

Micah 6:8

“Do”

Week 3 – February 12, 2023

Scripture: Micah 6:8; Deuteronomy 27:19; Acts 17:26; Genesis 1:26-27

Grab your Bible and a few people to connect with. Read the Scripture, reflect on the questions below, and share your thoughts. It's that easy!

Share: Are you inspired by underdog stories? What is your favorite movie or book with this type of storyline, or who is your favorite underdog character?

Read the scripture noted above together: Take turns reading if you prefer. Enjoy the different Bible translations we each read.

Discuss the following context:

Micah 6:8 says, “He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.” This is God’s vision for his people as summed up by the Prophet Micah.

The idea of justice in the Scriptures is summarized by two Hebrew words: “Tsedeq” and “Mishpat”. The two words roughly correspond to what some have called primary (tsedeq) and restorative/retributive justice (mishpat). Mishpat can refer to giving someone what they deserve (retributive justice). But more often in the Scriptures it refers to restorative justice – seeking out those who are vulnerable, who are being taken advantage of and helping them. It means taking steps to advocate for the vulnerable and changing social structures to prevent further injustice. Tsedeq means to have right relationships characterized by love, kindness, compassion and generosity. It is a behavior that if it was prevalent in the world, would render mishpat unnecessary. When we do justice, we move this world towards shalom, to the way God created and intended our world to be. As Jesus followers, we are called to actively do justice in our church and communities as a sign-post of the beautiful Kingdom of God.

Share your thoughts about the following questions:

1. In Scripture, over and over again, mishpat describes taking up the care and cause of widows, orphans, immigrants, and the poor. Read **Deuteronomy 27:19** and discuss. What other groups of people with little social power could we include today? What does mishpat reveal about the character of God?
2. Tsedeq is often translated as “righteousness”. It is treating others with the God-given dignity they deserve, understanding that we are made in the image of God and therefore have infinite value and worth. Read **Acts 17:26** and **Genesis 1:26-27** and discuss. How does tsedeq shape the way you view justice? What is your experience with relationships built on fairness, generosity, and equity?
3. The goal of mishpat and tsedeq is shalom – completeness, soundness, wellbeing, complete reconciliation. Tsedeq preserves the shalom that is present in our world and prevents the further unraveling of it and mishpat works towards its restoration. But for this to occur we cannot simply know about justice, we must live it out.
 - a. What does love and sacrifice look like for us today?
 - b. How does proximity play into what acting justly?
 - c. What practical ways can we aid those who are suffering around us?

Pray together: Ask each other to share what is on your heart today. Thank God for creating us in his image and increasing our capacity to care and advocate for the vulnerable and mistreated around us. We desire to treat one another fairly, equitably, justly – like we want to be treated. Ask him to empower us to love like Jesus loved, and to do justice like Jesus did.

Micah 6:8

“Love”

Week 2 – February 5, 2023

Scripture: Micah 6:8; Romans 5:6-8; 1 John 4:19

Grab your Bible and a few people to connect with. Read the Scripture, reflect on the questions below, and share your thoughts. It's that easy!

Share: Cobra Kai is a martial arts television show that uses the mantra, “Strike first, strike hard, no mercy”. Have you ever approached something in life with this type of mantra?

Read the scripture noted above together: Take turns reading if you prefer. Enjoy the different Bible translations we each read.

Discuss the following context:

God’s vision for his people was summed up by the Prophet Micah: “He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.” (Micah 6:8).

The word translated “mercy” in Micah 6:8 is the Hebrew word “hesed”. In different versions of the Bible, it is translated as “mercy,” “kindness,” “goodness,” “faithfulness,” or “loyalty” due to the fact there is no one English word that is able to encapsulate its meaning. Hesed is not merely an emotion or feeling but involves action on behalf of someone who is in need. It describes a sense of love and loyalty that inspires merciful and compassionate behavior toward another person. It surpasses ordinary kindness and friendship. It is the inclination of the heart to show “amazing grace” to the one who is loved. It runs deeper than social expectations, responsibilities, fluctuating emotions, or what is deserved or earned by the recipient. Hesed finds its home in committed, familial love, and it comes to life in actions.

