



THIS BOOK BELONGS TO:



Making Disciples...Developing Leaders

Act.Love.Walk: Micah 6:8

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Welcome TO ACT.LOVE.WALK.

Have you ever played a board game with your friends and made an amazing move, only for one of the other players to shout, “You can’t do that. It’s against the rules!” Professional football players run into the same problem. They’ve played according to one set of rules for years, but this season, one or more rules have changed. They make a big play and start to get excited. But when the whistle blows and the yellow flag flies, they’re reminded that their play is no longer legal—the expectations have changed.

Life gets tough when we don’t know what’s expected of us. We have no way of navigating what we should and shouldn’t be doing. Without expectations, we’re like a delivery person who lost the address for a package. He knows he’s supposed to deliver the package to someone, but he doesn’t know where to go or who to give it to.

Thankfully, God doesn’t leave us to wander through life without any directions. He’s given us a set of expectations to show us clearly which paths will take us where we need to go. These expectations aren’t arbitrary rules imposed on us just to make our lives harder. Just the opposite—God’s expectations give our lives meaning and direction.

HERE ARE SOME THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW AS YOU GO THROUGH THIS STUDY:

1. GOD WANTS TO CONNECT WITH YOU. In fact, he’s looking forward to it. But how ready are you to connect with him? As you go in and out of the sessions and devotional times, make sure you are willing to listen to him and learn from him. He promises that he will come near to you if you come near to him (James 4:8). Try it!

2. WHAT YOU PUT INTO THIS STUDY IS WHAT YOU’LL GET OUT OF IT. There are people all around you who have spent a lot of time praying for you and getting ready to invest in you. You’ll probably meet some new people, hear some new speakers, and get a chance to spend some quality time with God and with friends. Take advantage of it! Ask hard questions. Commit to being authentic and honest. God wants to use this time and these people in your life.

One important thing to note about God’s expectations: they can’t be faked. They have to start with serious heart transformation that only comes from knowing Jesus Christ. But we’ll get to that in a minute. For now, let’s look at what God expects from each of us. His expectations can be summed up by these three commands: act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with God.

SESSION ONE

act justly

Have you ever heard the phrase “Justice is blind”? Or maybe you’ve seen a statue of Lady Justice, with balance scales in one hand, a sword in the other, and a blindfold over her eyes. Why is Lady Justice blindfolded? So she can stay unbiased and un-swayed by outward appearances. In other words, justice has to look past money, power, and identity. Laws must be enforced equally for politicians and janitors, celebrities and fast food workers.

In that sense, blind justice is important. But in another sense, justice can’t be blind. God calls us to act justly in the world around us, and that means taking off the blindfolds that keep us from seeing the people in our lives. If we want to fight for justice, we first have to see—really see—the injustices all around us. We have to notice when someone is excluded because of the color of their skin, the level of their fitness, or the price of their clothes. We can’t look the other way when an employee at a store or a server at a restaurant is treated poorly by a rude customer. We can’t ignore the guy making inappropriate comments to demean a girl or the girl spreading untrue rumors about a guy. Justice isn’t blind—it has to see things clearly.

THIS LESSON WILL START TO UNRAVEL WHAT IT MEANS TO *ACT JUSTLY*. OVER THE NEXT FEW PAGES, YOU’LL HAVE A CHANCE TO DIG INTO GOD’S VIEW OF JUSTICE AND OUR RESPONSE TO THE INJUSTICES ALL AROUND US.

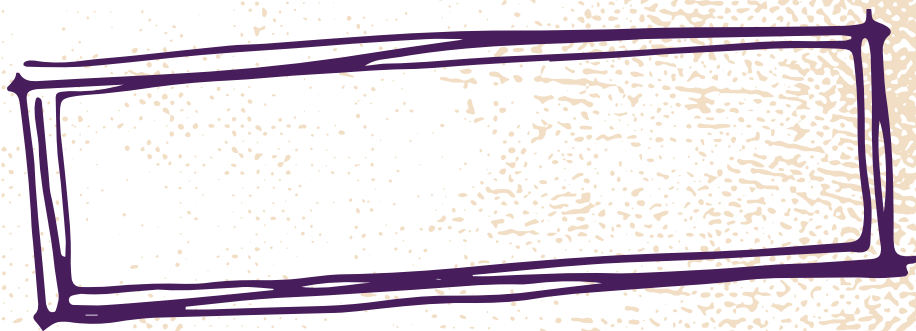
act justly

THESE TWO PAGES ARE DESIGNED SO YOU CAN TAKE NOTE OF ANYTHING THAT STANDS OUT TO YOU AND THAT YOU THINK IS WORTH REMEMBERING DURING THE LARGE GROUP TALK.

