

Justice. Kindness. Humility.

February 1, 2026

I was driving into work this week...
Came up to the intersection...
Of Mainstreet and Pine...
Right there by the library...
And got into the turn lane...
To go left on Pine.

I just happened to look in the rearview mirror... **[1 Angry]**
And in the car behind me...
Was a young woman...
Shaking her head...
And mouthing words...
That I can't repeat in church...
With a very angry look...
On her face.

As you know... I'm not always innocent...
Sometimes I drive like I live in Chicago...
I signal and nose my way into traffic...
Cut into the next lane...
So the driver behind me has to make a choice...
Let me in... or hit me.

But this time... I was innocent...
I hadn't done anything wrong...
To the person behind me.
I hadn't made any mistakes...
Driving through town.

I put my blinker on... like a good citizen...
Had plenty of room...
To change lanes.
Did everything right.

No problem.

But still... she was so angry.

Have you ever seen the movie... The Green Mile.
It's a Stephen King movie...
And there are some really hard parts...
But it's really about hope. **[2 John Coffey]**

John Coffey is a man on death row...
He's been falsely accused of a violent crime.
But he's an easy target.
As a black man... in 1930's Louisiana...
Under racial segregation...
And Jim Crow laws...

In the movie...
He has no voice.
He has no power.
And he's a really big scary guy.

Near the end of his time on the Green Mile...
The name for death row at that particular prison...
He says to the guard...
Played by Tom Hanks...

I'm tired, boss.
Tired of being on the road,
Lonely as a sparrow in the rain.
I'm tired of never having me
A buddy to be with to tell me...
Where we're going to, coming from, or why.
Mostly I'm tired of people being ugly to each other.

Coffey explains...
He is weary of all the pain he feels
And hears in the world every day,
Describing it as "pieces of glass in my head, all the time".

Does that sound familiar to you?
It's how I feel...
About the angry car driver the other day...
And really about all the anger...
We are seeing in this world right now.

I'm not naive... I know this is how the world is...
And probably has always been.
And I know there are people...
Who enjoy and inflame anger...
There are people who want to stir up...
And tear down...
And instead of working for the common good...

And honestly... I'm tired of that.

And then that causes... other people respond with more anger.
And it becomes an endless cycle...
We go around and around.
Swirling in the anger...
That steals our life.

Well... I'm tired of it.
Just like John Coffey...
I'm tired of people being ugly.

So I've been thinking... **[3 To Do]**
What am I going to do about it?
I'll tell you what... the first thing I need to do...
Is delete the Nextdoor app.

You know what I mean.
I need an intentional break from...
Reading the comments...
By trolls and haters...
Their snarky-ness...
Does not help me...

It may be witty... or clever...
But it doesn't help me...
Stay centered on what is good...
So I'm just going to delete it.

But I'm serious... what can we do.
And I mean... for real...
Not just more rhetoric...
Not just saying... things are wrong...
And complaining about the state of the world...
And not doing anything...
That adds life or value.

What can we do?
To really make things better...
And stronger...
And good.

Listen now... **[4 Micah]**
Around 735 years... before Christ was born...
The prophet Micah was raised up by God...
You know how God does that... right...
Throughout history... God has called up...
Specific people... to do specific jobs... at specific times...
And poured out the Spirit on them.

Well... that's what happened to Micah...
It was his job...
To call the people of Israel...
Back to God.
Because they had gone wrong.

Corruption of priests, prophets, and rulers...
Who were abusing their power...
Stealing land...
Ignoring the Torah.
Taking advantage of people... for their own personal gain.

And the people as a whole...
Had forgotten all that God had done... for them. **[5 Map]**

Micah warned the people...
From the northern kingdom... based in Samaria...
And the southern kingdom... based in Jerusalem...

That judgement was coming.

And he was right...
Or rather God was right...
Because this was right before the Assyrians...
Wiped out the northern kingdom of Israel... in 722 BC.
And threatened to destroy the south.

And of course... like all prophets... **[6 Micah]**
It was Micah's job... to call the people to repent.
And then he describes...
What that actually means to repent...

