

# What Should I Do?

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 06 January 2013

Preacher: Tobin Miller

[ 0 : 00 ] We welcome you again to Watermark. We're so glad you're here this morning. Let's turn around and greet some of our neighbors sitting around us. All right, please be seated. My name is Jeremy, and I just want to take a time to lead us through our next part of worship, which is communion.

It's a special time for us to remember the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. In the sermon later on, Pastor Tobin's going to talk a little bit about how God sent prophets.

Prophets like Micah, like Zechariah. How they were sent out to speak to the people of Israel in the Old Testament. To talk about how things are.

The state of things in our hearts. The brokenness. The sinfulness. In people like you and in me. But they didn't just point out to brokenness.

They also pointed out to how things should be. An image of justice, of restoration, of reconciliation, and forgiveness from God.

[ 1 : 04 ] So as we observe communion, we want to recognize that Jesus Christ was actually the final, perfect prophet. He was actually God himself, come to us.

And he not only spoke about how things should be. He actually did for us what none of us could do ourselves. He lived a perfect, sinless life.

And not only that, he sacrificed that. He sacrificed his life on our behalf. So God reminds us that communion is a time for members of God's family.

Those of us who have made that decision to accept that forgiveness and invite Christ into our lives. If you're here today and you're not yet a Christian, please take this time to think about that.

Think about questions that you might ask the people who brought you here today. Or take a look at your bulletin. It has a great little blurb on what it means to be a Christian. For those of us with young children in our care, God also reminds us that we've received a very unique and special responsibility to guide them spiritually.

[ 2 : 14 ] So if we know that a child is not yet ready to take the bread and take the cup, we can still use this time to teach them. Teach them about what we're doing. Teach them about why we're observing this.

And most importantly, just keep pointing them to the love of Jesus Christ. As the communion stewards set up, I know that God is also reminding all of us that this isn't just a time for us to go through motions of a ritual of eating and drinking.

God tells us, tells me to examine our hearts. Examine the relationships in our lives right now. I know he's told me that in the last few weeks to just examine my own heart.

See the places where I've struggled, where I've stumbled, where I've fallen short. To confess that to him. And most importantly, to receive his amazing grace once again.

So as the communion stewards set up here, please take some time to think. When you're ready, come up and take the bread and cup.

[ 3 : 23 ] Bring it back to your seats. And we'll eat and drink together as a family afterwards. Jesus took bread, gave thanks, and broke it, saying, this is my body given to you.

Do this in remembrance of me. And in the same way, he took the cup, saying, this is the cup of my new covenant.

Do this in remembrance of me. Let's pray.

God, who am I, Lord? Who are we? That you should come down to save us. That you should, as God Almighty, come and become a baby, as a human being.

Not only to live with us, to experience all the highs and lows of life, but also to die in our place. God, we stand in awe.

[ 4 : 37 ] I stand in awe of you of what that means. Lord, help us to remember. Help us not to just go through motions.

But God, give us a deep, deep assurance, Lord, in our hearts of what your death and resurrection means. What it means to be in a relationship with our creator.

Thank you so much. And God, as we send the kids and youth out, I pray that you would continue to guide them, continue to show them, through everybody, through each other, through the teachers, just how much you love them.

God, give them grace. Give them peace. And help them to just enjoy the next hour with you. Thank you again, Lord, and in your name we pray.

Amen. Kids, youth, please be dismissed and enjoy and obey your teachers. This morning, Tobin resumes his sermons on the Gorilla Series.

[ 5 : 41 ] These are questions that we as a community, as a church, have had that opportunity to send in to him. Questions that might be kind of taboo that we consider in church, things we're afraid to ask because we don't know what's going to happen if we ask those questions.

Before the end of the year last year, we looked at two of those topics, thematic themes. One of those was on finances and our stewardship. Another one was on sex and what the scriptures say about that.

And today we look at what does the Bible say about what we should do? What's the right thing to do? And so we've gotten several letters that have been sent in to us, SMSs, to an anonymous number.

And so I want to read one of those and we'll take a look at those. The first one is, Dear Tobin, as a Christian, how are we supposed to react when we see a video of a baby girl being run over in the streets of China and then watch many people walk by her without running to her rescue?

