

Micah 6:8

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Date: 25 October 2020

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[0 : 0 0] Thank you, Jesse. Guys, what a joy to be with you all. I'm going to speak to you all today from Micah 6.8. And thanks to Josh for grabbing that verse for me online. I didn't know we could have a, I wasn't even thinking about notes or putting anything up.

I just love to have that verse. So it's going to be really straightforward. If you guys are note takers, it's super easy. It's literally going to go right along the verse. So I appreciate you all being here again, just being together.

I guess it was two weeks or three. I keep getting messed up, two or three. So I know it's been a bit of a gap. Man, praise God we can be together. All right, Micah 6.8. He has told you, oh man, what is good and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.

So that's going to be our passage today. There is much that could be said about those words. I'm not going to say everything there is to say about those words. Otherwise, we'd be here a while and we're not going to be here that long.

But I want to start off with, before I get into my first points here, just to follow up on the privilege to be able to stay with Jesse and Haley and their family.

[1 : 1 8] I walked in and I had a little note from Sierra. And it said, y'all aren't going to be able to see this because it's so far from up here. But it says, welcome. There's a little fish. It's a sweetheart.

And then I missed it. Nobody told me about Riley's note. So it wasn't until the next day I opened up Riley's note. Welcome, Mr. Travis. We want to give you a warm welcome. Enjoy your stay.

And here's the part that got me. Riley, comma, on behalf of the Kinsers. I'm not making it up. It's right here. I can show it for a second.

So I'm going to come back to that because that actually is relevant to what I want to share. But this idea of on behalf of the family resemblance.

So first, so thank you. The reason I'm saying is thank you. And guys, I'm sure y'all know how blessed you are to have Jesse and Haley leading you and serving you.

[2 : 2 3] Man, I was the one that was blessed to be able to stay with them. So I got to move on. Okay. Micah 6.8. The first thing I'm going to say from this verse is who tells us what is good?

God. God tells us what is good. That's kind of a, whoa, wait a second. Not society. Not our upbringing or our experience.

It's God who defines what is good for us. That is a super important point and very, very easy to just hop right over. It is not even our own judgment that determines what is good.

You want a picture in the Bible what happens when you use your own judgment to determine what is good? Read the book of Judges. That's a horrible book. FYI. That's one of the hardest books to read.

It just is. It is. That's hard. Well, that's what happens when everyone does what is right in their own eyes. And it's a little bit frightening when you think about how much that ethos defines America.

[3 : 30] There is a little bit of that, whoa, I determine what's right. No, God tells us what is right. So I just want to challenge this right up front as we come into this verse.

Often, you know, we bring our own assumptions. We bring our own experiences into whatever their circumstances are. And the deeper and the longer we hold those assumptions, the less likely we are to be aware of them.

And I think this verse really helps us to cut against that. God, he tells us what is good. He has told you, oh, man. That means everyone, all of us.

He's told us what is good. And so I just think it helps us cut against the real cultural forces of, yeah, individualism and consumerism.

And I'm here to get mine and, you know, pursue to happiness. Look, yeah, it's a blessing to be able to do and be some of those things. But those don't define it. And they don't define what's good for us.

[4 : 25] God defines what's good. So I just think that's such an important part of this verse. Everybody's, you know, we'll get to the do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly. But God tells us what is good.

That's first. And then he tells us that it's required of us. He says, he's told you, oh, man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you?

This is not a change in point. He's continuing. I'm telling you what's good. And this is what I'm telling you you must do. So we see that God not only sets the standard of good, but he rightly requires it of us.

So it's just another emphasis. It's one of the most concise passages in Scripture that really summarized the Christian faith. What is it? It isn't mere belief. It's action.

It's living it out. So let's jump into that. What is exactly this verse talking about that God requires of us? Do justice.

[5 : 26] There's been a whole lot of talk about what that means. I think, again, to cut against our own assumptions, we need to look at what does the Bible say? What does God say about that?

And again, we can't possibly be comprehensive about whole sermon series could be just about justice. So I'm only going to touch on a couple things here. But I think the first and foremost, in the Bible, when the Bible talks about justice, and you can't hardly trip over a verse without running into it in some form, it's doing what is right.

It's righteousness. Those words are used interchangeably. It's doing what's right, but it's not doing what's right by your own determination and on an individual basis.

