

July 2007

Cyberspace News

Michigan News

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Lo^{The}d Ou^R Righteousness

What Does The Lord Require?

Elder Charles Moore

Have you ever wondered, what does the Lord require of me? How should I live in a society that is increasingly selfish, increasingly sinful and increasingly stupid? If so, Micah is a book you might want to consider.

The book of Micah is styled after a court case that God is bringing against Judah and centers on a verse which marvelously summarizes the lifestyle that God would like all of us to exhibit. **Micah 6:8 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?**

Micah is essentially saying 'There is nothing new here. God has already told you what his requirements are' through the Law and the Prophets. Jesus quoted the sense of this verse from Micah in challenging the empty religion of His own day. In Matthew 23: 23 **"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cumin, and have neglected the weightier provisions of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness; but these are the things you should have done without neglecting the others."** Jesus accused the Pharisees of majoring in the minors of external religious practice when He told them they had "neglected the weightier

provisions of the law: justice and mercy and faithfulness." As 21st century followers of Jesus Christ, we are folded into this set of expectations. So what does God require of us if we are going to consider ourselves His redeemed people? Micah's list of core requirements focuses on three things.

First, God requires us to do justice, or act justly. Justice describes right relationships with other people based on how God views them, treating others in a way that honors and glorifies God. It implies attitudes and behaviors that reflect God's commitment to justice. He has made those clear in the law that He gave Israel. He is concerned about the protection of foreigners and slaves, of orphans and widows, anyone who is vulnerable and can be easily taken advantage of or wronged. We are called to challenge those in authority who are using their position to take advantage of people who are weak and vulnerable. We are to defend and serve the helpless victims who live in our communities: battered women, children of poverty, immigrants among us and the unborn.

The second requirement is to love kindness or, as some translations may say, loyalty.

The Hebrew word is che'sed, which means "loyal love," which is the greatest attribute of God in the Old Testament. It defines His steadfast love. Our call is to love people in the same way that God loves us:

unconditionally, mercifully, passionately, consistently, kindly, and with loyalty. God is attentive, and faithfully loyal to us. Again, as followers of Jesus Christ, our relationships are to be marked by this kind of loyal love. Husbands and wives, cultivate this spiritual quality of loyalty in your marriage. You will be a wonderful picture of God's love. We live in a society that doesn't know much about loyalty in love relationships. Parents, cultivate loyalty with your children. Spend time with them. Invest in them. Then you will be wonderfully counter-culture in not placing your career ahead of your family. Children, cultivate loyalty with your parents. We live in a day and age where it's not cool to be loyal to your parents, where the norm is to put your parents down, and dishonor them. But the call of Micah is to go against that flow and show loving-kindness to your parents. Finally, for those in the workplace, in a culture where commitments are taken lightly and contracts are made to be broken, we are called to actively cultivate che'sed in our business relationships. The call is for us is to fulfill our obligations, to make our word our bond. That is loving-kindness.

The final requirement is to walk humbly with God; The Hebrew root of the word

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describes a lifestyle that is not proud, not self-willed, and not arrogant. We are called to walk in submission to God and to His heart, His will, and His ways. We are to live attentively and carefully. We are to follow God's will prudently. Learning to walk humbly with God frees us to do justice and cultivate loyal relationships with the people around us.

There are times when we want to bargain with God about His requirements of us. We tend to trust external religious activity. We stay busy doing religious things rather than sustaining pro-active justice, loyal relationships, and a submissive walk with God. We'd rather do it our own way than listen to God. If we are honest, we know we are prone to wander from resting in the Lord and towards restless striving, trusting our own resources, and eating the bread of anxious toil and tasting futility. If we are honest, we have to recognize that we are no better than the people of Judah.

The good news is these are the only kind of people God saves, those who know they are lost. The only kind of people God forgives are those who know they are guilty. If we see ourselves as God sees us, then we can, by faith, become what He wants us to become. True saving faith comes from a heart that has been broken in repentance and realizes that only God can atone for sin; we can't atone for our own sin.