Now I hear about people being pushed onto train tracks with no one helping them and about the shooting at a school in the States. How am I supposed to react to this?

[ 6 : 43 ] What am I supposed to do? Let's take a listen to some other letters. Pastor, what is wrong with people? Maybe I should ask, what is wrong with me?

How can we pass by so many needy people on the street or in the subways and not be moved? I was always told not to trust those people, as they might be fake, and then they would use me or make me look foolish as I stopped to help them.

I don't know if that is true or just said that way to make us feel better about our lack of compassion and action. What does the Bible say is our proper response? I am talking to a friend in my office who is considering an abortion, and she asks me what I think.

I have heard that the average woman in Asia has three abortions in her lifetime. As a Christian, how am I supposed to view life? How am I to answer my friend?

Pastor, I have a few friends that I'm trying to share with who are really big into this idea of social justice. They protest for many different things. As I've started to share with them about my faith, one of the big problems they have with Christians and Christianity is that in their eyes, Christians have really dropped the ball throughout history in the whole area of human rights.

[ 8 : 10 ] They talk about the Crusades and all the bad things that were done in the name of religion. They talk about the civil war in the States and how the Southern pastors were promoting slavery. They talk about World War II and how the churches dropped the ball in Europe.

How do I respond to them? Dear Pastor Tobin, I am a wife who has had an abortion. My shame is that I never told my husband or asked him about this process.

I realize now selfishly I did not want to sacrifice my career at the time of the pregnancy because I knew that I would be the one who had to stop my job and take care of our baby.

But now, I find myself dealing with a large amount of guilt and shame. And because of a series of other events, I wonder if God has cursed me.

What should I do? Should I tell my husband? Should I tell my husband? The scripture reading today comes from the book of Micah.

[ 9 : 24 ] Please follow along in your bulletin. Hear now what the Lord is saying. Arise, plead your case before the mountains and let the hills hear your voice.

Listen, you mountains, to the indictment of the Lord and you enduring foundations of the earth because the Lord has a case against his people.

Even with Israel, he will dispute. My people, what have I done to you? And how have I wearied you?

Answer me. Indeed, I brought you up from the land of Egypt and ransomed you from the house of slavery. And I sent before you Moses, Aaron, and Miriam.

My people, remember now what Balak, king of Moab, counseled and what Balaam, son of Beor, answered him and from Shittim to Gilgal so that you might know the righteous acts of the Lord.

[10:37] With what shall I come to the Lord and bow myself before the God on high? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with yearling calves?

Does the Lord take delight in thousands of rams, in ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I present my firstborn for my rebellious acts, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?

He has told you, O man, what is good and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?

This is the word of the Lord to God's people. How you guys doing today? Yeah, can I try it again? How you doing?

You there? Intense, isn't it? Yeah. Hey, we are, if you join us for the first time, you're probably going, okay, what are we doing here after those questions that were read? We are doing a series called Gorilla Sermons.

[11:50] There are questions that we felt like you want to ask, they're in the room, you know that they need to be addressed, but if you ask them, you might get in trouble. You might offend somebody.

Someone might have experienced one of those letters that was read today. That person probably is in this room and they're waiting to hear what the message will be on.

And I think that it's hard when we talk about questions like that because I think as church leaders and as people in the family of God, we need to continually be looking at questions like were read today and throughout the next couple ones coming up and we need to continually ask ourselves the question, what should we do?

What is our proper response as a church? What is our proper response as a church family? What is our proper response as the people of God?

I mean, you just have to read the news today and it's just craziness, right? I mean, you look at the news and newspapers and the TV and it's all about things are out of control.

[13:01] There's despair. There's corruption. There's disaster. There's hopelessness. There's anger. It seems like one of the common themes that keep coming out is people start talking about and keep asking the question of justice.

Where is justice in this? Why isn't justice being done in these things? Why isn't that person brought to justice? What does it mean to have justice or do justice in these situations?

And so I want to start a discussion today as a church and my prayer is my prayer is it doesn't just end here after this sermon my prayer is it doesn't just end and you forget about it and you walk out and our life is the same.

