**Living Christ Out in Community: Walk Humbly**

***Datuk Dr. Denison Jayasooria***

Listen to what the Lord says:

“Stand up, plead my case before the mountains; let the hills hear what you have to say. “Hear, you mountains, the Lord’s accusation; listen, you everlasting foundations of the earth. For the Lord has a case against his people; he is lodging a charge against Israel. “My people, what have I done to you? How have I burdened you? Answer me. I brought you up out of Egypt and redeemed you from the land of slavery. I sent Moses to lead you, also Aaron and Miriam. My people, remember what Balak king of Moab plotted and what Balaam son of Beor answered. Remember your journey from Shittim to Gilgal, that you may know the righteous acts of the Lord.” With what shall I come before the Lord and bow down before the exalted God? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousand rivers of olive oil? Shall I offer my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? 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[a] with your God.” (Micah 6:1-8)

# Review of the Series

In previous weeks, we heard, from Pastor Bill Wilson, about how we can live out in community by acting justly, and from Sister Margaret Loy, on how we are to love mercy and have compassion as Jesus did with His people.

# The Prophetic Tradition

## Prophets calling people to RIGHTEOUSNESS

“Hear me, you who know what is right, you people who have taken my instruction to heart: (Isaiah 51:7a)

God raises an ordinary man to warn the people of their sins.

## Prophets calling people to JUSTICE

The practice of love and mercy.

## Prophets calling people to JUSTICES

“(v21) See how the faithful city has become a harlot... (v23)they all love bribes... (v25) I will thoroughly purge... remove... (v26) I will restore... the City of Righteousness, the faithful City”) Isaiah 1:21-26)

There will be judgement followed by restoration.

# MICAH – the Minor Prophet

This week, Datuk Dr Denison Jayasooria shared with us how we can live out in community by walking humbly, through the story of Micah – a prophet whom God raised to speak light to the Israelites in their time of rebellion, disobedience, and eventual exile from their land. He was an ordinary man who was so inspired by the Lord’s ways and His word, that God used him to deliver His messages to great kings, priests and leaders of the nation.

# Micah and the Context

## The rich were oppressing the poor

“Woe to those who plan iniquity to those who plot evil on their beds! At morning’s light they carry it out because it is in their power to do it.” (Micah 2:1)

Micah was not a man who was afraid of rich, powerful people. He writes about the injustice that had taken over the land in its economy and politics, and about how wealthy, scheming people oppress the poor and stepped over them.

## Bribery – a national crisis and injustice

“Her leaders judge for a bribe, her priests teach for a price, and her prophets tell fortunes for money. Yet they look for the Lord’s support and say, “Is not the Lord among us? No disaster will come upon us.”” (Micah 3:11)

The long-standing issue of bribery is not something uncommon in a nation or a society. Micah writes about the disappointment that is the acceptance of bribes from God’s very own prophets and priests in the nation – the leaders and appointed rulers of the land who were supposed to lead God’s people into justice and righteousness, but instead, gave in to corruption and filth themselves.

Then I said, “Listen, you leaders of Jacob, you rulers of Israel. Should you not embrace justice,” (Micah 3:1)

## A false sense of religiosity

“Do not prophesy,” their prophets say. “Do not prophesy about these things, disgrace will not overtake us.” (Micah 2:6)

Micah also writes about the false prophets and religious teachers of the time, who arise not with the message of God, but with a completely different message. In fact, they put down Micah because of what he was telling the people, and claimed that he wasn’t speaking the truth.

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BIG IDEA: Walking in the prophetic tradition – living the Christian life in justice, compassion and humility.

# Micah and the Message

## Calling the nation to remembrance of God’s actions

“My people, remember what Balak king of Moab plotted and what Balaam son of Beor answered. Remember your journey from Shittim to Gilgal, that you may know the righteous acts of the Lord.” (Micah 6:5)

Micah reminds the Israelites about the wrongs they have once committed, and the faithfulness the Lord has once showed them. (Numbers 22-24). He reminds them of the disobedience and unfaithfulness they once showed to God, yet, he also reminds them of the faithfulness and unmerited grace that the Lord, their God, had once showed them.

## Calling the nation to a response

The Israelites then began to ask Micah just how can then make things right with God again:

With what shall I come before the Lord and bow down before the exalted God? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? **7**Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousand rivers of olive oil? Shall I offer my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? (Micah 6:6-7)

Yet, to their surprise, Micah says that the Lord does not want any of these things. No burnt offerings, no olive oil, no firstborns to offer. Micah tells the people that all the Lord wants is for them to act , love mercy, have compassion for one another, and to walk humbly with Him.

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 6:6-7)

# Understanding Micah 6:8

## Related imageThe Lord’s requirement of faith

Often times, in our relationship with God, we often have the perception that the God we serve is one who wants us to give Him all the luxuries that we have, which is not wrong. Everything we have and own is given by God Himself, and it is only right if we give it all back to Him. But more than that, the God we serve and love is also one who is just, righteous, merciful and compassionate. Sometimes, we forget that walking in justice and humility, loving mercy and being compassionate to those around us is also what God wants for His people. This should become the fundamental of our faith in our Christian lives.

## Holiness in daily living – in relationships and lifestyle

“Learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the oppressed. Take up the cause of the fatherless; plead the case of the widow.” (Isaiah 1:17)

To act justly: Being fair to all people, acting in right relations without prejudice.

To love mercy: Showing human kindness to all, whether significant or not, whether rich or not.

To walk humbly with God: Not acting proudly or thinking superior of yourself.

