
INTENSIONAL
FORMED IN THE TENSION
HOSTED BY D.A. HORTON
PEKO PEKO
EPISODE 05
FAITH THAT DOESN'T LOOK AWAY
JUSTICE • MERCY • HUMILITY

EPISODE 05

FAITH THAT DOESN'T LOOK AWAY

Micah 6:6–8 · Justice · Mercy · Humility

WHY THIS CONVERSATION MATTERS

Digital media gives us near-constant access to images and reports of suffering and more ways to perform concern without ever getting close to a neighbor. Micah refuses both numbness and performance. God forms a people whose worship changes the way they use power, treat people, repair harm, and walk through ordinary life.

BIG IDEA	SPIRITUAL FORMATION OBJECTIVE
Real faith does not look away; it walks humbly toward repair.	By the end of this guide, identify one local burden, listen to one person closer to it, join one faithful work, and take one sustainable step without making yourself the hero.

KEY TAKEAWAY

"Let your Sunday worship develop a Monday walk."

THE TENSION

You can care and still be tired. You can post something meaningful and still need to practice something embodied. You can want justice and still need mercy. You can be right about a problem and still need humility. Micah does not ask you to carry the world; he asks you to walk faithfully with God in the part of the world you can touch.

OPEN THE WORD

Micah 6:6–8: worship that cannot be separated from the way we live.

READ

Read Micah 6:1–8 slowly. If time is short, read verses 6–8 twice. On the second reading, notice the verbs: bring, bow, give, do, love, walk.

LOCATE THE TEXT

Micah speaks into a community with religious activity and real injustice at the same time. The book names land seizure and exploitation, leaders who pervert justice, bribery, dishonest economic practices, violence, and deception (Micah 2:1–2; 3:9–11; 6:10–12). In chapter 6, God recalls His faithfulness before the people imagine increasingly extravagant offerings. Verse 8 cuts through the performance: God has already shown what is good.

DO JUSTICE	LOVE HESED	WALK HUMBLY
Ask what is right, truthful, fair, protective, and reparative and then act accordingly.	Practice loyal mercy. Do not reduce people to content, causes, case numbers, or opponents.	Stay close to God, correctable, limited, teachable, prayerful, and willing to listen.

WHAT THIS IS NOT

Micah 6:8 is not a shortcut around the gospel, a partisan slogan, a permission slip for cruelty, or a demand that you personally solve every injustice. It is covenant formation: God's people responding to God's faithfulness with lives that reflect His character.

Translation note: The Hebrew word hesed in Micah 6:8 carries covenant-loyalty and steadfast-love meaning. English translations variously render it "faithfulness," "mercy," or "kindness."

GOSPEL IMPLICATION

Jesus is not merely an example added to Micah. He is the Savior who reconciles sinners to God and the King whose reign forms a new people. At the cross, human sin and injustice are exposed, and divine mercy and justice are displayed. Because grace saves us, grace also retrains the way we walk.

METAMODERN INSIGHT

You can distrust simplistic answers and still believe repair is possible. Christian hope is not optimism about every system; it is confidence that God's Kingdom is real enough to train our next faithful step.

WORKING DEFINITIONS

Use these cards as Episode 5 framing tools, not exhaustive dictionary definitions.

JUSTICE: God's righteous commitment to what is right and equitable, reflected finitely in human action that tells the truth, protects dignity, upholds fairness, and seeks repair.

INJUSTICE: Wrongful harm or unequal treatment that violates another person's dignity, rights, or rightful well-being.

OPPRESSION: The abuse of personal or systemic power that subjects people or groups to cruel, unfair, coercive, or unequal treatment.

REFLECT

Let the Word read you while you read the Word.

PERSONAL REFLECTION

1. Where has my faith been easier to express than to embody?
2. Where do I know the language of justice but avoid the neighbor in front of me?
3. What kind of suffering do I instinctively mute, scroll past, intellectualize, or turn into a debate?
4. Where have I confused anger with faithfulness or niceness with mercy?
5. Where do I want accountability for other people but resist correction for myself?
6. What issue am I tempted to make about my image, brand, politics, or need to be seen as "one of the good ones"?

IDENTITY-CENTERED JOURNAL

WRITE FOR FIVE MINUTES

"When I imagine doing justice, I secretly fear _____. When I imagine loving mercy, I resist _____. When I imagine walking humbly, I need to release _____."

