one thing, He's a man and she's a woman. Jews were taught to avoid talking with women, especially in public, to avoid temptation and the appearance of evil and things.
 2. For another thing He's a Jew and she's a Samaritan. We've talked about this before, the two saw each other as enemies. Many Jews considered Samaritans perpetually unclean, and they would travel around the region at all costs just to contact with them. This woman knows this. That's why even she objects at first: *"How is it that you, a Jew, ask for a drink from me, a woman of Samaria?" (For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans)"* (v. 9). This is just not how things are done Jesus.
 3. And one last thing, He's a rabbi, a holy and righteous man, and she's a well-known, notorious (it would seem) sinner. What is He doing associating with her?
- D. Well, His disciples return from running their errands, and they see this going down, and we read this: *"They marveled . . ."* (v. 27).
1. Don't you see it? Jesus is breaking through every barrier here—gender, ethnic, social, religious. And the clear indication is that, not only has He come to restore people to God, He has also come to restore us to one another.
 - a. He's come to break down barriers that divide neighbor from neighbor. He's establishing a people who are not ultimately going to be defined by their gender, or ethnicity, or social status, or religious pedigree . . . but by Him!
- E. One of the things I love about this church is that if you just walk in off the street, you've never heard about Christianity or Jesus before, and you come in here, what do you see? You see young and old, you see men and woman, you see white collar and blue collar, you see engineer and artist, you see introvert and extrovert, you see people born and raised in America, but then you also see people from Mexico, people from Korea, people from China, people from India, people from Africa.
1. And what are you immediately starting to wonder at this point? *"What in the world is uniting this motley group of people?"*
 - a. So you keep observing and listening and, no doubt, I pray, soon it becomes evident. It's Jesus. It's the cross. The good news of Jesus Christ is the way back to neighbor.

(3) To City

- A. Restoring you to city means that your rest, your work, your play, your parenting, your friendships, the way you sit around the dinner table—all of life takes on a new meaning and mission. You have a new reason for being.
- B. Make note, the woman at the well's whole orientation to life changes as a result of her encounter with Jesus. Not only does she leave the water jar, but she enters the town! Listen to this: *"²⁸ So the woman left her water jar and went away into town and said to the people, ²⁹ 'Come, see a man who told me all that I ever did. Can this be the Christ?' ³⁰ They went out of the town and were coming to him"* (vv. 28-29).

1. Did you hear that? This woman began the story hiding, full of shame. But then she ends here, no longer hiding from the people, but rather making a bee line for where they are, because they need to know!
 - a. There's no more shame! Her sin no longer defines her. Other's opinions of her no longer define her. She is free because she knows the love of one who has snapped those bonds and she's become a part of the new community He's establishing. And the world around her just starts to glimmer with significance. Suddenly she sees she's a part of a much bigger story. She's restored to city.

C. That's what we want to see in this church! Will you join me in this mission?

Logo

From a design standpoint it's more modern and simple. Aesthetically it looks like an M for Mercy Hill, but it also looks like hills. But most important for me is that it actually puts our mission in pictorial form. It becomes a logo we can live. The three points on the triangle correspond with three directions in our mission statement. We exist to help restore you to God (upward direction), neighbor (inward direction), and city (the outward direction). And as we move out with the Good News of Jesus Christ, as we bring our relationship with God, the church, out into the city. We are salt and light and people begin asking and coming. So there's a second triangle, to capture this idea of multiplication and spreading out. For as we go out, others in our city come to be restored to God, neighbor and city as well.
