

Act. Love. Walk

MICAH 6:8

ACT.LOVE.WALK: Walk Humbly

Large Group Talk 3

Objective: This session focuses on what it looks like to walk with God, to fall into step with our Creator. It requires a great deal of humility to walk his way and not our own in the first place, but it also grows our humility once we've started. Walking with God means following the journey of life beside him. It means we know how to connect with him and communicate with him. Through that process, we get a glimpse of who God is, giving us a whole new perspective on ourselves—a humbling one.

Introduction:

Say Something Like: *Last time we met, we talked about how God spoke to his people through Micah. We focused on Micah 6:8, looking specifically at God's command to "love mercy":*

He has showed you, O man, 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 6:8).

In this session, we're going to focus on the last "requirement" in this verse: to walk humbly with God.

Ask: What are some compliments you've gotten lately?

Say Something Like: *We all like getting compliments, right?*

"Hey, good game!"

"You look nice today."

"Your presentation was great!"

"You're a really good friend."

We like hearing these things, but have you ever been around someone who compliments himself or herself?

"I played a good game."

"I look awesome today."

"My presentation was great!"

"I'm a really good friend."

When people complement themselves, it's different, isn't it? It's annoying. It's a little ridiculous. We don't like to hear others boasting about themselves. And you know what? God isn't too fond of it either. He doesn't want us to be prideful, boasting about our accomplishments or abilities. In fact, God desires the opposite: he wants us to be humble.

Illustration Option 1: King of the High Wire. Nik Wallenda is “King of the High Wire.” He’s walked a tightrope between skyscrapers, over the Grand Canyon, and over Niagara Falls. His acrobatic feats have been featured on ABC and Discovery, and his walk over Niagara Falls was ABC’s highest rated Friday night program since 2007. On top of all that, he’s a nine-time world record holder. But Wallenda credits all of his success to God. While he was walking across Niagara Falls, he prayed out loud from start to finish. The next day he returned to the site of his accomplishment and did something completely unexpected: for three hours, he cleaned up trash left behind by the crowd watching him perform. Now *that’s* humility!

Illustration Option 2: Humblebrag. Have you heard of a humblebrag? It’s when someone tries to sound modest, but their ego can’t help but show through. For example, if you said something like “It’s so annoying! I can’t go anywhere without guys asking for my number,” or “Ugh, I can’t fit all of the Christmas presents I bought in my closet!” you would be humblebragging. Celebrities are some of the worst offenders. They tweet about the troubles they encounter in their glamorous lives, hoping their followers will feel bad for them. But they just come across as arrogant. Here are a few examples of real celebrity tweets that are actually humblebrags:

- “Being famous and having a fender bender is weird. You want to be upset but the other driver’s just thrilled & giddy that it’s you.” –Dane Cook
- “When you walk into a bookstore and your face is everywhere and you look a lot better in the pic than you do right now...#haha #crazylife” –Hayley Williams (Paramore lead singer)
- “Ouch! I think I’m developing carpal tunnel from writing my novel.” –Tyra Banks
- “Christmas shopping today...I’m blessed to give better presents than I receive...” –Will.i.am
- “I’ve been signing so many autographs lately, that I was writing a card to my dad and started to write my last name!” –Kerry Butler (Broadway actress)
- “Tornado coming. Hide in my wine cellar or my theatre? Or my gym.” –Jared Followill (Kings of Leon bassist)

Say Something Like: *During our last two large group sessions, we talked about God’s expectations for us based on Micah 6:8. Let’s read that verse one more time.*

He has showed you, O man, 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 6:8).

Humility is something God values. It’s something he expects from his followers. It’s something he longs for in his followers. But that doesn’t just mean we should avoid bragging. God does not want us to live prideful lives, but “walking humbly with God” involves a little more than just abstaining from boastful remarks.