My prayer is that this discussion continues for years and years but it doesn't just be discussion but it turns into actions.

Actions for us as individuals as we ask the question what should I do? asking actions for us as a church and community groups as we ask the question what should I do?

[14:09] So my prayer is that we would see a lot of actions so in some ways this is an exciting sermon to give because you don't know what God's going to do in people's hearts. You don't know what God's going to do when he moves people and what's going to happen when the church starts moving in a certain direction.

I want to talk about today's topic and preach off an Old Testament prophet. I realize that every time you teach off an Old Testament prophet there's probably a very good probability that people will leave your church.

People don't preach the Old Testament prophets in this day and age. They're not popular. They're weird. They do strange things.

They make us feel uncomfortable. They show us things in our world that aren't what we thought they should be like or what we think they're like and they disturb us.

Not to mention that the prophets were just weird. I mean, you read the scripture and some of them just do strange, crazy things. Like one guy was told to take the scroll of God's word and to chop it up in front of the people and to eat it in front of them as an indictment against them.

[ 15 : 25 ] One prophet was told to lay on one side for six months and no, he wasn't watching TV like some of us but then after six months he was told to lay on his other side for six months as an indictment against God's people.

One prophet was told to cook all of his food over crap, dried cow dung so that every time he ate the food and every time that people ate the food they would know that that is how their worship in their lives tastes to God.

One prophet was told to walk around naked for three years. How do you like that to be your pastor, right? Who's that naked guy? That's our pastor, yeah. You got a word from the Lord he's supposed to walk around naked for three years, you know.

It's easy to do in Malaysia, it's really hard to do in Siberia or someplace like that, right? So I guess it depends on what the guy was like. One prophet was told to marry a prostitute. His name was Hosea and he married this prostitute named Gomer and the whole book of Hosea is about him going back and buying back Gomer because she continues to go with other men and sell her soul and sell her life with these other men and God says this is what the people of God are like that he buys us but then we quickly sell ourselves to other idols and he doesn't give up on us but he continually comes back and he repurchases us and so when we read these prophets it just seems like they are out of control and their world is so strange and I've been trying to get a grasp on this for years and years and years and the best I can do is this story or an imagination or just imagine for you this is how I think about it just imagine with me that you love music the music is your life that you know every album everything you just love music and you've been sitting next to somebody who's been singing one of your favorite songs really really poorly now maybe you don't have to imagine that because you were just sitting right beside me as we were singing these worship songs right or the person next to you is really off tune but you are listening to your favorite song and you're hearing it sung and it is really really really bad now if you're somebody like me who's kind of tone deaf it doesn't really bother me that the person next to me is singing really poorly

I mean if they're if it bothers me it means they're singing really really bad okay but if you love music if you're an artist if you create music I was in college two of my roommates were musicians and they played music and they always talked they drove me crazy they talked about people who had pitch and they could hear things they talked about people who had perfect pitch it means every time they blew a note it was perfect they could hear every note and there's some people who are called absolute pitch they have absolute pitch anytime you make a noise you throw down you pass gas anything you do they could tell you oh B minor C major and so those are people that they can hear everything like that what if you're one of those people and what if you hear that song sung poorly day after day week after week month after month year after year what would you do see I think that's what the prophets were like

[ 19 : 07 ] I think the prophets understood God's creation perfectly they knew how things should function they knew how things should work they knew what God meant for perfect community to look like they knew this is what it should look like in this unfallen world this is how we should act with each other and so when they saw these things not working out that way the prophets just went crazy and they did weird and strange things because they couldn't ignore the music they couldn't ignore that what they saw wasn't what it should be they couldn't ignore what they heard wasn't what they should have heard they couldn't ignore that the actions they saw us in the church and people living out aren't the actions that God intended us to live out so they went crazy me on the other hand