If you are worried about going to court with God remember what John said, **"My little children, I am writing these things to you that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world."** (1John 2:1-2) We have a lawyer and His name is Jesus. The same Jesus who can represent you in God's courtroom is the same Jesus who can help you to be the kind of person He wants you to be. Ask Him and trust that He will help you.



Michigan Report

Aurine Moore

Michigan was hot, hazy and humid and we felt the heat as we enjoyed a respite between June's summer camp and Habitat builds and August's County Fair activities. One of our new trees at church has been suffering from a lack of water early in the month and has been deluged with rain towards the end of the month.

Our sermons have been taking us down the Roman road and reminding us that the apostle Paul knew what it was like to deal with temptations and discouragement. "Oh what a wretched man I am! Who will free me from this body of sin?" he asked. And we know the answer is, was and always will be, "Jesus".

Tim and Kim Trouten with Campus Crusade for Christ have accepted an assignment to serve with that ministry in Kalamazoo, Michigan at Western Michigan University. Carrie Smeltzer, who has just started her studies to become a physician, had graduated from Western and had prayed long and hard while there as a student for Campus Crusade for Christ to start a full time program there. Its proof that our prayers are often answered, but not always at the time we hoped they would be. Tim and Kim are excited to begin their work there.

Sally Smeltzer, who is here in Monroe for the summer, hadn't felt well and ended up at the Monroe hospital for tests while her son, Todd, also from Arizona, was in town visiting with family and friends. She got out of the hospital in time to perform a few line dances at the Monroe County Fair.

You have read in these issues how Dale Begeman was diagnosed with prostate cancer and was scheduled for treatment in July, after a long initial wait. He was all dressed up, so to speak, and ready for cryosurgery this month – only to learn they had to postpone the procedure until his potassium levels could be lowered. He was re-scheduled again for August 1st. I can tell you the good news, simply because I am unashamed to be a person who reads the end of the story before I've read the middle - everything came out fine and he already looks better.

Ben and Joe Smeltzer went on a classic road trip to Florida. From all accounts they had a great time and Joe even had a brush with a shark swimming in the water. Joe was able to quickly exit the ocean, thanks to all the track training he's done with Carrie and Becka.

Our local church has been lifting up the Pat and Erin Gill family in prayer as Pat worked to complete his education at Eastern Michigan University. He has graduated and now has a job at a General Motors plant in Defiance, Ohio (it will be a long commute) which will give him excellent work experience to start off his career. Erin will continue to teach at Bedford as he commutes.

Rene and Charlie Moore were both happy and sad when it came time to drop their grandchildren (Elisha Brugman and Zack and Zavier Moore) back home in Kentucky following last month's camp. Summer camp has been a wonderful experience for our families and our church. What a wealth of memories and what an opportunity to share with our loved children and grandchildren who Jesus is and what He has done for us – and does every day.

Don Begeman has been diagnosed for the problems he had been having with fevers and falling down. His appendix burst and he had to be transferred to a medically supported rehabilitation facility. His daughters, Rachel and Laurie, have been able to spend time with him over these last months and those who have been able to visit him have also enjoyed their visits with all of them. Judy celebrated her birthday this month. It's not too late to send a card: **Judy Begeman 1215 N. Telegraph, A-22, Monroe MI 48162**. Please continue to keep Karyn Zajackowski and Marcia Moore in your prayers as each continues to have health problems.

You are given Today - make it matter.

Cyberspace News genevabegeman@charter.net

The month of July has run by which means that summer is halfway over. Our county fair is here with lots of elephant ears and lemonade shake-ups. I don't ride the Ferris wheel anymore so I am glad the eats are still very attractive!

