

WALKING HUMBLY WITH GOD

“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)

Lisa Beamer, widow of 9/11 hero Todd Beamer, said that in April 2002 she had to decide what to put on her husband’s tomb stone. After much consideration and prayer she selected Micah 6:8, one of his favorite verses.

Then she gave a simple, but profound illustration of what it means to “walk humbly” with God. She has a two year old son, and expects him to hold her hand in parking lots. Often, however, he does not want to hold her hand or walk at her pace. Sometimes he wants to run ahead and check out something that he is interested in. Sometimes, if he does not like where they are going, he will lie down on the parking lot and throw a tantrum. Sometimes, however, he thinks it over and makes a deliberate choice to hold on to his mother’s hand, walk at her pace, and go where she leads.

Then Lisa said, “That’s me!” Sometimes she too was ignorant of the dangers that awaited her and wanted to run ahead of God. Sometimes she too did not like to go where God was leading and decided to throw a tantrum. When she thinks about it, however, she concludes that it is far better to hold on to God’s hand, go where He leads, and walk at His pace. This, she said, is what it means to “walk humbly” with our God. This, she felt, was what Todd was doing on the day of his death. Neither she nor Todd wanted 9/11 to turn out the way it did. He was on his way to California for a three hour business meeting and expected to return to his family on another flight that night. God knew what was going to happen and could have spared Todd if He had wanted to. Instead, God allowed the plane to crash and Todd to die. Todd had a phone and talked to an operator and

also to Lisa a few minutes before his death. Those last few minutes of his life were filled with the calm realization that God was in control. Even though Todd would have chosen otherwise, he was content to hold God's hand, walk at His pace, and go where He was leading. Todd knew he was going to die but did not seem to be afraid. Within fifteen minutes after the call everybody on plane was in eternity, Lisa was a widow, and her three children were without a father.

This, of course, placed a great burden on Lisa that she would have preferred to be without. How easy it would be in such circumstances to get mad at God and throw a tantrum. Lisa, however, also seems content to hold on to God's hand, go where He is leading, and walk at His pace. Her faith and courage are contagions! Listening to her made me want to also hold on to God's hand, go where He is leading, and walk at His pace.

Lisa said that Todd was a "bottom line" kind of guy. He wanted to cut through the red tape and do what needed to be done. The inspired words of Micah are therefore especially appropriate, for Micah was also asking what God really wanted. Micah reasoned that the ultimate goal of God was not blood and oil dripping down an altar, but a dramatic change in human hearts. The commandments of Moses were never intended to be an end in themselves, they were a "means to an end". The Law was a schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ that we might be justified by faith. (Gal. 3:24) The "bottom line" did not involve offering the blood of animals, our pouring out oil on an altar, it involved making ourselves living sacrifices that are holy and acceptable to God.

The world is filled with people who do not want to walk humbly with God. Even Peter tried to get Jesus to let go of God's hand. Jesus rebuked Peter for such rebellion. "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men." (Matt. 16:23)

What does God want from us? Far more than merely a

sacrifice of our possessions on an earthly altar. He wants us to become living sacrifices that are holy and acceptable. He wants us to love Him with all of our heart, mind, soul and spirit. When we do this we will act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with our God. This means that like Todd and Lisa Beamer, we will hold God's hand, walk at His pace, and go where He leads.