This talk will set the stage for the rest of the session.

Consider writing down main points, quotes, Bible verses, and any questions that pop into your head.

WHAT JUST ACTIONS SHOULD YOU *START* DOING TO GLORIFY GOD?



WHAT UNJUST ACTIONS SHOULD YOU *STOP* DOING TO GLORIFY GOD?



act justly

Richard Proudfit, a businessman from Minnesota, visited Honduras in 1987. During his time there, he was shocked to see the number of children who were starving. Everywhere he turned he saw men, women, and children dying because they had nothing to eat. Instead of going home with powerful memories and an incredible story, this man chose to do something about it. He used the power God had given him to focus on others instead of himself.

When he got back home, Richard began researching ways to send healthy meals to starving kids throughout the world. But not every kind of food would help. He worked with food scientists to devise a formula that would nurse malnourished children back to health slowly and consistently. Richard founded the Christian organization Feed My Starving Children. Each meal they prepare costs only 17 cents, yet has enough nutrients for a whole day's work.

In 2008 Feed My Starving Children provided more than 73 million meals to hungry children throughout the world. Think about that—who knows how many lives those meals saved? Clearly, this man understood what it means to act justly. He understood that his heart's desire for God's kingdom should echo through his actions, and he used his skills and influence to do just that. Richard took seriously Jesus' words to heal the sick and feed the hungry, and he did it out of his love for God.

WHAT POWER AND INFLUENCE DO YOU THINK RICHARD HAD BEFORE TRAVELING TO HONDURAS?



COULD RICHARD HAVE USED THAT POWER TO ONLY HELP HIMSELF? HOW?



WHAT MADE RICHARD DECIDE TO USE HIS INFLUENCE TO HELP THE STARVING PEOPLE OF HONDURAS?



DO YOU REMEMBER THE PLACES OF INFLUENCE YOU THOUGHT ABOUT DURING THE LARGE GROUP TALK? WHAT WERE THEY?



HOW COULD YOU USE THAT INFLUENCE TO BRING GOD'S JUSTICE TO SOMEONE WHO NEEDS IT?



A LITTLE DEEPER

Take a look at each of these Bible passages and get ready to talk through the following questions with your group.

LUKE 16:10-11

WHOEVER CAN BE TRUSTED WITH VERY LITTLE CAN ALSO BE TRUSTED WITH MUCH, AND WHOEVER IS DISHONEST WITH VERY LITTLE WILL ALSO BE DISHONEST WITH MUCH. SO IF YOU HAVE NOT BEEN TRUSTWORTHY IN HANDLING WORLDLY WEALTH, WHO WILL TRUST YOU WITH TRUE RICHES?

What are some of the things God has entrusted to you?

What do you think are the “true riches” Jesus is talking about here?

ISAIAH 3:14-15

THE LORD ENTERS INTO JUDGMENT AGAINST THE ELDERS AND LEADERS OF HIS PEOPLE: “IT IS YOU WHO HAVE RUINED MY VINEYARD; THE PLUNDER FROM THE POOR IS IN YOUR HOUSES. WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY CRUSHING MY PEOPLE AND GRINDING THE FACES OF THE POOR?” DECLARES THE LORD, THE LORD ALMIGHTY.

According to this passage, how does God feel about leaders who treat his people unjustly?

Why do you think God holds leaders to a higher expectation?

PROVERBS 21:15

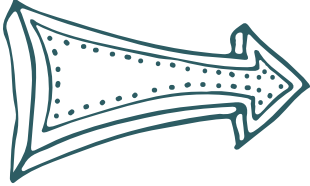
WHEN JUSTICE IS DONE, IT BRINGS JOY TO THE RIGHTEOUS BUT TERROR TO EVILDOERS.

What is one injustice you see over and over in your everyday life?

How would you feel if this injustice were righted? Do you know anyone who would be angry if the injustice ended?

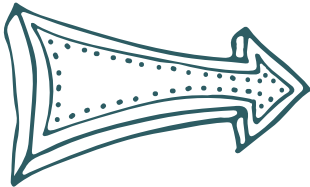
APPLY IT

Write down one action you could take in your everyday life to bring God's justice to someone who needs it. Think about something you can do within the next 24 hours!

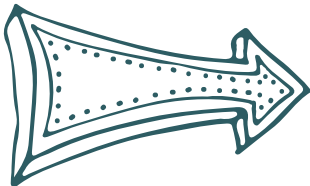


Be specific:

WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO?



WHEN ARE YOU GOING TO DO IT?



IS THERE SOMEONE WHO CAN KEEP YOU ACCOUNTABLE?

notes