Teaching: Walk Humbly with God

1. Start with the Walk

Say Something Like: *God’s requirement of walking humbly with him starts with a connection. He wants you to walk with him. He wants a close relationship with you. And regardless of the terrain, the circumstances, the storms of life, or the sunny days, he wants you to be next to him.*

Illustration: Walking the Dog. When dogs first go on walks with their owners, they aren’t exactly well behaved. At first, the walk is exciting to dogs because it’s a chance to smell new things, go new places, and take in a whole new world. Desperate to see and smell more, the dog strains at the leash, trying to pull away from its owner so it can do its own thing. In the process, it gets tripped by, choked on, and twisted in the leash. Its desire to go its own way only makes the walk unpleasant—for the owner and the dog. But after a dog has learned to stop pulling away from and start walking alongside its owner, the walking experience becomes far more enjoyable. The dog gets to exercise and enjoy the new smells, but more importantly, it becomes a bonding experience between the dog and the owner. When we let go of our pride, stop running from God, and fall into step with him, we will develop the relationship he’s wanted with us all along and experience the life for which he created us.

Say Something Like: *Jesus, the Son of God, showed us how important this connection with God is by constantly seeking out moments to get away and build on his relationship with his Father. He set a perfect example for us. Instead of boasting about himself, he always pointed to God. And in order to walk humbly with God, Jesus knew he needed to spend a lot of time in prayer with just his Father.*

“After he had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray. When evening came, he was there alone” (Matt. 14:23).

“Very early in the morning, while it was still dark, Jesus got up, left the house and went off to a solitary place, where he prayed” (Mark 1:35).

“But Jesus often withdrew to lonely places and prayed” (Luke 5:16).

God expects us to do certain things as a result of our faith. Among those, he expects us to act justly and to love mercy. But if our hearts are not walking with him, our actions are meaningless. This is why Jesus spent so much time in prayer—slipping away to spend time alone with God.

2. Get a Glimpse

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Say Something Like: *When we really get a glimpse of who God is, it's a lot easier to put our own prideful lives into perspective. God is incredible, and beyond what we could ever understand. Check out how huge and awesome God is:*

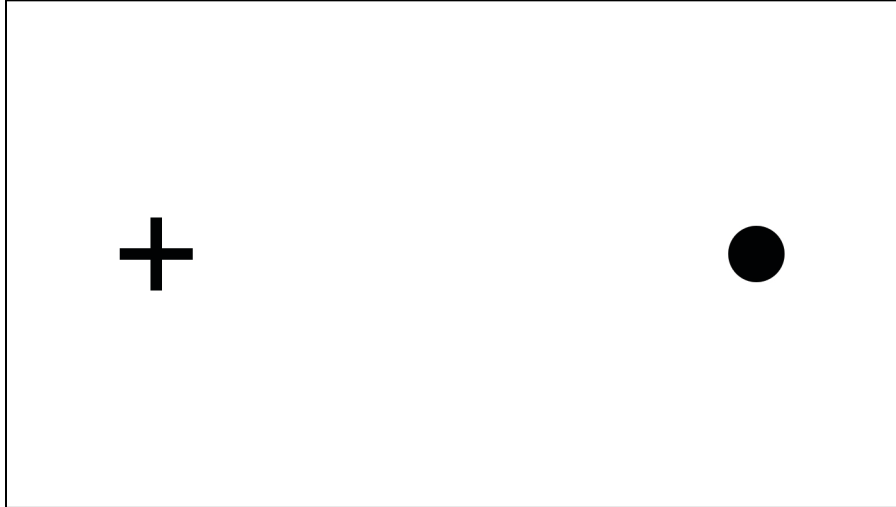
“To whom will you compare me? Or who is my equal?” says the Holy One. Lift up your eyes and look to the heavens: Who created all these? He who brings out the starry host one by one and calls forth each of them by name. Because of his great power and mighty strength, not one of them is missing (Isa. 40:25–26).

Check out what David writes in this Psalm about how well the God of the universe knows us.

All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be. How precious to me are your thoughts, God! How vast is the sum of them. Were I to count them, they would outnumber the grains of sand (Ps. 139:16–18).

How can we possibly lose sight of such a huge and awesome God? Well, we each have blind spots.

Illustration: Blind Spots. Did you know that every single person has a blind spot in each eye? There is literally a place in our vision where things completely disappear. We typically don't even think about it because our brain fills in the gap with surrounding information (color, patterns, etc.). But there's a test you can take to find your blind spot. Print out the following image for each of your students—you can find it on the last page of this large group talk. (Or students can go to this website to find a similar test: [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blind_spot_\(vision\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blind_spot_(vision)) .) If students are looking at the image below, tell them to hold the image at arm's length in front of them and close their left eye. With their right eye staring at the small cross, students should slowly bring the image closer to their face. When the image is at a certain distance away, the circle should disappear completely.



