

33-06-01.wpd -- What Does God Expect of Us?

God's will, knowledge, goodness, justice, mercy, obedience, humility

Micah 6:8

God's will for us is simply to be the humans He created us to be.

INTRODUCTION:

--"(Title)." This should be the foremost question of every Christian, even greater than "What does God expect of me?" My individual life is important, but God's will for the human race is foundational. God's will for humanity takes priority over any special plans He has in mind for particular people. The emphasis is on: What does God expect of Us?

-- I believe "**HOM.idea**." I believe I can show this from our **text** today

--Micah 6:8, *He has showed you, O man, 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.*

I. How Has God Has Already Revealed His Will to Us

A. In creation ("what is good")-- God called His creation "very good" in the beginning. After the Fall, we still recognize *goodness* in His handiwork through *beauty & order* (humans know intuitively).

B. In humanity: ("O man...") Humans know they are different from any other part of creation, because of *moral light* and our responsibility to choose. (Jesus said, "I am the light of the world," because His role as humanity's light came before His Incarnation-- John 1:9, The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world.

C. In the beginning ("what does the LORD require of you?")

1. God told Adam and Eve what He wanted them to do on earth: to *populate it, rule over it, work in it, take care of it, and name its other creatures*. (This is all we can see in Genesis 1&2....)
2. Sin affected 3 areas of "good" in human life: *social relationships* [discord between Adam and Eve], *spirituality* [disobedience to God], and the *natural environment* [disharmony in nature].
3. God's Word shows how to live well in the midst of these problem areas. But it also promises their healing. [What draws humans to the Bible? We long deeply to return to our original order & beauty without the *social, spiritual and environmental* problems we face in a fallen world.]

TRANS: God's will for us is to be what He created us to be. From the outset, we know what *true humanity* was suppose to be, but sin got

us off track. God's plan is to restore us to *full humanity* in Christ. **What will that restoration look like?** "He has showed you, O man, what is good..."

The rest of the verse answers: "*what does the LORD require of you?*"

II. He Wants Us to Live As Image-Bearers of Himself

A. As image-bearers of God, we are to "act justly."

1. **We know that God is a God of justice**. [When Abraham appealed to God to spare Sodom, because his nephew Lot lived there, he said in Gen 18:25, "Far be it from you to do such a thing--to kill the righteous with the wicked, treating the righteous and the wicked alike. Far be it from you! **Will not the Judge of all the earth do right?**"] (Humans are born with an assumption that God, as the ultimate Judge, ought to pronounce His *judgments* based only on what is "right" or *righteous*.)
2. To be *fully human*, to fully bear God's image, we must "*act justly*" (*live righteously* and *bring about justice and equity* on the earth).
 - a. This addresses the problem of discord in the social realm. (If all humans behaved only righteously and justly with each other, it would be *like what God intended* before the Fall.
 - b. But **not all humans live justly and righteously** (They will cheat, steal from, and take advantage of each other, until they get converted by Christ as Savior, or stopped by Christ as Judge.)
 - c. God's Son became a human Messiah, to restore and manifest again the unaltered image of God-- Heb 1:8-9a, But about the Son he says, "Your throne, O God, will last for ever and ever, and righteousness will be the scepter of your kingdom. You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness..." (It's through Christ that we learn to "*act justly*")

B. As image-bearers of God, we are to "love mercy."

1. God loves to "*show mercy*" (*kindness, goodness, favor*), *not just toward humans*, but toward all creation (read Psa 104:10-24).
2. God's Son is directly connected to the existence and welfare of creation (Col 1:15-17, He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were **created by him and for him**. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.), but His love to show mercy is focused on solving the human sin problem (Heb 1:3, The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, **sustaining all things** by

his powerful word. After he had provided purification for sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven.)

3. To manifest the true image of God, we must "*love mercy*," as God does, showing it *to all creation*, but especially *to those who also bear God's image*-- Mat 5:44-45, But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. (Treating the earth kindly will not *reverse the curse* of the Fall, and being merciful to sinners may not *bring peace on earth*, but living lives of mercy is God's will for us, while we wait for the harmony in all of creation that will be brought about at Christ's 2nd Coming.)

C. We are to "*walk humbly with*" the God whose image we bear.

1. God's fingerprints are everywhere in physical creation, but only we bear God's image, allowing us to "*walk*" with God.
2. Humanity's original walk with God in Eden gave us all we ever needed for fulfillment, but Satan convinced Eve to set her own perceptions above God's warning [God had said, "*That fruit is deadly! Don't eat it!*" But (Gen 3:6), When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was *good for food* and *pleasing to the eye*, and also *desirable for gaining wisdom*, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it.] (Adam also knew God's warning, but he too set Eve's *human thinking* above God's.) [this is still our problem]
3. Jesus showed us how to live as a human in the image of God-- John 8:28b-29, "...I do nothing on my own but speak just what the Father has taught me. The one who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone, for I always do what pleases him." Putting God's ideas ahead of our own is the *only way* "*to walk humbly with* [our] *God*."

CONCLUSION:

--**What does God expect of us?** "*He has showed you, O man, 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.*" **God's will for us is simply to be the humans He created us to be, image-bearers of Himself.** Sin *damaged* that image. Salvation in Jesus Christ *restores* it. Through Him, we can be what we were meant to be. We can live the way that brings the *greatest human fulfillment* and happiness, and *that is really God's will for us.*

Psa 104:10-24 (NIV) He makes springs pour water into the ravines; it flows between the mountains. {11} They give water to all the beasts of the field; the wild donkeys quench their thirst. {12} The birds of the air nest by the waters; they sing among the branches. {13} He waters the mountains from his upper chambers; the earth is satisfied by the fruit of his work. {14} He makes grass grow for the cattle, and plants for man to cultivate-- bringing forth food from the earth: {15} wine that gladdens the heart of man, oil to make his face shine, and bread that sustains his heart. {16} The trees of the LORD are well watered, the cedars of Lebanon that he planted. {17} There the birds make their nests; the stork has its home in the pine trees. {18} The high mountains belong to the wild goats; the crags are a refuge for the conies. {19} The moon marks off the seasons, and the sun knows when to go down. {20} You bring darkness, it becomes night, and all the beasts of the forest prowl. {21} The lions roar for their prey and seek their food from God. {22} The sun rises, and they steal away; they return and lie down in their dens. {23} Then man goes out to his work, to his labor until evening. {24} How many are your works, O LORD! In wisdom you made them all; the earth is full of your creatures.