

Title: **The Message, the Method, and the Madness (Part 1)**
Text: **Acts 22:1-22**
Date: **May 3, 2026**

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Big Idea

It's tempting to approach God with a "résumé mentality." We want to show him why we're good, worthy, deserving of salvation. But there is only one résumé that can commend us to a holy God—and it isn't our, it's Christ's!

Movement #1: Law

Do you have a list? Are you trying to build out your résumé—to catch the attention of God (or others); to prove you're good, right, smart, holy, worthy? Do you use the Law like Paul once did? Like a set of rungs in a ladder that you've got to climb up bit-by-bit to get right with God? If you approach God like this, if you use the Law like this, even though you may be trying hard to be good, ironically, it will only make you worse. You'll be thinking you're getting all cleaned up and holy (and maybe you are a little prettier on the outside)—but on the inside you'll be making an even bigger mess.

The law was not meant to be a ladder for us to show off our muscles, it was meant to be a muzzle to shut up our mouths (Rom. 3:19-20).

It was "about noon" Paul tells us in v. 6—the time when the sun would be highest in the sky, at full strength. And yet the glory of Jesus unveiled in that moment made the glory of the sun look something like a lighting bug before a lightning bolt, like a candle before a conflagration! So Paul falls to the ground. He is literally knocked off his high horse. And reality confronts him. "You, Lord, are holy and righteous. And I am not. I'm a sinner. And I've been blind. I need grace."

Movement #2: Grace

What is Jesus after with this Damascus confrontation? It wasn't to condemn Paul; it was to save him.

Effect #1: He Sees the Righteous One (v. 14)

Here's the fundamental point in all of this: that you stop thinking of yourself as so righteous and you come to see "the Righteous One" (cf. Acts 3:14; 7:52)—the only one who has ever truly been righteous according to the strict standards of God's holy law (cf. Phil. 3:4-9).

Effect #2: He Washes Away His Sins (v. 16)

When Jesus is being thrust through with nails and spears, no doubt, the Jews, like Paul, were thinking of themselves as a modern day Phinehas (Num. 25). They imagined themselves to be defending God's honor, ridding the world of a blasphemer, making their Father proud by doing away with this messianic pretender, named Jesus. But do you want to know what was really happening? God was opening a fountain for their cleansing. They were killing God. He was saving them. And us (cf. Zech. 12:10; 13:1; Isa. 53:5).

Effect #3: He Goes to the Gentiles! (v. 21)

When you're saved by grace and not by works, it means this salvation is for anyone who would receive it—because it's not based on your résumé, but on Christ's. It's not based on your ability to climb the ladder, but on his ability to carry you. Don't you see: on the one hand, the Jews, with all their religiosity and tradition, are yet still no better; and, on the other hand, the Gentiles, with all their pagan deviations, or in fact no worse. The ground is level at the foot of the cross. As Peter, in Acts 15, would stand up and say to that Jerusalem Council regarding the Gentiles: "[W]e believe that we [Jews] will be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, just as they [Gentiles] will" (v. 11). There is no distinction. So go to them!



Reflection Questions

- Have you ever put together a résumé before? While this is normal in the world of work, why would it be so problematic if we attempt to do this sort of thing with God?
- If you were making a list like Paul does in vv. 3-5, what would you put on it? What things are you tempted to think make you more commendable to God and worthy of salvation? Now, take all of that, put it in the dumpster (cf. Phil. 3:8), and lay hold of Christ!
- Which of the three "effects" outlined above seemed most relevant to you and why?

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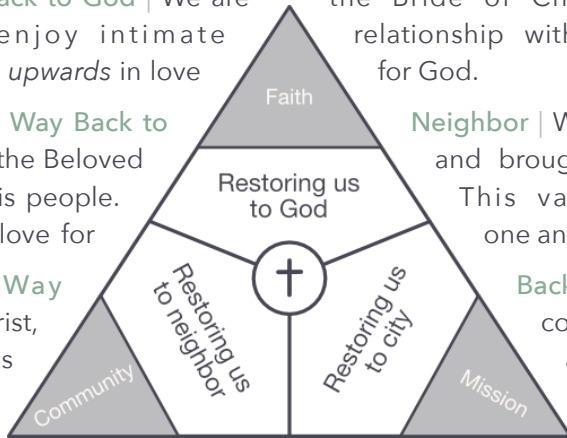
Our Mission & Values

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 unbelieving. 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!



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

Announcement Spotlight

All Church Campout - Open Registration!

We are excited to announce that we will again be hosting our All Church Campout at Mount Madonna County Park over the weekend of June 26-28! 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. Because the park is only a 45 minute drive from south San Jose, people can feel free to come and go as it works with their schedule and preference.

- **Option #1: Day-Use:** For those not wanting to camp but still wanting to participate, the Day-Use option is best. You can come in for the day, enjoy activities, meals, etc., and then head home to your warm bed while the rest of us "rough" it :).
- **Option #2: Camp:** This option is for those who want the full camping experience. We have the site for Friday and Saturday nights. You can choose to camp for one or both of these depending upon your availability and desire.

Scan the QR code below for more info and to find a link to sign up!

If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to us at info@mercyhillchurch.org.

All Church Hangout - Today!

All Church Prayer - Tonight!

Support the Nicaragua Team!

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