I can walk through the world pretty easily and see injustice I can walk through the world with my mind and my eyes numb and see things the way they shouldn't be and not do anything about it I can think thoughts in my mind like well maybe they just deserve that maybe they're just getting what they deserve maybe it's bad karma and I don't need to mess with it because that's just the way it is sometimes I say things like that's really no big deal it's really not that bad I mean it's really not that bad it's actually not as bad as it used to be it used to be really bad but now it's really not that bad sometimes I might say things like it's not my world it's a different country it's not happening in my neighborhood it's not happening in my family it's far far away what do

I have to do with that why should I be concerned I don't want to know that just a few kilometers away from what we're meeting right now that people are living in poverty and that every night kids go to bed hungry do I want to know that and those same kids they'll never have a good chance at education they'll never have a good chance at the future do I really want to know that I mean they're

not my kids it's not my fault it's the parents fault I don't want to know that just a few kilometers from where we're standing there's elderly people in a nursing home who are spending out the remainder of their life in a cubicle two meters by two meters with a wall this tall and the windows are broken and there's air coming in and it's freezing and they're there by themselves they're alone no one comes to visit them it's not my parents not my grandparents

I don't want to know things like one third of all the pregnancies in Hong Kong and in abortions and we're complaining about Chinese women coming in and having babies but in the same way Hong Kong women are going to Shenzhen and aborting their babies too many kids anyway I thought it was interesting 9-11 September 11th Christina and I were in Shanghai we're listening to it all on the BBC shortwave radio because we woke up in the middle of the night to listen to it and they kept saying things like today 3,500 people lost their lives and it was terrible it was terrible it was a tragedy and they said these are husbands these are wives these are kids these are doctors these are lawyers these are bankers these are people who could maybe have found a cure for certain things and they're no longer there they're dead

I felt terrible but on September 12th 4,000 people got killed like that September 13th 4,000 people got killed like that September 14th 4,000 babies got killed like that and no one said maybe they're the future doctors maybe they're the future lawyers maybe they're the future leaders maybe they're the ones who are going to cure for cancer I don't want to know those things come on you look at the world cheating goes on everywhere right I mean it happens in business it happens in politics it happens in our courts it happens in the government it happens in our marriage that's just the way things are that's just the way it is deal with it somebody takes the truth and they twist it just a little so they can get into office or for profit or they forget about people who are poor and can't take care of themselves it's no big deal

[ 25 : 09 ] I don't know what the prophets were so upset about why are they so upset Jesus who was the perfect prophet the last prophet he said in Matthew 25 it's in your bulletin he says it's a massive deal he says it's terrible because every time somebody's hungry they don't get fed every time somebody is thirsty and they don't get a drink every time somebody is naked and they don't get clothed every time somebody is lonely and they don't get visited every time all these things happen every time there's suffering in the world that God shares in that suffering did you know that that God shares in the hunger that God shares in the pain that God shares and he feels the anguish of hopelessness

Jesus says in that passage one day some of us are going to get in front of him and we say okay let's go let's party let's get in there and he's going to say you know I never knew you you know what I went to watermark all my life I was baptized I did all these things what do you mean you don't know me he says I was hungry you didn't feed me I was thirsty you didn't drink me you gave me a drink I was naked you didn't give me any clothes and then that you didn't do that I suffered you see why the Old Testament prophets were so unenjoyable to read I mean no one wants to read them no one wants to know about them no one wants to know how much sin has affected my heart I don't want to know how numb

I am I don't want to know how much sin has made me not see the things the way God meant for them to be I don't want to know how sin has affected my compassion and my love and my gentleness I don't want to know those things because it hurts I'd rather just be happy I want to be happy I want to talk about happy things you know it was the same way in Micah's day I put it in your bulletin it's an amazing verse Micah 2 11 Micah is talking to the people he is a prophet and he's a very interesting guy go back and read it I think there's six chapters it'll take you 15 minutes in Micah 2 11 Micah says this he says if a preacher or a pastor came to you with wine and beer and drink and he told you that he could teach you a sermon that and I'm paraphrasing but this is what it says in Hebrew that he could teach you a sermon that would allow you to get anything you wanted from God you would hire that person in a second because we want happy things

