

Justice, Mercy, Compassion

Scripture Reading — Zechariah 7:8-14

This is what the Lord Almighty said: “Administer true justice; show mercy and compassion to one another.” —

—Zechariah 7:9

In girls' club, the leader asked the question from Micah 6:8: “What does the LORD require of you?” In unison the girls responded with the next part of the verse: “To do justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with our God.” They had memorized this as their theme verse. Justice, mercy, and walking with humility are the behaviors that God is looking for in all of us. It's a deeply biblical theme.

God calls us, as a matter of worship, to act justly in our day-to-day lives, not being swayed by who has power and who does not. We honor God by showing not only impartial justice but also mercy and compassion. God himself clarifies that we are to seek justice for those who are not socially powerful—the single mother, foster children, immigrants, the poor. God declares, in effect, through Zechariah: “I don't even want your worship if you are taking advantage of and not defending the weakest among you. You're worshiping only to make yourselves feel better, not to honor me.”

Those are strong words. The suffering of people in another neighborhood—much less others around the globe—can be invisible. Enacting justice and showing mercy require us to care for our brothers and sisters. Ask God to show you ways to care for the marginalized. What acts of mercy are you doing for your family and community?

Prayer

Lord, help us to show mercy, and make us lovers of justice, so that we can make an impact in this world for you. Amen.

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