Why do we have a blind spot in each eye? The optic nerve blocks light from reaching the photoreceptor cells in the back of our eyes. We literally get in our own way. And that's exactly how our blind spots keep us from seeing God. We're so focused on ourselves that we completely block our vision of the Creator of the universe. By growing our humility and stepping to the side, our vision of God will become clearer and clearer.

Say Something Like: *The God who created the stars and set the moon in place also knows each and every aspect of your life. This may be hard to believe, but he even knows you better than you know yourself. The more we know about God—how big, awesome, knowing, and patient he is (the list goes on)—the more we see ourselves in the proper perspective. We get a different view of our lives than when we only concentrate on the things and people right around us. As you begin the journey of walking humbly, be sure to keep God right at the center of your vision.*

3. Reasons to Boast

Say Something Like: *The Apostle Paul was a big deal. He was well respected and accomplished more than most of us ever will. Paul worked hard for everything he achieved, and he had many reasons to be proud.*

Illustration: Obsessive Comparison Disorder. In the age of social media and YouTube videos, people are suffering from a new disease: Obsessive Comparison Disorder. What exactly is this new OCD? It's not an actual mental disorder, but it's still very dangerous. It's the anxiety you get when someone posts pictures of their trip to Europe on Facebook, and you wonder why your life isn't that exciting. It's the compulsion you feel when you just *have* to top your friend's amazing promposal. It's the voice in your head telling you to create a bigger and better video for every YouTube fad that goes viral (from the Harlem Shake to the ALS Ice

Bucket Challenge). When we constantly compare ourselves to other people, we'll be compelled to obsessively think about our own accomplishments, rub our achievements in other people's faces, and worry why our lives aren't as amazing as our friends' lives. But there's one comparison that stops us in our tracks and starts us down the road to humility. The apostle Paul discovered this comparison, and it changed his life forever. You can read more about Obsessive Comparison Disorder here: (allgroanup.com/featured/obsessive-comparison-disorder/).

Say Something Like: *Along his journey, Paul got a glimpse of God. His blind spot disappeared, and he saw God's glory in the person of Jesus. Suddenly, his own achievements looked pretty small in comparison. It changed his whole perspective, from what he thought about to how he communicated with people. It changed every single part of his life, mission, and dreams. Paul's glimpse of God brought his own life into humble perspective. Listen to what Paul wrote about this new view:*

But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ (Phil. 3:7-8).

Paul was walking his own road, pursuing his own greatness. But in light of God's incomparable greatness, everything changed. Paul realized how small and meaningless his own accomplishments were outside of his connection with God.

Paul started walking humbly with God. He let go of his own self-centeredness and focused on a relationship with the One who knew every single aspect of his life before he even lived it.

Putting it all together:

Say Something Like: *Walking with God is an amazing thing. It requires us to humble ourselves by turning from our self-centered lives to fall into step with God. We can't walk with God if we can't see him, and we can't see him if our vision is blocked by ourselves. So look beyond yourself. Look past your own achievements and wants and frustrations toward God and his calling for your life.*

That may sound like a big step, but thankfully God doesn't require us to be perfect. That's the awesome thing about walking with God: it takes a small amount of humility to start, but it grows our humility in huge ways once we're doing it. Because walking with God really is the best thing for us. We become like those we spend the most time with. When we start walking humbly with God, we'll discover that we start acting justly, loving mercy, and growing in humility just like our Lord.

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[Speaker note: The following questions will be discussed deeper in the small group lesson]

Question 1: How would God describe your walk with him?

Question 2: Do the words you speak to others reflect an accurate picture of God?

Looking Forward: Let the students know that the next lesson will look at the foundation for acting justly, loving mercy, and walking humbly: knowing and being transformed by Jesus. Be sure to give them any instructions they might need to go from here.

**LeaderTreks recommends watching all video clips and visiting all websites in this lesson before sharing them with students. These links are optional and not required in order to lead an effective large group talk. Websites often change, and links may not always have the same result. LeaderTreks will do its best to keep them updated and fresh; however, in the event that they do not function properly, we cannot retain responsibility.*

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