

# **“Loving Those on the Outside”**

## **Sermon Reflection Questions February 7, 2010**

### **Micah 6:3-8, Unlocking the Old Testament**

My favorite of the Minor Prophets is Micah. Our son Micah is named after the prophet and the verse we selected to be his verse is Micah 6:8. This verse is in response to the people asking, “What does God want from us.” God responds by telling us that He has already made His desires clear. But, He encapsulates it one more time, “To do justice, to love kindness and to walk humbly with God.” This is a beautiful passage, but it is difficult to live out.

1. God begins our passage in verses 3-5 by reminding the people of what God had done for them. This is to serve as a basis for understanding what they now were to do for others.

a. According to these passages and the Sunday message what had God done for His people?

b. If you think about your own life what has God done for you personally?

2. A natural question that we ask when someone has done something kind to us is, “What should I now do in return?” In Micah 6:6-7 God recounts the various ways people have thought they should respond to God’s goodness.

a. According to the verses how have people tried to respond to God’s goodness?

b. Why were these methods of response inappropriate?

c. How do we (maybe you personally or others in the culture) respond inappropriately to God’s goodness?

3. God then says in Micah 6, “here is what the Lord requires of you.” Before we hear what it is that the Lord requires of us, it is important to understand what He means by “require.” Is this required in order for us to keep our salvation; is what is to follow merely “requested of us”? What do you think? (Read Eph 2:8-10 and James 2:14-17)

4. God requires three things of us. The first is “to do justice”.

a. Some translations will say to “seek justice” rather than “to do justice”. What is the difference between the two translations? (The most authentic translation is “to do justice”)

b. I said in the message that doing justice is very similar to one of the great ends of the Presbyterian Church which is, “to exhibit the kingdom of God to the world”. What

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does it mean to “do justice” or “to exhibit the kingdom of God to the world”?  
(Remember that the kingdom of God is the rule and reign of God)

- c. What does it look like for you in your life to “do justice”?
5. The second thing God requires of us is, “to love kindness”.
  - a. I said in the message that “kindness” is the Hebrew word “hesed”, which we have looked at before. One definition for “hesed” is “covenant love”. It is mostly used about God toward us. 1 Chronicles 16:34, “O give thanks to the LORD, for He is good; for His steadfast love (hesed) endures forever.” How would you describe God’s “hesed” for us?
  - b. Jesus tells us to love our neighbor as ourselves, but Micah seems to be taking it a step further; we are to love others as God has loved us. What is the impact of this statement that we are to have “hesed” toward others?
6. The final requirement is, “to walk humbly with God.” What does this statement mean?
7. I said in the message that these three things are interrelated and build off of one another. This is to say that in order to do justice we must love kindness (hesed). In order to love kindness we must walk humbly with God.
  - a. How do you see the interrelation of these three things?
  - b. What happens if you try to do only one or two of the three commands?
8. Why is it so difficult to live out these three commands?
9. How is God calling you to respond personally to this passage?