The month always starts out for us up in Michigan at Silver Lake State Park. We are always happy to get a week of camping with family and friends and this year we were so glad to have Kerry and Kathleen Johnson for neighbors. Sally and Lloyd Smith were there also and Jane and Mike Brown joined them for a day so there was a reunion of the Ethel Johnson family. Every time I looked over at Kerry's table there was a board game going on. I don't know who won the most, but I was so happy to see the family members together. Golfing was also an activity they all enjoyed.

This month we were happy to have Aurine Moore share a story with us of a phone call from a 90 year old lady named LaVerne Brumfield from Billings, Montana. Sister Brumfield called to share the joy that is hers because many years ago Elder M.A. Rogers had brought the wonderful message of Christ's righteousness into her area and she had accepted God's free gift and has enjoyed her life ever since. She met with Elder Wilkinson as he traveled to the west coast with Elder Rogers also. She is in a nursing home now and finds it hard to communicate with people. We would love to invite you to drop her a note. Her address is Mrs. Clyde Brumfield, St Johns Lutheran N Home, 3940 Rimrock Road, Billings, MT 59102. It is always wonderful to hear about the difference Christ has made in someone's life. He would be happy to move into your life and accept you as his dear child also.

I reported last month that Don Begeman had a brief stay in the hospital and quickly recovered. I got that news the day before I wrote my June news and I am sad to say I was wrong. Don got much worse before starting the upward climb again.

It seems he had a burst appendix so he ended up in the hospital 3 weeks. He is now in a rehab center near Beaumont Hospital and is starting to perk up and eat again.

Laurie and Rachel have spent much of this whole month at their dad's bedside caring for him and encouraging him to get better. We are so glad he is responding now and is on the mend.

Some news from the Jim & Kay Nevil family. Jim's father has been very ill the last month. Jim and his siblings went on a family vacation with their father to Pigeon Forge, Tennessee. They had a wonderful time and Jim's Dad was able to enjoy it. Please pray for him and his continuing health problems. Jim and Kay's son Josh has been on submarine duty and called in that he was back and it is very different serving under the water. Their daughter Katy had been to Mexico on a mission's trip July 17 through the 28th. She traveled with the Woodland Shores Youth Group. Picture-- The girl to the left of Katy in the picture is Tiffany LaPrate who is a former COLOR youth camper. Katy will start school at Spring Arbor on Labor Day.

On the picture page you will see SheaLyn Lane from Cave Creek, Arizona on a mission trip to Mexico. That is two of our young people out there spreading the Good News. She says she had a wonderful time.

Kane and Jennie Begeman enjoyed some "cousin" company this month as Chelsey Begeman and boyfriend Jason made a trip to Arizona. They all went to Sea World in San Diego and other places of interest. Jason was a friend to Kane in high school so it was nice for all concerned.

Ellen writes about her vacation trip during July: "Carl, Sherry and I had a wonderful 4 days, 3 in Santa Fe visiting so many Art Galleries. The weather was nice and cool there as it is high, and then we went to Monument Valley and took the 1-1/2 hr. jeep ride (very, very rough over all rock roads). They do not advise using your car, as it is pretty hard on it and they cannot go as far either. We stayed in Kayenta, Arizona. one night, which is nearby. Monument Valley is part in Utah and part in Arizona."

A happy birthday goes out to Dorothy Layton this month of July. The family had plans of getting together to celebrate! Those days roll around faster and faster.

That's all for July. Please let me know how you are doing and what you are doing. May God bless each of you.

**CHURCH OF THE
LORD OUR
RIGHTEOUSNESS**

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Top Ten Silliest Questions Asked on a Cruise Ship

10. Do these steps go up or down?
9. What do you do with the beautiful ice carvings after they melt?
8. Which elevator do I take to get to the front of the ship?
7. Does the crew sleep on the ship?
6. Is this island completely surrounded by water?
5. Does the ship make its own electricity?
4. Is it salt water in the toilets?
3. What elevation are we at?
2. There's a photographer on board who takes photos and displays them the next day, this question is asked: If the pictures aren't marked, how will I know which ones are mine?
1. What time is the Midnight Buffet being served?