

Turning Our Hearts

Micah 7:1-7, Malachi 4:4-6

Micah 7:1-3, 5-7

What misery is mine!

*I am like one who gathers summer fruit
at the gleaning of the vineyard;
there is no cluster of grapes to eat,
none of the early figs that I crave.*

²*The godly have been swept from the land;
not one upright man remains.*

*All men lie in wait to shed blood;
each hunts his brother with a net.*

³*Both hands are skilled in doing evil;
the ruler demands gifts,
the judge accepts bribes,
the powerful dictate what they desire—
they all conspire together.*

⁵*Do not trust a neighbor;
put no confidence in a friend.
Even with her who lies in your embrace
be careful of your words.*

⁶*For a son dishonors his father,
a daughter rises up against her mother,
a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law—
a man's enemies are the members of his own household.*

⁷*But as for me, I watch in hope for the LORD,
I wait for God my Savior;
my God will hear me.*

Malachi 4:5-6

⁵“See, I will send you the prophet Elijah before that great and dreadful day of the LORD comes. ⁶He will turn the hearts of the fathers to their children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers....”

Sermon Outline:

- I. Introduction
 - a. Mystery of Love/Families
 - i. Greatest Joy and Deepest Pain
 - b. God wants to Heal Families
- II. Micah - 8th century prophet in Judah to people of Israel
 - a. Like rest of Prophets, life in desolation.
 - b. Micah 7 - Tragedy of Israel is that families are split
- III. Matt 27:45-46 - Jesus on the cross

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- a. *The most painful demonstration of our broken world - separation from Father.*
 - b. *Greatest pain we feel is fractured relationships, often in our families.*
- IV. *Malachi 4:4-6*
- a. *The Messiah will usher in a time when the hearts of fathers and children are turned toward each other*
 - b. *God wants to heal families*
- V. *How Does God Heal Families?*
- a. *He Becomes our Father, and We Join His Family*
 - i. *Galatians 4:4-6*
 - ii. *John 1:12*
 - iii. *The Body of Christ “fills in the gaps”*
 - b. *He Invites us to Turn Our Hearts*
 - i. *Psalm 127 - Children are a reward*
 - ii. *Ephesians 6 - Fathers, do not exasperate your children*
 - iii. *Matt 5:44, Mark 11 - Love your enemies, forgive others. Language of Togetherness.*

Small Group Questions

1. *What thoughts, questions, or feelings do you have as you read this passage or listen to the sermon?*
2. *Do you believe it's true that the greatest pain we can experience is fractured relationships, often within our family? Why or why not?*
3. *Have you ever experienced times of conflict within your own family? What was the experience like for you? Has there been resolution to the conflict or is it ongoing?*
4. *When thinking of the idea that “God Wants to Heal Families”, what thoughts or questions come to mind? What are some challenges in making this a reality for you?*
5. *What are some “gaps” in which you’ve needed support or help that your family, for whatever reason, could not provide. Did you have anyone to fill those needs?*
6. *Has there been a time in your life when the Body of Christ (Christian community) has “filled in the gaps” and provided relational support as a community when you needed it? What was that like? If you have never*

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experienced this, what's one area right now where you would like the Body of Christ (Christian community) to "fill in the gaps"?

- 7. What's one way God might be calling you to "fill in the gaps" for others in the community?*

- 8. Is there a relationship that God might be calling you to "turn your hearts" to right now, whether it's by reaching out, forgiving someone, grieving a loss, etc?*

- 9. Please end your time with prayer in groups of 2-3, praying for families, healing, and for God's protection and provision for our families.*