

WHAT DOES GOD REQUIRE OF ME?

There are two places in Scripture where the searching, penetrating and scrutinizing question is asked, “What doth the LORD require of thee?” (Micah 6:8; Deuteronomy 10:12, 13). First of all, it would serve us best if we discern what is involved in this all-important word, “require.” It is defined as something that is necessary, compulsory or demanded. It is defined as something to claim or ask for by right and authority. The Cambridge Dictionary says it means “to order or demand something, or to order someone to do something, esp. because of a rule or law.” Oxford Dictionary defines it as, “an action, ability, or quality as due from (someone) by virtue of their position.” Our English word is birthed from the Latin word “requirere,” from re- (expressing intensive force) + quaerere ‘seek’. Placing all these thoughts together, it means someone in authority is seeking something necessary from us with intensive force. In Micah the Hebrew word is “darash,” which means to care for, to seek diligently or to make inquisition. In Deuteronomy the Hebrew word is “shael,” which means to request and demand by extension. The insight on that last Hebrew definition informs us that Moses is speaking authoritatively on behalf of God. In Exodus 4:16 the Bible says, “And he (Aaron) shall be thy spokesman unto the people: and he shall be, even he shall be to thee instead of a mouth, and thou (Moses) shalt be to him instead of God.” Moses spoke with inspiration. Although Moses gave the command, it is, in fact, God’s command. The message I want us to leave with this morning is that God is most serious about this and it is a triumvirate of truth that is to be obeyed wholeheartedly. Let us examine this three-fold requirement of God.

I. DO RIGHT REGARDLESS OF THE CONSEQUENCES.

Micah 6:8b admonishes us to “...do justly...” The word “justly” is the translation of the word, “mishpat,” which is a verdict (favorable or unfavorable) pronounced judicially, especially a sentence or formal decree (human or (participant’s) divine law, individual or collective), including the act, the place, the suit, the crime, and the penalty.” Simply put, it means defining what’s right and doing what’s right. There is no middle ground in this word. There is no vacillating in the word. There is no wobble in this word.

A. Work hard.

In both Solomon’s day and in Ezra’s day, there is the most captivating phrase used: “...as the duty of every day required” (II Chronicles 8:14; Ezra 3:4). Contextually, these verses are referring to the daily requirements of the priests. Great application can be made if we understand that we should all do our required work everyday with diligence.

Proverbs 22:29 says, “Seest thou a man diligent in his business? he shall stand before kings; he shall not stand before mean men.” Allow me to give you some synonyms for the Old English word for “mean”: obscure, shady, insignificant, small-minded, ignoble, despicable.

In the Bible we see the value of hard work (Romans 12:11; Proverbs 12:24; I Thessalonians 4:11; II Thessalonians 3:10).

B. Honor the righteous laws of the land.

Genesis 9:5, 6; II Samuel 4:10, 11.

C. Enter the covenant of marriage.

I Corinthians 7:36; I Corinthians 7:7-9.

II. LOVE UNCONDITIONALLY AND WITHOUT RESERVATION.

In Micah 6:8c we read, “...and to love mercy....” Micah 7:18 declares that God delights in showing mercy! Dr. John Townsend has authored a book entitled, “The Entitlement Cure.” Some of his thoughts are, “Everyone has faced entitlement issues in his or her relationships, family and workplace. It emerges in poor attitudes, a lack of empathy for one’s impact on others, and irresponsible behaviors. We live in a culture of “I deserve”: anything from deserving a great marriage, to a great home to a great career. The problem is that “I deserve” is a disempowering phrase. It places the power of our success in the hands of others, in the hope that they will do something to provide that marriage, home and career. But when you change your wording to “I am responsible,” you are empowered. You are responsible to do what it takes to be well-married, to live in the right home and to find the career that works for you. You are in charge, and you are the agent of success, not others.” Unconditional love will drive us to do what is necessary without reservation. Romans 12:10 tells us, “Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another.” To summarize this concept, it means to love God with all that is within you, no matter what He does or brings into your life. Then love people, no matter how they treat you (Mark 12:29, 30; I Peter 2:17; Luke 6:27, 35).

Think of this, you and I deserve Hell, but God in His unconditional love and without reservation came from Heaven to earth in the form of man to die for us. Let us, in turn, take the responsibility in love to tell others of salvation through Christ. Ezekiel 33:8 reports how important the salvation of a person’s soul is to God.

III. SERVE GOD WITH ABANDONMENT.

Micah 6:8d teaches us “...to walk humbly with thy God.” Deuteronomy 10:12, 13, “And now, Israel, what doth the LORD thy God require of thee, but to fear the LORD thy God, to walk in all His ways, and to love Him, and to serve the LORD thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, To keep the commandments of the LORD, and His statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good?” What does this mean? It means to give God:

A. All Respect

He is God; you and I are not. We are commanded to "...fear the LORD thy God..." (Deuteronomy 10:12b). In I Peter 5:6 we learn to, "Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time."

B. All Inclusive Rights

We are "...to walk in all His ways..." (Deuteronomy 10:12c). We cannot pick and choose; we must surrender all our rights to God and leave the outcome with Him. All our ways must come into agreement with all God's ways. In some of the modern day approaches to serving God we often hear these phrases, "Be a user-friendly church or be seeker-sensitive." There is essentially nothing wrong in this approach. But if we cease being a God-friendly and Savior-sensitive church, we compromise the ways of God to reach people for God, which is prohibitive and dishonoring to Him. Absolutely all our rights must be subservient to all His will.

C. All Heart and Soul

We must serve Him "...with all thy heart and with all thy soul." (Deuteronomy 10:12c). A half-hearted person will turn back. In anticipation of this temptation, our Lord said in Luke 9:62, "And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." Paul sees this whole-hearted commitment as a requirement. He said in I Corinthians 4:2, "Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful. The Lord Jesus said in Revelation 2:10c. "...be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

Conclusion:

In Deuteronomy 10:13b God said, "...Which I command thee this day for thy good." All that God in His mercy does for us is for our good.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Johnny Pope". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal line extending to the right.