



For Further Reflection

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)

“Act justly” or “do justice.” The Hebrew word used here (*mishpat*) can mean judgment, or verdict, or ordinance, or justice. God’s commands and ordinances include not merely a list of do’s and don’t’s, but a relationship grounded in God’s gracious verdict. God does *mishpat*, and therefore the people of God are to do *mishpat* as well. To “do justice” is to do what is right; but it is also to have mercy.

“Love mercy.” This Hebrew word for mercy (*chesed*) is a theologically loaded term. It could be translated mercy, or loving-kindness, or even covenant faithfulness. *Chesed* is one of God’s defining actions: covenant faithfulness is what God is all about. To love “*chesed*” is to love and trust a God of forgiveness and mercy, and to live with other people accordingly.

“Walk humbly with your God.” Used only here and in Proverbs 11:2, this Hebrew word means lowly or humble. Jesus talks about *the poor in spirit* receiving the Kingdom (Matthew 5:3), and says only people who turn and become like a little child—that is, *lowly and dependent*—can enter into the Kingdom (Matthew 18:3). Walking this journey of faith with your God, you are dependent on God’s justice, mercy, and covenant faithfulness.

Walking humbly with your God also means standing ready and prepared to do the justice, mercy, and loving-kindness you receive from God (the Greek version of Micah 6:8 uses “ready, prepared” instead of “humbly” to describe our walk with God).

All three together. You are to *do justice*—but that justice is flavored with *mercy*. You are to *love mercy*—and that mercy is first and foremost dependent on *God’s covenant faithfulness*. You are to walk in *lowly dependence on God*—the same God who is known for *doing justice* and *loving mercy*.

Start anywhere on the triangle, and *justice*, *mercy*, and walking *humbly* all lead to each other. And they all describe the God we know as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—the God who *does justice*, *loves mercy*, and in Jesus, becomes *lowly enough to walk with you* on your journey of faith.



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