Micah is a prophet he came into the world about 730 BC he's being sent from God to the people of God in Judah there's a lot of things going on in Judah but the interesting thing about Micah is when Micah comes there there's prosperity there's wealth there's influence there's peace in the world it's an amazing time to be in the people of God and God sends Micah to the people of God in Judah to preach to them immense this amazing time and the message that Micah brings to the people of God who on the outside everything looked perfect inwardly their hearts were hard their hearts were numb so the message that Micah brings to the people of God is not hey you're not worshipping good

enough hey you're not tithing enough hey you're not in enough

Bible studies you're not in the community group that's not the message Micah brings to the people of God the message that Micah brings to the people of God is this you've forgotten your neighbor you've forgotten the people in society around you you've become so inwardly focused that you've forgotten why I as your God has you here as my people they had especially forgotten the poor and the widows and the homeless and the people who are defenseless they had just forgotten all those people they had set up all these schemes if you read back over you'll see that there's these schemes for these housing schemes they're trying to work people out of houses they're trying to take property from people they were scheming on how they could cheat people in business deals it was amazing one passage actually says that the people go to bed at night dreaming of how they can cheat their other partners in business deals they're dreaming about these things at night and they can't wait to wake up the next morning so they can go do it that's the people of

[ 30 : 53 ] God all these things are happening in the world and all of these people are being out and he hears the music and the music isn't what it should be or what it was meant to be and he just kind of goes crazy he says you've forgotten the very people that God has a special heart for you've forgotten civil rights you've forgotten personal rights you've taken wages away from poor people and they can barely survive and the people listen to this and the message is intense and they wonder what they should do and the interesting thing in Micah's day and I think in our day also is that the people in Micah's day they couldn't make a connection they couldn't understand that how they treated the people around them was how they treated

God they couldn't make the connection how they treated the people who weren't in the same social economic realm but the people who were begging for food the poor people couldn't make that connection that how they treated those people were how they treated God they couldn't make the connection that how they treated the widows probably the most helpless part of society how they treated the orphans how they treated the people who couldn't take was how we treated God. And so Micah goes out and he starts preaching this message of revival, of social rights, that judgment is coming. And he basically goes to the people and he says, just because you're a minority doesn't mean anything.

Because God works through minorities. Don't say it's just me or just my family who want to do this. Because God works through the individual.

God works through small groups of people. He tells them this message, which is so powerful. We talk about it every Christmas, that you are going to make a difference, but that ultimately, the ultimate difference in Micah 5 is that there's going to be a ruler born.

[ 33 : 23 ] And his name is Jesus. And he's going to gather his people. And he's going to change the music. He's going to change everything.

He's going to make it like it should be. And you're going to hear things like they were meant to be. You know what happens?

It's the first time in the history of God's people, they listen to him. Usually these 17 prophets come in and they just, pfft, get out of here.

You have no idea what you're talking about. What are you talking about? I got it all made.

Everything's perfect. Everything's happy. Things are getting better and better. But Micah 6, after three messages to God's people, they listen to him.

And it's amazing because Micah is preaching and he's sharing and he's talking and he's doing. And the things you see about Micah is this. One thing is that he's leading it. He's not just telling the people to do it, but he's doing it.

[ 34 : 33 ] The second thing you see about Micah is it takes a long time. I mean, when you read these things, we go, okay, they heard, they did it. But from what I understand, the research I did for you, so you don't have to do it, it took them 25 or 30 years of talking against injustice, of doing kindness.

25 or 30 years of faithfully living and being different in front of the people around him. And the people listen.

And so we have the passage that you have here in your bulletins, verses one through eight, is basically a courtroom. The people have brought God onto trial. So you're going to love this as your lawyers.

What a great person to try, God, right? And they have God's on trial. The jury who's going to listen to this indictment is creation. The mountains, the earth, everything that God's created because

they've seen God from the very beginning.

And the people are going to bring up a charge against God. Well, you haven't done this for me. I wish things were better. I don't know what the charge is in your life.

[ 35 : 52 ] I have a lot of charges. And before they begin their charge, God says something. He says, wait, wait, wait, wait. I just want to make sure. Is it you're putting me on charge because I freed you from Egypt?

Whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa, wait. You're putting me on charge because I saved your life from an eternity separated from me. Whoa, whoa, whoa, wait, wait.

You're putting me on charge because I did all these massively good things to you as my people. And after that, the people shut up.

And they just ask one question. What should we do? What do you want us to do?

You're right. You're right. What do you want us to do? Should we tithe more?

[ 36 : 56 ] Should we worship more? Should we give our children as pastors or whatever? What do you want us to do? And God speaks to Hosea and he basically says, I want you to do the same thing that I've always wanted you to do.

The message has never changed. The message is found in verse eight. He has told you, Tobin, what is good and what the Lord requires of you.

Do justice. Love kindness. Walk humbly with God.

That's all he wants us to do. I wonder what it would be like if we all left here today with that mandate in our world.

You know, I love when we gather together as churches in Hong Kong in the stadium and we pray. But sometimes I wonder how effective that really is because we pray and I'm not saying it's a bad thing so please don't hear me.

[ 38 : 14 ] I think it's a great thing. But it means nothing if we go back into our workplace and we don't act like Christians.

I mean, in some ways, I think we'd probably be better not to gather. We should just act like Christians and do it and pray individually than to gather and pray and ask God for great things but then go back into the workplace or into our home and act mean and not like followers of God.

Do justice. The word is a very special Hebrew word. It's mispath. It means to care for vulnerable people. When we think of justice, we usually think of punishing out punishment to people.

They need to be justice. They need to get justice. But in the Hebrew culture, it's so much richer and deeper than that. It means being nice to everybody the same way. It means caring for everybody the same way.

It means judging everybody the same way. How are we doing on that?

[ 39 : 36 ] Do we treat everybody the same way? Are we nice to everybody the same way? When we see somebody in our office and they're getting slammed and it's totally unjust, how do we react to that?

Do we walk away like I do? Well, it's not my fault. I still have my job. When we see someone being treated unjustly, in a restaurant or in a grocery store, how do we act and react to that?

As God's people, he's called us to do justice, to help the helpless, to help the homeless, to treat everybody the same.

Justice means basically going out into the world and seeing where things are broken. seeing where systems are broken, seeing where institutions are broken and start to be a part of fixing those institutions.

Do justice, Tobin. Love kindness, Tobin. That word is very rich. That word is hasid. It's God's loyal love.

[ 41 : 05 ] That he's called all of us to love kindness. He's not just saying to be kind. He's saying to love kindness. Another word used is mercy.

He's not just saying be merciful, but love mercy. Make it be a part of who you are because that's who God is. Be merciful.

Share it to people. Speak to people. Extend to them mercy and love and compassion.

I'm really praying for us. I wonder what it's going to be like the first day one of our teenagers comes walking through those doors and she's pregnant. What if it's your daughter?

How are we going to react to her? Are we going to give her a ticket to Switzerland so she can go live with an auntie somewhere? Are we going to take her to shopping to Shenzhen so she can go to

a special place?

[ 42 : 23 ] Are we going to be a place where we can accept and care and love people who've made mistakes in your life? Because that's what God's done for us.

What does it look like to have mercy in your workplace? What does it look like to have mercy in your home? What does it look like to extend mercy to somebody who you've been fighting with for so long and you're so angry at them?

What does it look like to be kind to them? The passage says it's because we have a merciful God to us He's called us to be kind and merciful to everyone not just the people who deserve it because in reality no one deserves it right?

I mean if we're just no one deserves it none of us here deserve it but He's called us to love kindness what would it be like if we were a church that was known for that in Hong Kong?

What would it be like if we were a church where people were hungry and they were thirsty and they needed clothes they knew oh I could go to Watermark because they're going to help me? What would it be like if instead of going across the border to have their abortions girls and women could come here and we could offer them a loving and caring environment that would surround them in love the same love that Christ gave us and allow them to have their kids and put their kids up for adoption or take care of their kids or even start a daycare so that they can have their kids in daycare and they can finish school and then go into society and provide for themselves what would it be look like if we did that?