Share your thoughts about the following questions:

1. Think about your own experiences. Has someone showed you mercy? Have you showed mercy? Perhaps it was an extension to a project or grace on a payment owed. Perhaps it was desperately needed, even if it was not exactly deserved. Share your experience. How does even a little bit of mercy begin to change us?
2. Jesus invites us to offer mercy to others, but he goes farther and instructs us to love our enemies. Read and discuss the following about loving enemies:

*And there is a power there that eventually transforms individuals. That's why Jesus says, “Love your enemies.” Because **if you hate your enemies, you have no way to redeem and to transform your enemies.** But if you love your enemies, you will discover that at the very root of love is the power of redemption. - Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.*

3. When mercy shows love, love does what it does best, *loves us at our worst!* Read **Romans 5:6-8** and **1 John 4:19** and discuss.
 - a. How does forgiveness impact a life of mercy and love?
 - b. We see what mercy can do so it seems like we would offer it to all, but often we do not. What barriers prevent us from offering mercy?
 - c. What could our lives and communities look like if we truly offered mercy?

Pray together: Ask each other to share what is on your heart today. Thank God that he desires us to live a life filled with mercy and love. Ask him to stir mercy in our souls; we are so grateful for the profound way Jesus offers us unlimited life-changing mercy and unconditional love.

Micah 6:8

“Walk”

Week 1 – January 29, 2023

Scripture: Micah 6:8; Amos 3:3; Isaiah 40:31

Grab your Bible and a few people to connect with. Read the Scripture, reflect on the questions below, and share your thoughts. It's that easy!

Share: Do you enjoy walking or running? If so, what is your favorite route or trail?

Read the scripture noted above together: Take turns reading if you prefer. Enjoy the different Bible translations we each read.

Discuss the following context:

Jesus reminded the religious leaders of his day that in their worship and practice they were neglecting the more important matters of God's work: justice, mercy, and faithfulness. The prophet Micah summed up three action steps of God's vision for his people: love mercy, walk humbly, and do justice. Compassion and justice in the way of Jesus are birthed in love and are always humble, but also move us to action.

Walking humbly with God is a foundation of the Christian life. The “walk” metaphor is often used in Scripture to describe the overall direction one's life is heading. Walking implies direction, intention, consistency, and activity. It is not passive but active. We are told to walk in humility – the constant recognition of the reality that we absolutely need God. When we do this, God's heart becomes our heart, his passion becomes ours, and we begin to see the world as he does. Consequently, walking in this manner is the basis for loving mercy and doing justice. It compels us to fully invest in moving the world towards shalom through mercy and justice.

Share your thoughts about the following questions:

1. Through his prophet Micah, God told his people not to simply walk with him but to walk **HUMBLY** with him. **Micah 6:8** says “He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.” Discuss what it means to walk humbly with God in a relationship of dependence:
 - a. We don't know the way, but he does
 - b. We are weak, but he is strong
 - c. We are unsteady, but his strength holds us up
 - d. We belong to him, and he belongs to us
2. Walking humbly with God requires *participation* – talking to him, listening to him, engaging with him. Consider the current relationships in your life. What is the result of a relationship in which one of the parties dominates or withdraws?
3. Walking humbly with God requires us to have a shared *purpose*. **Amos 3:3** asks, “Do two walk together unless they have agreed to do so?” Of course not! Two people cannot walk together without agreeing on a direction. What barriers can prevent people from uniting toward the same goal? What barriers can prevent us from moving with God as a single unit?
4. Walking humbly with God requires a shared *pace*. Often, we try to determine when things should happen. **Isaiah 40:31** says “but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.” Can you think of a time in your life when God called you to surrender to his timing? Share your experience.

Pray together: Ask each other to share what is on your heart today. Thank God that he wants love, justice, mercy, humility, purpose, and peace in our lives, and through him we can offer it to others. We desire for God's heart to become our hearts. God, please help us see the world as you do.