It's doing what's right according to God's character and God's word for everyone. There is a corporate, a group element to that, and that is very much underemphasized in our country and in our culture.

Again, we tend to be very individualistic, naturally. It's just kind of where we're, that's in the ethos. And that's the scripture. Again, God tells us what's good.

[6 : 39] And this idea of justice being a collection of what we do right on an individual basis, but also what we do right together and do right and work for others.

Again, when the scripture talks about justice, it's always talking about it in terms of, you know, the poor, the brokenhearted, the captive, the widow, the orphan.

It's like there's an advocacy that's communicated in scripture. So that's part of what's in mind here. It's doing what's right, but it's also defending the weak. It's getting in front of folks who are taking it on the chin.

So justice centers on God's character. When he first made us go to Genesis, the perfect world that we had. That was a just world.

Of course, our world now, after the fall, after Adam and Eve sinned and introduced injustice in the world. And it didn't take long, did it? You got Cain murdering Abel.

[7 : 44] So very quickly it became competition and jealousy and anger. And it started to affect the way people related to each other. So the brokenness of our world clearly stems from that.

So when people talk about social justice and social injustice, that's not new. That's not new. You can go back to Genesis. We've been talking about that.

God's been talking about that. And God has been saying still from the beginning, I've told you what's good. This is what I require. We need his help to challenge our thinking where we've been accustomed or resigned to thinking this is just the way things are.

These socioeconomic disparities, these racial disparities, that's just the way that things are. Oh, God tells us what is good. And he tells us what he requires.

Right? So one thing I want to really emphasize here, though, on the justice part, is that when the Bible speaks about justice, it primarily, you can't understand what it's saying about justice if you don't focus in on the ultimate model of justice.

[9 : 01] And that is Jesus. That is our Savior. It's like the Sunday school answer. Anytime you have a thing. What's the answer to any question in Sunday school? Jesus. It might be God, but go ahead and say Jesus just to be, you know.

So it sounds like, well, duh. Man, who put this guy up here? Like, it's Jesus. But it is. But it is. You can't understand justice apart from that. And again, back in Genesis, what did God do with Adam and Eve when they sinned?

Was judgment reeked immediately? No. No. In fact, the promise came. And the arc of redemptive history began. It's like, no, I knew. And I'm going to restore you.

And he made them animal skins. And he did judge them out of the garden. Out you go. And sweat of the brow and pain and pregnancy and et cetera, et cetera. All that kind of stuff happened. But God was working from the beginning knowing that Jesus was going to come and crush the head of that serpent.

But it's like, there will be a day when injustice ends. And that day is rooted in the victory of our Savior on the cross, taking our sins.

[10 : 12] And we'll ultimately restore. So there is going to be no injustice in the end. You get the story of Genesis to Revelation. So that's great. We can have faith for what happened before and believe it and have faith for what's going to happen in the future.

It feels really awful now sometimes. Sometimes it's real personal. Sometimes it's just like, boy, this can't possibly change. And that's why I'm saying let's let this verse affect us and really move us into, you know what, God defines what's good.

He defines what justice is. And that's rooted in Jesus. Amen? Does that make sense? All right. So I must move on. There's more to say about these verses. Jesus is our only hope for a truly just world.

He's the one that lived perfectly and justly. And he took the just punishment that we all deserved for our sins on himself on the cross. So he is our hope. And that is at the core of what it means to be a Christ follower.

I said earlier, it's not about just believing in your head. It's acting on it. There is a very active dimension of faith.

[11 : 22] So hold on, hold on, hold on. Are you saying we can earn our salvation? Are you saying we work towards it? Is that what this verse is talking about? That there's a list of stuff to do? I need to do, what is it?

Do justice? Love mercy? Okay. And some of us are like, okay, yep. Check the box. Oh, no. No, no, no, no, no. All of Scripture is very clear. There is no way we earn our way into God's favor.

It is a gift to us. There's no way Adam and Eve were going to earn their way back. It was ruined. It was done. But Jesus did what we couldn't do. And he took the punishment that we did deserve.

And so in that grace, see guys, grace, God's unmerited favor to us, is not opposed to effort. We do work hard.

So this verse means something to us. It means we work. But it's not a work that means you earn. Right? It is a work that is because it's who you are.

[12 : 22] It's who we are. Right? So that's at the core of understanding this passage. Because if you don't grasp that, then it does become a list that you'll either feel wrongly, proud for having accomplished in some way, or you'll feel like I just can't.

