

THE OVERVIEW

MAIN IDEA: God is calling you to become someone who is led by Jesus, shaped by grace, and moved by love.

TEACHING TEXT: He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God. Micah 6:8 NIV

WHAT DO WE WANT STUDENTS TO KNOW? As the people of God drifted further and further away from God, they became more and more unjust in their treatment of others. So, God continued to send prophets to call them back to their true and proper worship, and to doing the hard work of bringing justice and righteousness to all the places in society where wickedness had taken root. For those of us who follow Jesus today, we have been given the same assignment. To do what we can to partner with God in His good plans. To act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with our God.

WHAT DO WE WANT STUDENTS TO FEEL? Hopeful that God can use them to make a difference. Inspired to use their influence to bring justice.

WHAT DO WE WANT STUDENTS TO DO? Serve people. Solve problems. Glorify God.

THE OUTLINE

INTRO: Hello, Switch! My name is Colton, and we find ourselves in our message series Fallen Kingdom, where we are looking at the kings and prophets of Israel. How God used specific people to try and persuade the Israelites back to Him, when so often they would drift the wrong way. Last week we talked about entitlement, how God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble. Tonight, we are going to be talking about injustice.

TENSION: It can feel like everywhere we look, we see people who have needs looking to be met. The person on the side of the road asking for help. Wars in foreign countries where innocent lives are lost. It's knowing that more people are caught in slavery today than at any point in human history.

What are we supposed to do? What *can* we do about it? How can we make a difference when the need is so great? And if we're also being honest, we can become numb to it. We can start to believe that there's no point, the need is too great - I'm one person, I couldn't possibly make a difference. And that leads us to a place where we start to not care. We become numb and we become apathetic. But numb and apathetic never changed the world. And as followers of Christ, we are called to be difference makers.

What we are going to explore tonight is how **God is calling you to become someone who is led by Jesus, shaped by grace, and moved by love.**

Let's pray.

TRUTH: Tonight we find ourselves in the book of Micah. Micah is a book found within the last 12 books of the Old Testament. These prophetic books are oftentimes referred to as the “minor prophets.” At this point in history, the nation of Israel, God’s chosen people, had split into two separate nations. Micah is living in a small town in the southern kingdom of Judah and through this book, we see how God is using Micah to deliver a warning of God’s impending judgement upon Israel. Because unfortunately, once again, the Israelites have not been faithfully following God. And when you read this book, the first four chapters or so are very gloomy, because God through Micah is addressing the sins of the nation. But toward the end of the book, Micah delivers a message of hope. What we see throughout all of Scripture is that God’s ultimate desire is not to destroy, but to save and redeem.

And that is where we find ourselves when we read the words...

He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God. Micah 6:8 NIV

Let’s break this down, I love that first part of this verse.

“He has shown you, O mortal, what is good”

Micah is reminding the Israelites that God has shown them what is good. He has shown them what is good because he has shown Himself to them. He has shown them grace, mercy, love. He has provided for them time and time again. God has continued to be faithful when the Israelites have been faithless. And then, Micah leads us to this question, “And what does the LORD require of you?”

Micah is letting the people know that the goodness of God requires a response. Even for us today, as we experience the goodness of God, it should change our lives. Because God has shown us love, how different should our worship be? Because God has shown grace and mercy unto us, how differently should we live and love others? And now Micah writes what the response should look like...

“To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.”

These words were true to the nation of Israel almost 3,000 years ago, and these words still ring true for us today. Because Jesus is the same yesterday, today, and forever. Jesus is our model example for how we are to live. So for the rest of the message tonight, we’re going to look into those three things: To act justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God. We’re going to unpack each of these and see how Jesus modeled this and how we can live this out in our lives today.

APPLICATION: First: To act justly.

A simple definition for what this means is that we are to **make wrong things right**. This could look like preventing harm to others, to live out God's standard of what is good, meaning we are choosing to do the right thing even when everyone else is doing the wrong thing.

We see this in the person of Jesus, how He was in the business of making wrong things right. And throughout Jesus' ministry on the earth, the people that he came after the most, were actually the religious leaders. The people who were supposed to be leading and shepherding God's people, but instead they had corrupted themselves. We see an example of this in Mark 11...

Jesus heads into the temple courts, and he finds that instead of it being a place of worship, the temple has been corrupted and people are selling animals to be sacrificed. Now at this point, animal sacrifices were how the Israelites atoned for their sins, but what angered Jesus about this is that the people who were putting together this operation, the vendors and the religious leaders, were not doing this to help people worship, but they were doing it to make a profit.

And so Jesus flips tables, some accounts say he whips those who were wronging the people, and he makes it clear that he is living justly. We also see this in how Jesus met the woman at the well, a woman caught in adultery, and He gave her forgiveness. Or how he healed a man that had been paralyzed for almost 40 years. Jesus was in the business of making wrong things right.

