

Title: **Critical Characteristics of a Christian Influencer (Part 1)**  
Text: **Acts 20:17-38**  
Date: **January 18, 2026**

Find the sermon manuscript to follow along with online at [mercyhillchurch.org](http://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.

### Characteristic #1: They Make Time for People

This first one's a bit obvious, isn't it? Of course you can't influence people if you're not making time to be with them.

Every characteristic we will look at through these weeks finds its perfect representation in the life and ministry of our Lord. He's the quintessential Christian influencer. He's the one we're following after. He's the one we're reflecting in all this. The life of the disciple will track and trace the life of the Savior.

### Characteristic #2: They Lead with Their Lives

You shouldn't just hear the gospel from my mouth. You should also see the gospel in "how I live among you." The truth of it, the beauty of it, the power of it is on display. You can't truly give away what you don't truly have. If Jesus hasn't changed you, you're not going to change others. You lead from your life.

### Characteristic #3: They Serve the Lord (Alone!)

If you truly want to influence people for Jesus, you cannot—in a fundamental or ultimate way—be serving them or it will ruin you and them. In the deepest place of your heart, you have to be serving the Lord, and him alone. This is what Paul is wrestling with in Gal. 1:10, when he says: "[A]m I now seeking the approval of man, or of God? Or am I trying to please man? If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ."

### Characteristic #4: They Come in Humility and Weakness

This is just not how you would think a real leader should come, right? We think they should come with power and strength and eloquence and all this. They should impress us or why would we follow them? But Paul comes humble, low, crying, hurting, needy. It's embarrassing. It's shameful. It's pathetic. But it's essential, if you're going to really influence for Jesus. The people that you lead need to see that you need. Why? Because you are not the Savior, Jesus is.

### Characteristic #5: They Share the Hard Truth

If you're going to truly influence people for Jesus you've got to share the hard truth, even if people despise you for it, at least at first. It's like what Paul bemoans with the Galatians when he's trying to call them back to the gospel: "Have I then become your enemy by telling you the truth?" (Gal. 4:16). Sometimes you will. But it's worth it.

### Characteristic #6: They Do It All in Love

Obviously, we know sometimes people share the hard word with a hard heart. They like to make you squirm, to beat you with the Bible. But that's not what Paul is doing here. Look again at what he says there in v. 20: "I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was [what?!] *profitable* . . ." That's the motivation. I love you. I really love you. I want the best for you. I want you to profit!



### Reflection Questions

- If you're following Jesus, you're called to be leading someone. Who is God calling you to influence for him?
- Which of the six of characteristics referenced in today's sermon do you most need to grow if you're going to be an influencer for him? What steps can you take? How can Jesus help?

W  
E  
L  
C  
O  
M  
E

SCAN TO FILL OUT A



CONNECTION CARD

Give your offering online at [mercyhillchurch.org/give](http://mercyhillchurch.org/give) or place it in the dropbox at the back.

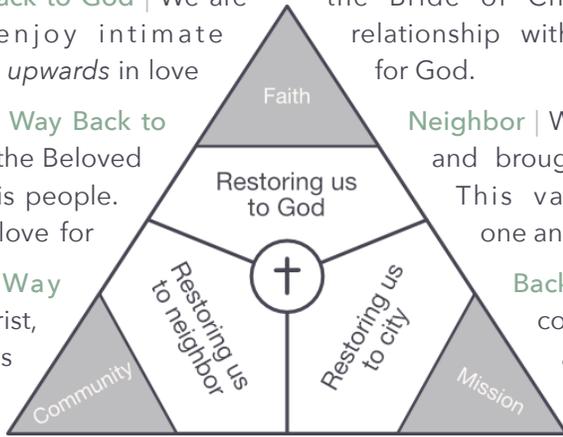
## Our Mission & Values

*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 redeemed to enjoy intimate relationship with God. 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 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](mailto:info@mercyhillchurch.org)  
**Web:** [mercyhillchurch.org](http://mercyhillchurch.org)



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

## Announcement Spotlight

### All Church Campout - Save the Date!

We are excited to announce that we will again be hosting our All Church Campout at Mount Madonna County Park! This year, it will take place over the weekend of **June 26-28**. Mark your calendars. We have a huge group campsite all to ourselves and lots of options in the park for having fun together. Whether you love to camp or you'd rather still sleep in your own bed, we have something for everyone. More info to come as the day gets closer!

If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to us at [info@mercyhillchurch.org](mailto:info@mercyhillchurch.org).

### All Church Prayer - Tonight!

### Nicaragua Short-Term Missions Trip - Applications Now Available!

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.