

Patterns of Grace and Gratitude Week 5

Thursday, May 13



Photo Credit: Steve Bettencourt "Mt. Rainer from White River"

Listen to what the LORD says: "Stand up, plead my case before the mountains; let the hills hear what you have to say. "Hear, you mountains, the LORD's accusation; listen, you everlasting foundations of the earth. For the LORD has a case against his people; he is lodging a charge against Israel. "My people, what have I done to you? How have I burdened you? Answer me. I brought you up out of Egypt and redeemed you from the land of slavery.1-4

With what shall I come before the LORD and bow down before the exalted God? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousand rivers of olive oil? Shall I offer my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God. Micah 6:1-4 & 6-8

Our pattern seems to be to go from one extreme to the other. We don't recognize that we've gotten off track until things fall apart. And when they fall apart, we assume we need to move heaven and earth to put them back together.

This passage from Micah re-enacts God and God's people in a conversation. God throws out the complaint and the defense of God's behavior and asks the people what God has done to cause them grief. The people then respond with the acknowledgement of their sin and not following God's plan by lifting up all kinds of ways of making reparations. They are extreme but come straight out of the history of things they have done before to atone for sin.

But the prophet Micah tells them that there is a new thing that they must do. Not sacrificing goods or riches, rather treating others and God with a newfound respect and love. This is a new thought. It is a future behavior... a posture of living in the world. We cannot buy our way into God's good graces. Rather, we are the embodiment of God's grace in the world.