

Do, Love, Walk

"He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?" Micah 6:8 NRSV

A clergy colleague, a friend, and her husband went on a cruise last winter. It was a much-needed break. It was their first cruise and it offered many wonderful excursions. Early one morning about mid-way through the cruise, my friend and her husband were gathering with others preparing to embark on an excursion on one of the islands. Many of the travelers were excitedly talking about the adventure, and one fellow passenger greeted my friend with a cheery, "Hello, how are you this morning?" My friend, who isn't exactly a morning person, responded, "Great! This is our first time to visit the island. We've been looking forward to this." And before the fellow traveler could answer, an angry man spun around, got right in my friend's face and screamed, "Why don't you shut your fat mouth. No one wants to hear about what you want to do." The traveler who had greeted my friend was puzzled by the man's behavior, and she asked him, "Why are you picking on her? Several of us are talking about the trip." Rather than respond to her, the man just glared at my clergy friend. Many of the travelers just turned away to avoid any conflict. But the one who had asked the question, just stood there looking confused until my friend answered, "He is angry with me because I am African-American, and black folks are supposed to know their place and keep their mouth shut at all times." Her answer hung in the air like a plague, and all the travelers moved away from my friend without saying a word.

I wonder how many of the travelers identify themselves as Christian? I wonder how many of them are familiar with the prophet Micah's revelation of what is required of those who love God? Sometimes we think we are being humble when we walk away from trouble, and we are being kind when we avoid confrontation. Sometimes, we think it is enough to refuse to participate in unjust acts. The reality is simply this, we must love God with what we do rather than only with that which we avoid. The Lord does not ask us to run away; the Lord asks us to DO justice, LOVE kindness, and WALK humbly with Him. God never promised it would be easy, but He did tell us it is the way to live and know the saving acts of the Lord.

Prayer: O Lord, help me live doing justice, loving kindness, and walking humbly with you.

God be with us and guide us,

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