So he asks rhetorically...
How should I come before the Lord.
Should I bring a burnt offering...
Calves a year old?
Will God be happy...
With a thousand rams...
Or ten thousand rivers of oil?

Should I give my firstborn...
For my transgression...
The fruit of my body...
For the sin of my soul?

The he answers... God doesn't want your sacrifices...
Because they are insincere...
You are pandering to God.

God has already told... O mortal...
What is good.

What God requires from you... is change.
Change the way you are choosing to live your life.

And Micah proclaims three things. **[7 Command]**
Do justice,
Love kindness,
Walk humbly with your God.

Do justice. **[8 Justice]**
Which means... to do what is right.
Like if you stood before a judge...
And the judge asked you...
Did you do what is right...
According to the Law of God...
Or did you do what is wrong...
According to the Law of God.

It's about you and me... choosing...
Each and every day... to do what is right...
In our own life...
And to the people around you...
And to the world at large.

Even if someone does you wrong.
Doing Justice means...
We choose what is right.

Now listen.
I could tell you some things...
That are clearly wrong...
Things you should not do...
Just go to the 10 commandments.

Don't kill. Don't steal. Don't covet.
You know the list.

But Jesus condensed the list...
Into two positive commands...
Love God. Love each other.
So on a daily basis...
We need to turn our back...
On those wrong destructive words and actions...
And turn to love.
Choose to do the loving thing.

That's the real challenge.

Next... Love kindness. **[9 Kindness]**
I'm tired of talking for a minute.
Let's watch this video. **[VIDEO - Groceries]**

So. Is anyone crying?
Why? Why when we watch someone...
Doing something good...
Does it touch our hearts?

Do you want to know?
There's a reason...
But you have to watch another video...
[VIDEO - Science of Kindness]

See how wonderful our God is.
God calls us to love kindness...
Because it's not only good for the world...
It's good for us.

God sent the prophet Micah...
Into his community...
Among his people...
And Micah told them...
That they had forgotten...
That kindness... is a value...
That is in God's heart.

And so... it should be in our hearts too.

So where are we?
Do Justice...
Love Kindness...
And finally... walk humbly with our God. **[10 Humbly]**

Maybe in some ways...
This last idea that Micah proclaims...
To the wayward people...
On behalf of God...
Is the hardest command of all.

Because in order to walk humbly with God...
We have to be honest...
About who we are.

We have to embrace the idea...
That we may not know everything.
That we may not be as important...
As think we are... or want to be.

That we... just like everyone else...
We are dependent on the mercy and grace of God.
In which we live, breathe, and have our being.
And without God's grace...
We whither and die.

What I'm saying is...
We are not exempt.
No one here is exempt...
We are actually part of the situation.

The problems of this world...
Are our problems.

The pain of this world...
Is our pain.

And I'm telling you... witnessing to you... I know... I'm a part of the problem.
That without the love of Jesus... for me...
I would have no hope.

It's not that I'm so terrible...
It's just that I'm not that great.
And I cannot stand before God...
On my own.

I can't do it.
I don't have... inside of me...
What I need to live a good life.

So it is... only by the love of Jesus...
And the grace God...
And the power of the Holy Spirit... working in me...

Only in God...
Can I have... the confidence...
To keep moving forward.

Only in God...
Can I have... any hope at all.

Walk humbly... means knowing...
And sincerely confessing...

Our need.
I need you... Lord...
I desperately need you...
To guide my steps...
Direct my life...
And bring me... to what is good.

So. That's it.
All I want to say today.

Well... maybe one quick summary...
Of how to handle...
The anger. The pain. The suffering.
Of this world.

It's written by the Apostle Paul...
To the people of the church... in Philippi. **[11 Philippi]**

Finally, brothers and sisters,
Whatever is true,
Whatever is noble,
Whatever is right,
Whatever is pure,
Whatever is lovely,
Whatever is admirable,

If anything is excellent or praiseworthy,
Think about such things.
Think about good.

Think about...
The good things.
That we can do
The kind of people we can be... who...

Do justice.
Love kindness.
And walk humbly with your God.

Thanks be to God.
Amen.