We can't do that. We can't really work justice. So we're just going to sit in our homes and we're going to do our own little thing and kind of withdraw. And the history of the church, there's waves of that. You can see it. You can go back into it.

All right. Mercy. Mercy. Next, the verse says, love mercy. So we're to do justice. What does God require of us?

Do justice. Love mercy. The Bible also speaks extensively about mercy. The original Hebrew, the word means steadfast love.

And again, you can hardly read a passage without coming across it. And again, I'm not going to hide it from you. There's nothing special. It is special, but it's nothing special in my delivery.

[13 : 26] Jesus is the focal point for the mercy. Like you can't understand mercy in scripture without linking it to Jesus. Guys, basically everything in scripture is about Jesus.

Okay. It just is. It just is. And that's, that is the, it's not just the key to understanding and interpreting scripture. It's the key to really getting it in your life, really putting your faith.

And so we're going to get to a point where you all will be able to respond. But I'm going to speak to you. Even if you haven't yet put your faith in Christ, this verse is for you. Because it's another invitation to come do that.

So mercy, quite simply, divine is not getting what you deserve. That's mercy. It's not getting what you deserve.

You forfeit. If you're extending mercy to someone, you forfeit a right or a claim that you had on them that was legitimately yours.

[14 : 32] You have mercy on them. And you all may remember the parable from Matthew 18, the unmerciful servant. You guys remember that story? Where Jesus told some guy owed a huge debt.

It was, you know, incalculable. And the guy he owed the debt to, he came and he fell on his knees and said, I'll pay you. Just give me time. I'll pay it. Which is ridiculous.

Everybody knows it's not going to happen. And the guy forgives his debt. What does that guy do? He turns around, goes to someone else who owes him. If you look in the passage, we don't have time. A not insignificant debt.

It was probably a couple years' salary. A couple years' worth of salary. So it was big. He turns around to his fellow servant and starts to choke him. Pay me what you owe me.

Did he have the right to claim what was owed him? Yes, he did. What he missed, though, was that the mercy that was extended to him, and that incalculable debt forgiven to him, should have changed how he viewed everyone else.

[15 : 37] And it didn't. And that's the trouble in that passage. That's the trouble in that parable. And that was Jesus' point. It's a very sobering story. And it should be. It should be.

When Scripture speaks, it feels harsh to us, we should let it feel harsh. When it feels frightening to us, we should let it feel frightening. That's part of how it's intended to function.

Again, we don't want our theology to, like, run, you know what I mean? Like, run over, oh, but I know, God's grace. God's grace. Yes, it is. But, boy, you better change. You know what I mean? Like, that's not bondage.

That's real. That's how God wants us to be. He wants us to respond. So, look, everyone needs mercy. Jesus offered it to the poor and to the rich.

But the interesting thing here is that mercy and justice are, they're related. They're inseparably related. And if we get out of balance with one or the other, you know, we start looking awfully, you know, it's like Popeye.

[16 : 45] Nobody's going to know Popeye. That's too old. That's such an old illustration. You know, pop the spinach. So, it's like having one arm. If you just worked out with one arm, man, you know, of course, not me.

That's a bad illustration, too. But you just get super imbalanced. You say you have your one arm, it's all justice, and the other arm's measly mercy. Or if it's all mercy and no justice, you know, and it's all just, hey, you know, this way.

Boy, that, you got to have both. And you know who did both perfectly? Kids. Jesus. On the cross.

God's justice. His perfect justice. His hard justice. His wrath on our sin. Poured out on Jesus.

Jesus. Jesus. Meets with Jesus' mercy to take that debt that was not his, to forfeit his right to be honored as God's son.

[17 : 46] As the creator. Boom. I mean, it's cosmic. It's massive. Justice. Mercy. Boom. It's Jesus.

That's where this whole verse was previewing that. This was Old Testament days. This is hundreds of years before this is going to happen. But this ties it together.

And what's amazing is mercy triumphs over judgment. Mercy triumphs over judgment. It's they meet at the core of our faith in Jesus on the cross.

And mercy wins. Like God's love, his steadfast love wins. But justice is still done. It wasn't like justice got swept under the rug.

If you were the wrong party, you would not, it would not be just for you to not ultimately have, be righted in some way.

[18 : 50] Right? And so Jesus, justice was served, the justice that we deserved on him. So justice was done. The offended party, which was God, is righted through Jesus.