## Image result for holinessHoliness redefined – acts of justice and compassion

“Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke?” (Isaiah 58:6)

Isaiah redefines the expression of religiosity in acts of justice and compassion in Christian living. In all of Micah and Isaiah’s accounts that we’ve read, **justice** and **compassion** for others is **NOT** an option – it’s a **REQUIREMENT** of faith. It is not an option of ministry, but an **EXPRESSION** of Christian faith.

# Jesus and the Mission Mandate

“The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me, to proclaim good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord’s favor.” (Luke 4:18-19)

Jesus was the PERFECT example of walking in humility, acting justly, and having compassion. He knew very clearly what His purpose was on earth, and He did not shop for the attributes and requirements that came with His ministry, but He treated compassion and justice as a non-negotiable of His time on earth.

“When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.” (Matthew 9:36)

“For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” (Mark 10:45)

“The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.” (John 1:14)

# Walking Humbly

## Being humble before God

No matter what position and status we are given, no matter the riches and luxuries we have, we are ALWAYS nothing before God. Jesus was the epitome of a great king, yet a humble servant before the Lord. He was fully man, and fully God. He was given all the authority and power of heaven and of earth, yet, He chose to humble himself before the Father, and He chose to serve all of mankind in humility and grace.

“Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.” (James 4:10)

“if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land. (2 Chronicles 7:14)”

## Being humble from within (Character)

“having cancelled the charge of our legal indebtedness, which stood against us and condemned us; he has taken it away, nailing it to the cross.” (Colossians 2:14)

Humility is not a gift that is given to us since we are born, and is not something that we can put on like a piece of clothing. It is a journey that we grow and mature into, and is part of our character. Unlike other characteristics or personalities that we may have since we were little (kindness, helpfulness, friendliness etc), humility is something that needs constant practice and work. We have to constantly remind ourselves to walk in humility every second of our lives – no matter who we meet, what we do, say or think, we should always remind ourselves, and pray to God constantly for the spirit of humility. As Peter says:

“Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as elaborate hairstyles and the wearing of gold jewellery or fine clothes. Rather, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God’s sight.” (1 Peter 3:3-4)



## Being humble with others (Relationships)

“Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited.” (Romans 12:16)

When we begin to practice humility more and more in our lives, there will be a natural change in the way we treat and honour others.

“Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves,” (Philippians 4:3)

“Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.” (Ephesians 4:2)

“You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love.” (Galatians 5:13)

## Being humble and Dangers

When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with humility comes wisdom. (Proverbs 11:2)

He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble. (Luke 1:52)

## Being humble and Rewards

Then he said to them, “Whoever welcomes this little child in my name welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. For it is the one who is least among you all who is the greatest.” (Luke 9:48)

# Conclusion

Micah redefines the requirements of our faith. As Christians in a sinful, corrupted world, we are called to be the salt and light of each of our communities. As we learn about what it means to live out Christ in our communities, may we also fixate our eyes on The One who has given us this life to live, and The One who remains faithful to His people no matter the circumstance. Even as we go about our daily lives in our schools, workplaces, communities and our friends and families, may we continue to pray for a posture of humility, a heart for justice and compassion for His people; to pray for a heart that feels the heartaches of those who are oppressed and who face injustice on a daily basis, and may we continue to look to Jesus Christ for strength and perseverance through this life on earth.

# Challenge

God is challenging us.

* To stand up and speak up for those facing injustice.
* To respond in compassion for the needy and neglected in society.
* To walk humbly before God so as to fulfil His purposes on earth

Sermon summary contributed by Phoebe Leong

Prayer points contributed by Michelle



**SERMON: Living Christ Out in Community: Walk Humbly**

**Pray:**

* God's people will embrace the fruit of the Spirit – humility; and be the hands, feet and eyes of Jesus to reach out to those in need of justice and compassion.
* We will intentionally seek out and help those who face injustice by praying daily and responding as the Holy Spirit leads.
* People of God will turn from their own ways and be like Jesus in serving others and have compassion; giving His life for us.
* We will walk humbly before God so as to fulfil His purpose on earth.

***"Learn to do right, seek justice. Defend the oppressed. Take up the cause of the fatherless; plead the case of the widow.” (Isaiah 1:17)***

**MINISTRIES and EVENTS: SPIRITUAL RETREAT – ABIDE IN ME:**

***17 - 19 NOVEMBER 2017***

**Pray:**

* God will convict the hearts of all believers who want to seek God through prayer and reflection to respond.
* God will inspire more people of God to step up and register for this retreat.
* God will enable His leaders in church to be united and encourage one another through his calling for this retreat.
* God will bless the leaders in charge with wisdom, knowledge and understanding to do His Will.

 ***‘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)***

 **MALAYSIA MY NATION: 40 days Fast and Prayer**- Perak

***The Unreached People, Marginalised and Detained.***

**Pray:**

* People of God will pray for protection, grace and mercy upon those detained to be treated fairly by the authorities.
* People of God to step out in faith to the Unreached People in the new villages with His Love, wisdom and compassion.
* God’s authority be upon the Perak government to have a plan to implement community development projects to improve living conditions of the marginalized Orang Asli tribes of Semai, Temiar,Jahai, Kintaq and Lanoh.

***‘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 favour.’ (Luke 4: 18-19)***

* **A TRANSFORMED WORLD: Laos --Year of Sowing**

**Pray:**

* God's protection, strength and grace on leaders and people of underground house churches who are boldly seeking to share the gospel and grow churches.
* God’s hand on the government to ease restrictions on church planting as a restoration and healing process for the nation.
* Persecutors to have a change of heart – compassion, and experience the Love of Christ.
* God to give gifts of translation to the local believers involve in Bible translation.

***‘What answer shall be given to the envoys of that nation? The Lord has established Zion, and in her his afflicted people will find refuge.’ (Isaiah 14:32)***