SPIRITUAL INVENTORY

Statement	Rarely	Sometimes	Often
I listen before assuming what a community needs.	☐	☐	☐
I can care about an issue without dehumanizing people who disagree with me.	☐	☐	☐
I practice repair in private relationships, not only public causes.	☐	☐	☐
I can name my limits without using them as an excuse for indifference.	☐	☐	☐
I am connected to at least one concrete work of mercy, service, or justice.	☐	☐	☐

REFLECTION

What would change if your feed stopped being the place where justice ends and became the place where attention begins?

DISCUSS

Small-group conversation that moves from opinion to formation.

START HERE

1. Which line from Micah 6:6–8 feels most confronting or most hopeful to you—and why?
2. What is the difference between awareness, advocacy, service, and repair? Where do they overlap?
3. When can posting or sharing online be meaningful? When can it become a substitute for presence?
4. How does mercy keep justice from becoming cruel? How does justice keep mercy from becoming sentimental?
5. What does humility look like when you are convinced you are right?
6. Where have churches done meaningful justice work? Where have churches demanded justice publicly while avoiding accountability internally?
7. What local issue do people in our community talk about from a distance rather than listening to people closest to it?

PEER-LEARNING EXERCISE · THREE VOICES

Choose one local issue. Before proposing a solution, identify three voices you should hear:

- someone directly affected,
- someone already serving, and
- someone with relevant professional or community expertise. Your group's assignment is not to become experts; it is to become better listeners.

LEADER SAFETY NOTE

IF HARM IS DISCLOSED

Do not turn a disclosure of abuse, exploitation, discrimination, or unsafe leadership into a debate exercise. Listen, avoid blaming, follow applicable safeguarding/reporting policies, and connect the person with appropriate pastoral, legal, professional, or emergency support. Justice in the house of God includes truthful accountability.

PRACTICE

The One Step Toward Repair Practice.

Mercy keeps justice human. People are neighbors, not props.

1 · LEARN. Learn one local burden, not ten. Spend 15 focused minutes with a credible local source. Ask: What is happening? Who is affected? What do I not understand yet?

2 · LAMENT. Bring what you learned before God. Grieve what is broken. Confess indifference, pride, cruelty, or avoidance. Do not rush to fix the feeling.

3 · LISTEN. Talk with someone closer to the issue. Ask: "What do people misunderstand?" "What is already being done?" "What would actually help?" Then listen.

4 · LINK ARMS. Find people already doing faithful work: a church ministry, school partnership, food pantry, mentoring program, legal clinic, reentry ministry, foster care network, neighborhood group, or community organization.

5 · LABOR. Take one concrete step: give time, money, skill, presence, advocacy, repair, hospitality, tutoring, meals, transportation, or another practical form of neighbor-love.

FAMILY APPLICATION	CHURCH APPLICATION
Name one burden close to your household. Ask one age-appropriate question at the table: "Who near us could use practical care this month?" Choose one action together.	Audit alignment: where do sermons, budgets, volunteer practices, safeguarding, staff culture, and neighborhood relationships reinforce or contradict the church's public justice language?

COMMUNITY APPLICATION

Join before you launch. Before creating a new initiative, ask who has already been serving faithfully and what support they need.

Humility does not ask, "How can everybody notice what I did?" Humility asks, "Who is already serving? What do they need? What can I bring?"

GUIDED PERSONAL PRAYER

God of justice, mercy, and humility, forgive me for worship that performs but does not transform. Forgive me for looking away when love would cost something. Forgive me for using justice language without mercy, and mercy language to avoid justice. Teach me to act rightly without becoming cruel, to love faithfully without becoming sentimental, and to walk humbly without becoming passive. Open my eyes to my neighbor, my ears to voices I have ignored, and my hands to serve without needing applause. Jesus, You are the Just One, the Merciful One, and the Humble King. Form Your life in me. Amen.

RESPONSIVE PRAYER

Leader	All
God of justice	Teach our worship to walk.
God of mercy	Keep our neighbors human in our eyes.
God of humility	Teach us to listen before we lead.
When we are overwhelmed	Show us the next faithful step.
When we are self-righteous	Bring us back to grace.
When we are indifferent	Soften our hearts and move our feet.
Jesus, form us as Kingdom people	People of truth, compassion, courage, and hope.

COMMITMENT STATEMENT

"I cannot carry every crisis. I will not harden my heart toward every crisis. By God's grace, I will learn one burden, listen to one person, join one faithful work, and take one humble step."