Right? And then mercy is extended into us. So we're the recipients of that. So this whole verse is now talking about how do we reflect that? How do we reflect that? So Tim Keller writes on this, just a really good quote from his book, which I'll show you in a second.

When the text in this verse says to do justice and love mercy, it seems at first glance that they're two different things, but in actuality they are not. The term for mercy in the Hebrew is a Hebrew word that means unconditional grace and compassion, the steadfast love.

The word for justice in Hebrew, it puts an emphasis on action. Whereas the word for mercy puts an emphasis on attitude or motive.

So they're really two sides of the same coin. So in essence then to reflect this verse and to walk humbly, which we're about to talk about, it's just basically the way we live. It's doing justice out of mercy.

[20 : 06] It's like, wait a minute. How could, mind blown, right? I mean, that's, and it should be. So I'm getting you, I'm trying to lead you guys to a point where you realize if you're going to try to do this as a way to earn God's favor, there is no way.

But if you're going to do it from a place of faith, knowing that he has extended this mercy to us, oh, then we got power. Then we can reflect him.

You know, Jesus, his disciples were always beating on him about, hey, you want us to call fire down on this town? You know, even when he came back in the, you know, before the great commission, are you going to restore the kingdom to Israel now?

And it's like, they're just short-sighted, commendable because they want justice, but they want it here. And they're not thinking mercy. And Jesus is like, guys, go to the world and tell them who I am.

Go to the nations. Go to the ethne, the races, the cultures. Go to them and tell them. And then he had to kind of move them out, you know, and ask.

[21 : 09] Come on, guys, you got to go do it. So let's walk this out. So that's the last part of the verse. We do good. To do good, we do justice. We love mercy.

And we walk humbly. So the word walk in Scripture is a profound metaphor for how we live our lives. It has to do with how we relate to and grow in God. Walking is one foot in front of the other.

And that is intentional. That's God's design. It just shows us, you know, you can, again, you can look at this passage. It's just like, oh, my goodness. Do justice. Love mercy. So much. Put a foot in front of the other.

Humbly walking. Lord, I'm trusting you. I don't even understand all these things. Maybe just one of this, what we're talking about this morning, sticks in your head. That's what the Lord wants for you. And just walk with it.

Just walk with it. It's just taking it literally everywhere in the Bible. We see walking talked about. I did a quick search. One of the first ones was Enoch, father to Methuselah.

[22 : 12] He walked with God, and then God took him. Wow. Like, can I sign up for that? Why is that so limited?

I'd like to do that. That sounds great. Noah walks with God. It's basically a way to summarize God's chosen people, how they were to live.

Moses tells them in Deuteronomy. Just a quick, don't turn there. Israel, what does the Lord your God require of you? But to fear the Lord your God, to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the Lord with all your heart, with all your soul, keep the commandments and statutes of the Lord, which I'm commanding you today for your good.

A lot of echoes in Micah 6.8. It's the same core point. To walk humbly is to know God intimately and what he wants and loves and to want and love the same things.

And that's what I wanted to talk about. That's why I started with Riley's note. He didn't know he was going to be in this one. On behalf of the Kinsers, we reflect that we are God's family when we walk humbly and we look to do justice out of hearts of mercy.

[23 : 32] We show, not perfectly, not perfectly, not by a long shot, and it's also not so we can prove and get God to get us in his family.

Right? We're already in. Riley is a Kinser. Through and through, family resemblance, everything else.

On behalf of the Kinsers, welcome, Mr. Travis. Love it. You all, if you put your faith in Jesus, if you have grasped the amazing truth that what Jesus took on the cross was for you, not in general, for you, every time you blew it, every time you deserve punishment and didn't get it, or maybe you did to some extent, Jesus restores.

That is, you are the family of God. You are a saint. You are a son and a daughter, the Most High. That is who you are. So then, man, resemble the family.

Amen? Be that. Be that. And it's something you grow in. It's something you grow in. We move in that direction. We walk humbly, one foot in front of the other.

[24 : 48] And some days, guys, the walk is hard. But we get to do it together. We get to encourage one another. We get to provoke one another. We get to prop one another up. We get to say, hey, you don't do that, son.

You don't do that. You take the correction. God disciplines us as sons. But we're not earning. We're not. Man, God's made us his children. That's what's in view here.

