

Sermon Title: Good Religion
February 13, 2022
Biblical Passage: Micah 6:6-8

⁶ Wherewith shall I come before the LORD, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves of a year old? ⁷ Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? ⁸ He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?

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Passage Background and Summary

There are so many aspects of black history, but none, Pastor Warnock argues, is more impactful to the story of black people in America than the black church. The Black church was not meant to be racially exclusive, but to be inclusive, to be the anti-slavery church, anti-segregation church. The Church was designed to demonstrate inclusivity, equity, universality, hospitality and embrace everyone as God's children.

Howard Thurmond claimed that slaves redeemed Christianity which whites had profaned. Black people transformed it into a liberating faith. The Black church understood the brutality of the oppressive and false teachings from the white preachers. They knew they were being taught bad religion. Our assignment is to bear witness to the integrity of the faith, which grounded in love for God and for others. Jesus raised the question: Do you really love God? If so, have love one for another and follow his commandments. So then, what does good religion look like? Micah claims God has already told us: do justice, love kindness, walk humbly with God.

Sermon points:

1. Do Justice
 - a. Our deeds prove whether or not we have real/good religion
 - b. Let people see and benefit from our commitment to justice
2. Love Kindness
 - a. So much hatred, pain, violence- these will block your blessings
 - b. More power in kindness than hate
 - c. Be an ambassador of kindness and spur others to be kind
3. Walk humbly
 - a. Walk with God and appreciate the awesomeness of walking with God
 - b. We are not all-knowing nor have it all together
 - c. We cannot do anything without being connected with God
 - d. He will give us strength beyond belief, "He restores my soul..."

Questions

1. What is an example of bad religion you have encountered in your own church experiences?
2. What religious practices do you know about, that oppress others?
3. How can we work towards building the multiracial, inclusivity church within our lifetime?
4. How do you use your good religion to show kindness and teach others about kindness?
5. In what ways do you struggle with humility?
6. In what ways can you grow in humility and be thankful for God's presence in your life?