FIVE-DAY SCRIPTURE PLAN

The original formation rhythm, expanded for clarity and publication.

HOW TO USE IT

Set aside 10–15 minutes each day. Days 1, 3, and 5 use a simple Lectio Divina rhythm:

Read → Reflect → Pray → Act.

The goal is not spiritual intensity. The goal is a faithful practice that can continue after the guide ends.

THE FIVE-MOVEMENT RHYTHM

Movement	Formation question	Practice
LEARN	What is happening?	Understand one local burden before trying to solve it.
LAMENT	What is broken—and what does it reveal?	Bring grief, complicity, anger, and limits honestly before God.
LISTEN	What do people closer to the pain say?	Ask before assuming; receive correction without centering yourself.
LINK ARMS	Who is already serving faithfully?	Join trustworthy people and organizations instead of becoming the hero.
LABOR	What is my next faithful step?	Act concretely, then give faithfulness a repeatable place on the calendar.

DAY 1 · LET WORSHIP WALK (LEARN)

Micah 6:6–8

DATA-INFORMED INSIGHT

Social media can be a meaningful avenue for awareness, connection, and involvement, especially for younger adults and several racially and ethnically diverse groups. The discipleship question is whether attention becomes embodied faithfulness.

Source: Pew Research Center (Park, 2025).

- **ACTION STEP:** Choose one local issue. Spend 15 minutes learning from one credible local source. Write one question you need to understand before acting.
- **REFLECT:** Where has my faith been easier to express than to embody?
- **PRAY:** God of justice and mercy, show me where my worship needs to become obedience.

LECTIO DIVINA · READ → REFLECT → PRAY → ACT

Slowly read Micah 6:6–8 twice. Notice one phrase. Sit with it for 60 seconds. Then write your one local issue and one honest question.

NOTES / JOURNAL:

DAY 2 · WHEN WORSHIP BECOMES NOISE (LAMENT)

Amos 5:21–24

DATA-INFORMED INSIGHT

Societal division is a significant source of stress for many U.S. adults. Sustainable formation therefore requires more than remaining activated by a permanent outrage cycle.

Source: American Psychological Association, Stress in America 2025.

- **ACTION STEP:** Take one day off from reposting outrage. Use ten of those minutes to call, give, pray, write, serve, or learn a neighbor's name.
- **REFLECT:** What worship habit needs to become love in action?
- **PRAY:** God, receive my grief and expose the places where my worship is louder than my obedience.

TODAY'S PRACTICE

No formal Lectio today. Read Amos once and notice that the problem is not worship itself, but worship severed from justice and righteousness. Name one thing that makes you grieve. Then do one embodied action instead of one reactive post.

NOTES / JOURNAL

DAY 3 · GET CLOSE ENOUGH TO LISTEN (LISTEN)

Luke 10:25–37

DATA-INFORMED INSIGHT

Many adults say social media can highlight important issues and give a voice to underrepresented groups. But online visibility cannot tell you everything a local community needs. Neighbor-love requires proximity and listening.

Source: Pew Research Center (Park, 2025).

- **ACTION STEP: Talk with one person closer to your Day 1 issue. Ask what people misunderstand, what is already being done, and what would help.**
- **REFLECT:** Where am I tempted to discuss suffering from a safe distance?
- **PRAY:** Jesus, interrupt my indifference without feeding my ego. Teach me to see neighbors instead of issues.

LECTIO DIVINA · READ → REFLECT → PRAY → ACT

Slowly read Luke 10:25–37. Notice who sees, who moves, and who gets close. Listen to one person today without making yourself the expert.

REFLECTION

Before you explain a community, have you listened to someone who lives there?

NOTES / JOURNAL

DAY 4 · MAKE COMPASSION TANGIBLE (LINK ARMS)

James 2:14–17

FORMATION INSIGHT

Feeling overwhelmed can make suffering feel too large to touch. A bounded, concrete action can move us from helpless exposure toward faithful participation.

- **ACTION STEP:** Take one practical step with an existing person or organization: groceries, tutoring, volunteering, transportation, a gift, professional skill, repair, or presence.
- **REFLECT:** Who is already doing faithful work that I can support instead of trying to become the hero?
- **PRAY:** God, show me where to join, not just where to lead.

TODAY'S PRACTICE

No formal Lectio today. Read James 2:14–17, identify one existing work, and contact them or take one concrete action. This action does not earn salvation; it is one way living faith becomes visible.

