

What do the Lord Require? - Micah 6:6-8 **Notes, Family Worship, Bible Reading**

Notes from the Sermon

Leslie Holdegraver has chosen a fantastic passage that is very appropriate for our consideration and meditation on Independence Day. Micah is an Old Testament prophet speaking to God's people during an era where they believed God owed them blessing. Yet, there were significant cracks in their culture, and the salvation God brought them when He delivered them from Egypt was not creating the type of people who understand the grace they have been given. A contemporary with Isaiah and Hosea, Micah echoes warnings of a coming judgment that will one day include the conquest of the Northern Kingdom of Israel by the Assyrians and the eventual Babylonian conquest and captivity for Judah. Yet, they can't believe Micah would issue these warnings, just look around, they would say. Things were going pretty good, at least for the blessed and wealthy. Yet, they had failed to be the kind of grace-filled people God intended. Instead, the culture was full of injustice and oppression. The rich manipulated and abused the poor and many people lived marginalized lives. Furthermore, the people were falling into idolatry and were involved in all sorts of unrighteousness and sexual immorality. Yet, they mistakenly interpreted prosperity and a period of peace as proof of blessing and approval from God. Hence the prophets and these warnings. Micah spends much of his book making God's case for this coming judgment indicting them as God's people. Yet, woven into this wonderful book is a picture of a coming King who would both fulfill God's justice and righteousness and usher in His Kingdom which would be a stalwart of these things.

The people answer with a simple and serious question, one which is asked by people in all religions. Basically they are saying, "What do I have to do to get right with God?" They want to know what sacrifices they should bring, how many animals need to be offered, and how they can make it right. We too are looking for the answer to this question, hoping to appeased with some form of penance which will make us feel better and God OK with us. Micah's answer inspired by the Holy Spirit is actually stunning. Rather than telling these people what they can do to appease God he tells them the type of people they should become. They want a list, Micah gives them a path to transformation. Now, to make sense of this we have to understand this text in the context of the entire Old Testament. Micah is speaking to people who are part of the rescued and redeemed community. They are Hebrews who stand with those who were delivered from slavery in Egypt, brought into covenant, and loved deeply by Yahweh. The three things listed in verse 8 are not the path to salvation, a way to appease God and divert His just wrath for our sin. We are not saved by doing justice, loving mercy, and walking with God. We have a Savior who is gloriously perfect in His justice, who embodies the love and mercy of God, and who has granted us relational access with God. But Micah is telling us that if we are truly redeemed the Gospel should so shape us that we become people who do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with our God. Furthermore, there is implication here which is echoed over and over again in the whole of Scripture that if we fail to move toward these things in our Christian lives this may be a sign that we truly do not understand what has been done for us and may have never authentically experienced redemption.

Micah's answer is possibly the shortest and most direct explanation of the transformation of life that should take place in the life of a Christ-follower. Micah is not rejecting the sacrificial system set in place in Exodus and Deuteronomy and definitely is not telling them to stop going to church and doing their religious rhythms. But these things should lead to transformation rather than serve as a list to check and then go on with life as you desire. No, the community of faith is shaped by our gathering but marked by our becoming individuals and a community that is involved in justice, loving and merciful, and who walk with God.

Doing justice has myriads of applications, but at the core there is the idea of standing with the marginalized, caring for the poor, protecting the rights of those who are oppressed,

and giving a voice to those who have no voice in the culture. Both the Bible as a whole and Jesus Himself speak often to the reality that people who have received grace will become more generous and will grow to see the beauty of the image of God in all people and our equality in humanity and at the foot of the cross. Loving mercy here literally means to love love, or Chesed. Chesed is God's covenant love for His people that causes Him to pursue us, forgive us, draw us to Himself, and to never give up on us. Mercy, grace, and forgiveness flow from this love. We are loved, and loved people love. We are given mercy, so we should be beacons of mercy. We are forgiven and we should forgive. And to walk humbly with God means that we desire intimacy with our Creator, walking with Him much like Adam and Eve walked with God in the cool of the day. This is sanctification, that we day by day become people who do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with God.

Bible Reading for the Week

Daily Bible Readings

Sun	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri	Sat
Genesis 35	Genesis 36	Genesis 37	Genesis 38	Genesis 39	Genesis 40	Genesis 41

Reading from this past week: Micah 6:6-8

Reading in preparation for this coming Sunday: Matthew 11:28-30

Family Worship

Song - *Act Justly, Love Mercy, Walk Humbly*

<https://youtu.be/dk7llf2LkKc>

Gospel Project

Story: Paul before Rulers

Story Point: Paul was willing to do hard things to share the Gospel.

Big Picture Question: What will happen to all Christians in the future?

Answer: One day, all Christians will see Jesus in His glory and live with Him forever.

Scripture: Acts 24-26

New City Catechism

Question #27: Are all people, just as they were lost through Adam, saved through Christ?

Answer: No, only those who are elected by God and united to Christ by faith.

Verse: Romans 5:17

Scripture

Micah 6:6-8

- How would you answer someone who asked you what they had to do to be right with God?
- What are one or two steps you, your family, or your faith community could take to do each of the following?
 - Do justice
 - Love mercy
 - Walk humbly with God

Prayer

*Pray that we would have our lives shaped by the Gospel so that we would do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with God.

*Pray for the North American Mission Board and the Send Network and for their work in church planting, disaster relief, and reaching college students with the Gospel.