[ 44 : 27 ] Do you think God's name would be made great? it's complicated I walk around sometimes I look at people and I say well I don't know if they're worthy of it I don't know if they deserve it they're probably just getting what they deserve I'm going to look stupid should I look stupid helping people?

the prophet said hey it doesn't matter if they deserve it or not be just be kind be merciful to everyone to everyone because God is to us finally he just talks about what does it mean for us to walk humbly with God and you know what that means it means to understand who we are before the Lord it means to understand that we are broken and we're needful and we need mercy we need grace and we never can forget that and the moment that we forget that we stop walking humbly it means to be the same person you are right now and Sunday as you are on Monday in your workplace it means to be the same person and to understand who you are as you walk before and that you know you it's all because of grace it's okay if you look stupid it's okay if that thing happens because your identity is determined by Christ not by you to walk humbly with God means that we never forget the gospel it means that we never forget that God saved us when we were dead to do justice to love mercy and kindness and to walk humbly with God chapter 7 is amazing if you read it tonight before you go to bed this is what it's going to say

Micah is talking to the people and he says if you do this if you trust me if you trust God if you realize everything that's going to happen is because God's power is flowing through you because you're obedient and you're trusting him if you do this on that day the nations will see and they will be ashamed they will come they will tremble at their homes as they walk out and they will fear the Lord and they will say this who is like God which is what Micah's name means who is like God who pardons sin and forgives transgressions because a few people decided to take God at his word and to step out in faith and trust him and allow God's spirit to live through them and to change all of society it took 25 years and for the next 100 years that city and that culture benefited from God's people's faithfulness and obedience

I don't know where you are today I read those things and I can answer all those questions in many many different ways and every one of those questions there's justice and every one of those questions there's mercy and compassion and every one of those questions we need to walk humbly because we realize that if it wasn't for God's mercy and grace that would be us and it probably is us if we're honest I don't know where God has you today but I believe without a shadow of a doubt that Hong Kong is dying for Christians to act like Christians I believe without a shadow of a doubt that Hong Kong is dying for a church to act like a church I'm not going to tell you what that means I'm not going to say go do this because I think that God is working inside of you right now my prayer is you will not allow that voice to be snuffed out and you won't become numb but every one of us as leaders we have these burdens we have these passions we've been praying about them praying about them and we're praying

Lord please make the people in the church have those same passions I mean this isn't going to be the only time you hear this type of sermon because we're just going to keep talking about it and talking about it what does it mean for us to be good what does it mean for us to love kindness what does it mean for us to be gentle what does it mean for us to be compassionate what does it mean for us to walk humbly what does it mean for us to do justice we're going to talk about those things over and over and over and over and over and over and over until I die and there'll be another pastor he'll come and do it over and over and over until he dies hopefully but wherever you are tonight my prayer is that you wouldn't leave here without allowing God to speak to you you wouldn't leave here and shut that voice off that he's trying to share with you you would walk through the world and you would ask yourself questions where do I need to do justice here maybe it's in your workplace maybe it's at your home maybe it's in a restaurant you're about to go visit because people are treated really poorly there maybe it's in the old folks home 1.3 kilometers away from here maybe it's in a starving family's my prayer is that you would walk out of here and you would ask the question well who do I need to be kind to

[ 50 : 27 ] God please tell me I know that I'm sinful I need help I'm numb because of this sin who in my life do I need to be kind to who do I need to show mercy to who have I ignored because I'm really angry with them what would it look like for me to show mercy to my boss today tomorrow or to my husband to my wife God please show me these things because I want to be walking with you I want to be a person who obeys you I want to be a person who honors you I want to be a person who you use to change the world around me my prayer is that we would all be asking these questions in the midst of it we'd all understand what it means to be humble and as a church when we come back in weeks and months later and you share these things in your heart we start asking questions like okay now what do we do about that well we talked about it we've been praying about it okay so now how are we going to fix that and you're right we might not fix it