METAMODERN INSIGHT

One step is not everything. But it is not nothing.

NOTES / JOURNAL

DAY 5 · BECOME A REPAIRER (LABOR)

Isaiah 58:6–12

DATA-INFORMED INSIGHT

Habit research suggests that context stability can strengthen automaticity and goal attainment. A rhythm of justice-oriented discipleship becomes more durable when it has a repeatable place in ordinary life.

Source: Stojanovic, Grund, and Fries (2022).

- **ACTION STEP:** Choose one three-month commitment: one Saturday a month, recurring gift, mentoring relationship, neighborhood organization, church mercy ministry, or family repair practice. Put it on the calendar.
- **REFLECT:** What "breach" is close enough for me to participate in repairing?
- **PRAY:** God, keep me from apathy and a savior complex. Show me my faithful place in Your work of repair.

LECTIO DIVINA · READ → REFLECT → PRAY → ACT

Slowly read Isaiah 58:6–12. Notice one image of restoration. Keep the promise in context: Isaiah ties restoration to covenant repentance, justice, mercy, and faithful worship not to a formula for personal prosperity. Choose one recurring act and attach it to a stable calendar cue.

SHAREABLE PULL QUOTE

Repair becomes formation when faithfulness gets a place on the calendar.

NOTES / JOURNAL

SEVEN-DAY ACTION LOOP

Extend the five-day Scripture plan without turning formation into overload.

Day	Movement	10–15-minute next step
1	Learn	Choose one local burden and one credible source.
2	Lament	Pray honestly about what is broken; name grief before solutions.
3	Listen	Hear one person closer to the pain; ask before assuming.
4	Link arms	Identify one trustworthy work already serving.
5	Labor	Take one tangible step and schedule one repeatable commitment.
6	Review	Ask: What did I learn? Where did my ego show up? What do I still misunderstand? Use Psalm 139:23–24 as a prayerful self-examination.
7	Rest + recommit	Receive your limits. Pray Matthew 11:28–30. You are a disciple, not the Messiah. Confirm the next calendar step and rest in Christ.

SCRIPTURE MEMORY	30-DAY FORMATION CHALLENGE
Memorize Micah 6:8 in your preferred translation. Pay attention to the three movements: do or act justice, love hesed (steadfast love, mercy, or faithfulness), and walk humbly with God.	Keep one recurring act of service/repair, one listening relationship, and one prayer cue. Review after 30 days: Is this making you more faithful, merciful, humble, and rooted in Christ?

HABIT DESIGN

Attach the practice to a stable cue: first Saturday, payday, after class on Wednesday, after small group, or another repeatable context. Habit research indicates that repetition in stable contexts can support automaticity and goal attainment.

Source: Stojanovic, Grund, and Fries (2022).

SOCIAL SHARING

Turn the guide into conversation without turning suffering into content.



- **QUOTE CARD:** Real faith does not look away; it walks humbly toward repair.
- **DISCUSSION POST:** Where has your worship become easier to express than to embody?
- **REFLECTION POST:** You are not called to carry everything. You are called not to harden your heart toward everything.
- **STORY PROMPT:** Name one local burden you want to understand better this week.
- **REEL / SHORT-FORM PROMPT:** What is one step from awareness to embodied faithfulness you can take in the next 24 hours?

Episode 5 companion song: Faith Outside.

Listen through the INTENSIONAL podcast's official YouTube Music, Spotify, or Apple Music channels.

POSTING ETHIC

Never use someone else's pain as proof of your righteousness. Get permission before sharing identifiable stories. Center dignity, local voices, and the work—not your image.

RESEARCH NOTES & SELECTED SOURCES

Primary sources, academic scholarship, and audience research supporting the plan.

Source note: The bibliography below includes both sources directly cited in the guide and background scholarship used to verify its biblical, theological, historical, and research claims. This guide primarily cites Scripture references rather than reproducing full Bible-text quotations; use the Bible translation adopted by your ministry or community for reading and memorization.

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CARRY IT WITH YOU

Faith that does not look away is not faith that carries everything. It is faith that refuses indifference and keeps walking with God.



“Learn one burden. Lament what is broken. Listen to one person. Link arms with one faithful work. Labor in one concrete way. Then keep walking humbly with your God.”

FINAL COMMITMENT

Real faith does not look away; it walks humbly toward repair.