



THIS WEEK'S SCRIPTURES

Proverbs 3:5-6, Micah 6:8, Nehemiah 1-6,
Matthew 5:1-9, Habakkuk 1:5

DAY 1

Too often we focus on our personal hopes and dreams only to lose sight of our true life's purpose which is to bring the kingdom of God into the here and now. Whether you are the leader of the free world or a common person, God's vision for our country and the world remains the same. Through renewed spirit and purpose, we can truly make the world a better place.

- Take a moment and think about the following question: "If you could do something or be part of something that could change the world, what would you do? What would it be?"
- Why do you feel we as individuals and a nation struggle with recognizing what our true priorities ought to be?
- How do you know what to make a priority in your life?

Read Proverbs 3:5-6

- What does it mean to trust in the Lord and not yourself?
- Why do you feel writer makes the point God and God alone is the one who makes our paths straight?

DAY 2

Read Micah 6:8

Write the passage down, leaving room after each line for your comments.

- The prophet says, "God has shown you what is good." If God has already done that, shown you what is good, why is it so hard to see what he is showing you? Why is it so hard to act the way he requires?
- How would your life and circumstances change if you began each day doing what God has shown you is good?

DAY 3

Reread Micah 6:8

- The scripture spells out what the Lord requires of us so we don't have to guess. It says we are to act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly before God. Define what it means for you to, "Act justly."
- Being a lover of mercy is often confused with charity or helping someone less fortunate. Mercy isn't just an act of kindness, it also a means to show compassion to someone else, and regardless of their circumstance, a prayerful desire for nothing but love and care for them. Think about or write down a time when you were able to show mercy to someone else.
- To walk humbly before God is a call for the disciple to surrender themselves from all things of the earth and wholly give their life and its control over to God. Why do you think so many people have trouble with humility? What is it about surrendering our life to God that we find so scary?

DAY 4

Read Nehemiah 1-6

- Nehemiah used his skills to promote God's vision which was to have the scattered people come together for a

- uniting purpose. How did Nehemiah accomplish this? How important was his sharing the vision?
- Note in the story that the people rejoiced at the opportunity to do something right again. What is it you feel needs to be done to unite the people of our nation? Your family?

DAY 5

Read Matthew 5:1-9

Jesus' sermon on the mount was instrumental in showing people those who were otherwise marginalized. Throughout his ministry, Jesus makes it quite clear that we need to see those who are hurting, suffering, and having to deal with difficult situations.

This past week during the national title game weekend, a group of persons feeding the homeless were arrested. The charge against them was that they had not registered for the proper permits. Some would argue the reason they were arrested was because their desire to help those in need was causing homeless people to enter into the parks, where they might have scared away the visitors in town for the game and caused them not to spend money in the local businesses in that area.

- How do you feel about this situation?
- If Jesus told us to do whatever it takes to help those in need, why do we seem to fight that?

As you read the different persons Jesus describes in chapter 5, think about the faces of the people he names. Close your eyes and imagine them one by one. If you can, use a piece of paper and draw the face(s) you see. Take time to see into the eyes of those Jesus describes. Share what you are feeling.

DAY 6

[Read Habakkuk 1:5](#)

The prophet Habakkuk is doing his best to share an encouraging word to the people of God. In this passage, he specifically says, "Prepare to be amazed!"

- If you were to live into the text of Micah 6:8, what would it look like if you acted justly, were a lover of mercy, and humbly walked before God?
- Even bigger, what would it look like if our entire nation and its leaders worked together, living into the words of Micah 6:8. Can you imagine the impact it would have? What amazing things do you think would happen if we indeed all worked together?
- Renewal was the keyword for the day. How are you being renewed today?

DAY 7

Today is your "Sabbath" and a time for reflection. How has God been speaking to you over the week? Use what the Lord has said to you to remold and reshape your life. If you are having trouble hearing God's voice, slow down or even stop what you are doing so that the busyness of life's demands do not squelch the whispers of God's language of love upon your heart.

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