I mean we might not ever fix the government here you're probably never going to fix the government in America I mean the weeds of injustice are just too massive but that's okay because God is asking us as his people to be faithful where he has us and to pluck those little weeds around us to trust him to fix the rest because he will he will he's told you old man what you should do what the Lord requires of you to do justice to love mercy and kindness to walk humbly with God Father we just thank you for this day we thank you for this message of the prophets which is out of control it's intense it's brutal it makes me feel uncomfortable but I know in the midst of all that your mercy and your grace is working in our lives and that you're changing us help us to understand that Lord we are so thankful for your son Christ who came as the final prophet to make all things new and you know one day when he comes again and the clouds open and he is there on his horse that total justice will be done we know that when he comes again that day total compassion and mercy will be done in every knee scripture says will bow and every tongue on heaven and earth will say that Jesus Christ is Lord even those who do not believe him so Lord we come before you and we listen to Micah and we look at our hearts and we pray Lord we pray that you would show us what it means to do these things in this part of Hong Kong Island on the western side amongst the poor amongst the hungry amongst the broken amongst the needy amongst the people who cannot help themselves Lord use our hands as a church to help them to change this to redeem this and to be people after your heart because your heart is for those people who can't take care of themselves we love you we need you desperately and we're so excited to see what you're going to do through all this as you talk to us and do things in our world we pray all these things in your son Jesus holy name amen amen my hope is that you go home write on the date today and a piece of paper and write the words what should I do and that you would just revisit that throughout your day and throughout the week and just ask the Lord to talk to you about what that looks like in your world to do justice to love and be kind if you're here today and those questions were yours or your questions are like those there'll be we'd love to pray with you and talk with you there'll be a counseling team a prayer team up here to pray and Christina and I and the other elders are here we'd love to talk to you about these things and how they've affected our lives and the mistakes we've made and the forgiveness we found in Christ in his blood it was shed for you and me there's still some things you want to talk about we're going to start up a group and if you're interested in talking about those things in complete confidentiality the email address is on the screen so just send an email there and no one else will know who sent it we want to just meet with people in groups to talk about some of these things

God's doing in our life we would say the next step as we do justice and mercy as a church is to do it within our community groups we're thinking about starting some groups in DB and in Kowloon and in Parkview if you're not in a community group and you're in that area I want to encourage you to take a step of faith and seek one of those out there's a table out there and Chris Thornton will be there who's overseeing it and he would love to help you connect in that sense as you think about what the next step is for you to do justice also next Sunday we're going to meet in Cyberport we want you to come right here but we're actually going to the ninth floor you have a very special treat we're going to be in a place where they film all the ICAC movies and all the corruption movies and anytime you watch a Hong Kong Kung Fu shoot them up office place there's an empty space on the ninth floor up there about 40,000 square feet and so that's where we're going to meet next Sunday so you're going to see the panoramic view will be the best view in church in Hong Kong

[ 57 : 03 ] I guarantee you for that Sunday and just as we pray about where God is leading us so come here next Sunday and we'll have little signs directing you out to the back kids way up to the ninth floor and we will worship there kids will remain in the same classrooms how you guys doing are you excited to see what God is going to do for me it's one of the most amazing things as a pastor when we talk about these things and I'm sure that most of these things we'll never know until we get to heaven someone comes up to you and says you don't know me but I'm here because God used these things that you did to open the doors that's how God works most of the time sometimes it's like that sometimes it takes 30 years sometimes we'll see when we get to heaven Father we just thank you for this day we thank you that we can come to you and we can talk about such a hard topic and intense questions and we know that at the cross you've made all things new that no matter what our past no matter how much we've blown it no matter how much we've acted not as a Christian even though we profess it in the workplace or other places that you heal us and that you change us and that you know us and so we come before you over and over and over partake of your grace and your mercy and your love and your justice your son

Jesus Christ we pray for our church that we would never forget why we're here we're not here just to have fun and to have our ears tickled and learn how to get great things from you but that we're here to be used by you as your children to change and to do justice and to love mercy because this isn't our home our home you've already prepared for us in heaven help us not to forget that so Lord we pray we lift these things up to you and we pray that you would tell us what we need to do and how we can serve you in Hong Kong in 2013 on the western side of the island or wherever you take us we pray these things in your son Jesus name Amen God bless you remember next Sunday here just come right here we'll take you up there there's some drinks and food if you're new I'd love to meet you prayer team will be up front and have a great week