Maybe for you today, it's looking in the mirror and becoming serious about living a life of integrity. To be the same person in every situation. Maybe it's to no longer "go with the flow" and drift wherever your friends may take you, but to choose to do what's right when everyone else is choosing to do what's wrong. Maybe there are areas of your life where if you're honest, the "acting justly" is more of a performance than an actual act of worship. Maybe it's time to look at your heart, and work some things out. Because we are called to live justly, to make wrong things right.

Second: Love mercy

What does this mean? Mercy is when what we deserve is withheld from us. It's when we mess up in some way, and there is a deserved punishment as a result, but that punishment is withheld from us.

That's mercy, but what does it look like to *love* mercy? **To desire peace for people, not punishment.** To love your neighbor as yourself. Too often we want justice for others, but mercy for ourselves. And if we can be honest for a second - this one might be the hardest. And honestly, it makes sense. In our culture, we are taught to divide ourselves over basically anything - anyone that disagrees with you or lives differently is the enemy!

Where are my sports people at?! We see this in sports all the time. Now, for me - college football is KING. And the house that I grew up in, my mom and my dad both brought different teams into the house, and I am the product of having both college teams influenced over my life.

The first being from my mother, the one and only Oklahoma Sooners. The second, passed down from my dad (who was in their marching band when he was in college), the Ohio State Buckeyes. If you ask me who is my favorite - it truly is equal. But with those being my two favorite teams, if you know college sports, then you already know my two LEAST favorite teams. The Michigan Wolverines and the Texas Longhorns. These are some of the greatest rivalries in ALL of sports. For Ohio State and Michigan, the dislike is so real that fans from each side won't even refer to the other team by their name. Ohio State fans call Michigan "That Team Up North," and Michigan fans call Ohio State "Ohio" - both as a sign of disrespect.

Sports are great, and I love them, and I could preach a whole message about why I think college football is the greatest - but as I've grown in my faith I have learned and I've been convicted that things cross the line when we begin to see people as objects or obstacles rather than as a person. A living, breathing soul. Someone created in the image of God. And this goes beyond sports rivalries, we can allow ourselves to fall into these mental traps in every area of our lives.

We are called to love mercy, to see people as people, to desire peace for everyone. Jesus models this in Matthew 9:13 when He quotes the Old Testament saying, "I desire mercy, not sacrifice." For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners."

So if you notice that there's someone who bothers you, or more bluntly, someone or maybe an entire group of people that your heart is hard towards, you may need to repent and ask God to soften your heart towards them. That our desire would be that the same mercy that has been given to us, would be given to them.

Third: Walk humbly

To walk humbly, is **to release our control and let God lead**. To recognize that we can't do this on our own, that we need Him. To lead us, guide us, help us.

But so often, and I'm speaking for myself, I want to take hold of the wheel and control my life. I want to do things MY WAY. I can lack trust in God and place more trust in myself. Unfortunately, I look back at my life and this has been one of the areas that God has worked the most on me. When I was a junior in high school, there was this girl that I was interested in. We were doing the "talking, not dating" thing for a while. I asked all my friends what I should do, and they basically said don't date her. Well, I didn't like that advice. But one friend challenged me to pray to God about it. So one night during worship at my youth group, I'm asking God what to do. And so clearly, almost like God was standing next to me, I heard Him say "don't date her." I remember at that moment thinking "sorry God, I gotta take the shot." Unfortunately, that relationship did not end well. There were a lot of mistakes and a lot of hurt. And if I had walked humbly, listened to my friends, listened to God - I could have avoided all of it. But I thought that I knew better, and I got in my own way.

When we look to Jesus, we see someone who walked humbly with God, who let go and let God lead the way, and looked to serve everyone around him. From healing the sick, to performing miracles, feeding thousands of people, offering compassion to those who were societal

outcasts, and even washing the feet of the very men that followed him. Jesus at every turn surrendered to what the Father led him to. In Philippians 2 Paul writes this out beautifully,

5 In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: **6** Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; **7** rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. **8** And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!

He emptied himself. He humbled himself. Why? So that you and I might have life. Why should we walk humbly? So that others may find life in Him. Walk humbly with your God.

So to recap:

We are called to act justly: **to make wrong things right.**

To love mercy: **to desire peace for people, not punishment.**

Walk humbly with your God: **to release our control and let God lead.**

And when we do these things, we can begin to make a difference. You might not change the entire world overnight, but you can begin to make a difference in your individual world. **God is calling you to become someone who is led by Jesus, shaped by grace, and moved by love.**

In order to do that, we have to let the Holy Spirit examine our heart, so tonight we are going to ask these questions in small group.

- What breaks your heart? What is the need that you see, and you feel a calling to do something about it?
- Where has your heart been hardened? Is there a person, a group of people, maybe a situation where you need God to come and soften your heart.

CONCLUSION: Before going to small groups.. Want to tell stories of students

Act Justly - Aracena

Love Mercy - Makayla

Walk Humbly - Jordan

So what can you do? Start small....

God is calling you to become someone who is led by Jesus, shaped by grace, and moved by love. Let's pray.