So, oh man, there's so much more to say. But I think these are, the other things I wanted to say about walking is that, again, I talked about how Jesus was our ultimate model in doing justice.

And Jesus is our ultimate example and model of extending mercy. The walk is no different. Jesus came and walked with us. And again, we can kind of take it for granted, especially if you've been around the church for a long time.

How many of y'all grew up in churches or are very familiar with this? So a bunch of us, yeah. You can just kind of take it for granted that God became man. History is full of men who would be gods.

[25 : 57] but only one God who became a man and walked with us and sweat and, you know, anybody seen that series Chosen?

Highly recommend it. The first, whatever the first piece is out. Well, what's really struck out to me was how human they portray. They really portray his humanity. I mean, he's brushing his teeth, you know, bashing his thumb when he's building something and, you know, it's just, it's just real.

Jesus walked with us. He put one foot in front of the other, step by step, day by day. So, of the many verses that talk about walking, here's one from Colossians 2.6.

Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus, the Lord, as you received him, so walk in him. So walk in him. So, how did we receive him?

Did we do something to earn that favor? No. Did we do something to get God's attention and say, oh yeah, you must be, yeah, I need this one. No, heck no.

[27 : 01] Quite the opposite, right? Let's be honest. Very much the opposite. And so we receive him by grace. It's unmerited favor. It's like, yes, Abba. Yes, Heavenly Father.

I receive that by faith. The same way you receive that, now you walk. And see, the walk is the effort because you do put a foot in front of the other. You do move. You do act. You do reflect.

You do say, on behalf of my family. You do that. And it may feel small. It may feel insignificant. People of God, it is not.

When you reflect your Heavenly Father in a small way, with a smile, with a cold cup of water to someone who is thirsty, with standing up for someone who is being wronged, you are reflecting God Himself.

You are reflecting that family resemblance. You are walking humbly with God. So, that is the main things I wanted to share with you all. Let me invite the band to come up as we start to close.

[28 : 04] The one thing I wanted to, I want to invite some particular responses. There's many different ways we could respond. I'll just reiterate, I don't believe that Micah 6.8 is meant for us to be a checkbox list.

You need to do these things. Do justice, love mercy, walk humbly. No, no. It is a summary of the Christian life. It is what we should look like as His children.

And, as such, I think it is primarily addressed to us as His children. But I want to speak to you if you're with us this morning and you haven't yet put your faith in Christ, you haven't yet grasped the uncalculable, incalculable debt that He has paid on your behalf, I want to invite you.

This verse actually is an invitation for you to consider. Are you the one who's determining what's good in your life? You really want to put your hope there?

That's a faith step. Do you know that if you don't put your faith in Christ, you're putting it in something else? There is so many reasons, both rational and emotional, historical, and every which way to put your faith in Christ.

[29 : 24] So I want to invite you this passage. He's told you, oh man, including you, men, women, who haven't put your faith in Christ, what's good? He's told you. We'll tell you more. Come be with us.

Learn more about it. I want to invite you to consider, put your faith in Christ. And then for those of us who have put our faith, for those of us who are followers, I think Micah 6.8, like I said, it's a summary of how we should live and how we should resemble him.

It's not a to-do list. Please don't see it as a to-do list, but see it as, this is the way I want to be more and more. I want to walk humbly in that way. So my ask to you guys by way of application and response for today is to just think of one, one thing, one area.

Where can I do justice more? Where have I not shown mercy? Where have I been merciless? Even in my thinking, even in my heart.

And guys, let's get real. There's an election in a couple weeks. Not everybody has the same view. And you know what? We need to have hearts that are open and humble with one another because who we are as a church family, we are God's children, supersedes the world.

[30 : 33] It doesn't mean the world doesn't matter. Okay? And there's a, what does that look like for us? What does that look like to walk that out? I would just ask you, be humble, walk humbly before your Lord and ask what does that look like?

And if you, yeah, if there's unforgiveness in your heart, you have not extended that to someone else, maybe that's what the Lord's calling to. I just want to invite you all to stand with us. We're going to sing and be thinking about this thing.

Maybe over lunch today you can talk with your spouse, you get with your community groups later this week or whatever the rhythm is and take time to share. You know what? This is where I want to grow in doing justice.

This is where I want to grow in loving mercy and extending mercy because I want to reflect. I want to reflect my Father. I want to reflect my King. So, guys, lead us with you.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.