

Justice and the Heart of God

Brad McConnaughey // September 13, 2020

Micah 6:8

*“What does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.” **Micah 6:8***

Big Idea: Justice is merciful love and care for the vulnerable.

1. Justice is care for the _____.

Mercy is God’s unconditional grace and compassion.

Justice is to treat people equitably and to give people what they are due, whether punishment, protection or care.

*“You are to have the same law [mishpat – justice] for the foreigner as the native.” **Leviticus 24:22***

*“Defend the rights of the poor and needy.” **Proverbs 31:9***

*“This is what the LORD Almighty says: “Administer true justice, show mercy and compassion to one another. Do not oppress the widow or the fatherless, the immigrant or the poor.” **Zechariah 7:10-11***

The “quartet of the vulnerable”

2. Justice reflects the _____ of God.

*“He executes justice [mishpat] for the oppressed and gives food to the hungry. The LORD sets prisoners free, the LORD gives sight to the blind, he lifts up those who are bowed down, the LORD loves those who live justly. The LORD watches over the immigrant and sustains the fatherless and the widow, but he frustrates the ways of the wicked.” **Psalms 146:7-9***

*“The LORD your God...defends the cause [mishpat] of the fatherless and the widow, and loves the immigrant, giving him food and clothing.” **Deuteronomy 10:17-18***

*“A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in his holy dwelling.” **Psalms 68:5***

*“Speak up for those who cannot speak up for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute.” **Proverbs 31:8***

3. Justice is the _____ of God's people.

"The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." **Luke 4:18-19**

"Go back and report to John what you have seen and heard: The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor." **Luke 7:22**

"Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world." **James 1:27**

"What does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God." **Micah 6:8**

How will you respond?

1. Examine your heart and mind – Are you humbly open to learn?
2. Educate yourself
 - Immerse yourself in God's Word
 - Read *Generous Justice* by Tim Keller
 - Be the Bridge* by Latasha Morrison
 - Go to the Chalmers Center at Chalmers.org and read articles
 - Take Poverty 101 class
3. Engage/form relationships with those who are in the vulnerable classes of society.
4. Create your own Compassion Fund in your family budget.
5. Volunteer – at the Compassion Center, Everett/Union Gospel Mission, Pathway for Women, speak up for the vulnerable...

Sermon questions

Use these questions to discuss the sermon from Sunday, focusing on how you can **grow** as an everyday follower of Jesus and how you can **go** accomplish what Jesus calls you to do.

1. Have someone read **Jeremiah 22:3**. How would you define justice? How does this verse help inform the biblical concept of justice?
2. Have someone read **Micah 6:6-8**. The Lord requires of his people that they **act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with Him**. Which of these is easiest for you and which is most difficult?
3. Brad encouraged us that having humility in tough conversations means being willing to say, "My thinking on this might be wrong" and listening to others even when we disagree. Around what topics is it most difficult for you to adopt this humble attitude?
4. Have someone read **James 4:6**. **Why** is humility so important to God and how can you **grow** in humility so as not to be someone whom God resists?

5. When you look at our world and our country today, what opportunities do you see for the church to strive for justice? How can you **go** and represent Jesus' heart for justice in your relational world?