

Weekly Devotional  
June 3, 2020

*He has told you, O man, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God? (Micah 6:8 ESV)*

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The prophet Micah wrote at a time when God's people experienced the emergence of a wealthy upper class—a corrupt class that produced substantial legal, economic, spiritual, and physical injustices. Some of their sins included idolatry (Mic. 1:7; 5:12-14), the confiscation of property (Mic. 2:2, 9), the belief that personal sacrifice fulfills God's justice (Mic. 6:6-7), and shady business practices and violence (Mic. 6:10-12). So, through Micah, the Lord delivered his grievances against his people (Mic. 3:8) as he accused them for their transgressions (Mic. 1:2-9), warning them that both Assyria (Mic. 5:5-6) and Babylon (Mic. 4:10) were imminently approaching as the Lord's instruments of divine judgment.

With this backdrop, Micah reveals what God wants from his people. "What does the Lord require of you?" is the question. The threefold answer: do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God. It's a threefold answer that reveals two categories of living: life with others and life with God. He wants his people to be impartially just and compassionately kind with one another, and he also wants his people to be walk faithfully with himself. In other words, he wants his people to love him and to love their neighbors (Deut. 6:5; Lev. 19:18, 34), which Jesus revealed to be the heart of God's commandments (Matt. 22:37-40). So, what does God desire of his people? He desires *basic forms of love*.

But the reason why he wants his people to pursue these basic forms of love is because the Lord himself has righteously, lovingly, and faithfully redeemed his people (Mic. 6:3-5). God's people have tasted the marvelous grace and goodness of God, so it is only appropriate that God's people express basic forms of love and goodness to one another, as well. Corruption, oppression, and injustice would not only be inappropriate, they would be a monstrous wrongdoing against the glorious love and kindness received from the Lord.

For today's Christian, God's lavish grace has been tasted through his glorious salvation in Christ. On the cross, Jesus took upon himself all sins of corruption, oppression, and injustice, so that our unjust hearts would be forgiven through faith in him. But not only have we been forgiven in Christ; we have also been given new hearts that love the Lord and his statutes (Jer. 31:33) and the Spirit of God that empowers us to just living (Ezek. 36:27). In Christ, we have been forgiven of all our unjust transgressions, and we have been empowered to love the Lord and our neighbors with a love that seeks justice and kindness for all, especially the afflicted.

My dear, dear Christian friend: as those who have tasted the incomparable love of God, may we be the first who love others with basic forms of love. And when that love is missing because of the world's injustice—as recent events have shown us—may we "Learn to do good; Seek justice, Rebuke the oppressor; Defend the fatherless, Plead for the widow" (Isa. 1:17), all because we have tasted and seen that the Lord is good (Ps. 34:8). As Tim Keller states, "There is a direct relationship between a person's grasp and experience of God's grace and his or her heart for justice." May your own grasp and experience of God's grace increase your heart for justice and kindness as you walk in all faithfulness with the Lord.

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Questions:

- What have been some of your gut reactions to recent injustices and destruction? Why do you think you have felt that way?
- How does today's text encourage you to love others with basic forms of love? How does it encourage you to defend the suffering? What suffering people groups can you identify in your own culture? As a young person, what can you do to raise your voice in loving ways?
- Spend some time in prayer thanking God for his love and kindness to you. Ask him to give you a heart that seeks justice and kindness to all, especially the downtrodden.