

## **20260920 EVELEIGH CHURCH JAY KIPER DO THE RIGHT THING FINAL**

If you got your Bible and you want to turn in your Bible, turn to Micah chapter 6, verse number 8, Micah chapter 6, verse number 8. I'm going to be talking about what it is that God requires of us, and I know Tommy doesn't put titles on his messages, but I put titles on mine, and David Downs will have it easy this week. I've entitled this, Just Do the Right Thing, Just Do the Right Thing. I think that Christians maybe have a difficult time understanding what it is that God does require of us.

I think that the church itself and some pastors try to make it harder than it actually is, because the Bible tells us specifically what is required of us in our Christian walk, and this is talking about Christians here, this is not talking about the world as a whole, but once you become a believer, once you've accepted Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, then it's not so complicated, and it's really not confusing, but sometimes we make it harder than it has to be. We like to pile on expectations of what you have to do and what you have to say and the way you have to act, and a lot of that is centered around what happens here within these walls here in the church that meets here at Eveleigh and every other church building around. What we do is sometimes we feel like that there are certain expectations of us or certain traditions and pressures that are put on us that God has really never even asked for.

We make walking the walk seem too hard, and we make living up to God's standards sometimes feel impossible for us to do, and it's not impossible. God wouldn't ask the impossible from us, right? God understands who we are. He understands that we're imperfect beings, and he knows that we're not going to do everything right, and he doesn't have an expectation that we are going to do everything right.

He just wants us to continue moving in a direction towards him. But it lays it out specifically here in Micah chapter 6, verse number 8, and this is kind of like a reset button, if you will. Hopefully what it'll do is it'll bring us back to the basics, and it'll show us exactly what God requires of every Christian, not a list of impossible tasks, not a mountain of religious performance, but a simple, powerful way to live our life.

So let me read Micah chapter 6, verse number 8. He has showed 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 that God. Let's pray. Dear Grace and Heavenly Father, Lord, we're thankful for the opportunity that we have once again to gather in this building, Lord.

Your church, it gathers here at Eveleigh, Lord. I just pray right now, Lord, that you're just going to give me the ability to speak plainly, to speak clearly, Lord. That you'll let me slow down and not get in such a big hurry, Lord, as I try to do all the time and try to get ahead of myself, Lord.

I pray, Lord, that you're going to make your word come forth in a way that everybody is going to be able to see you for who you are, and they're going to be able to see the good gifts that you're giving us each and every day, Lord. I just pray, Lord, that this is just going to be something that gives us a better purpose, that Lord gives us a direction and an understanding of what your expectations are, Lord. And I just pray, Lord, that I don't say anything that is wrong, Lord, that you give me the ability and the wisdom to speak the truth plainly and clearly, Lord.

We're asking all these things in the name of Jesus. Amen. All right.

I'm going to read a little bit more of that. I'm going to back up to Micah chapter 6, verse number 6, and give a little bit of clarity to this. It says, what can we bring to the Lord? This is Micah asking this question.

What can we bring to the Lord? Should we bring him burnt offerings? Should we bow before God most high with offerings of yearling calves? Should we offer him thousands of rams and 10,000 rivers of olive oil? Should we sacrifice our firstborn children to pay for our sins? No, O people, the Lord has told you what is good, and this is what he requires of you, to do what is right, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God. Micah is trying to get the people in the nation of Israel refocused on what is important and what they should be doing, and I feel like that that's something that a lot of times we need ourselves. We need a reset.

We need to get back to the basics of what a Christian belief is. Now he asks this question, what can we bring to the Lord? And that's a good question to ask. What can we bring to the Lord? We don't have much of anything that the Lord needs, right? But what he wants from us is obedience.

The Bible tells us that obedience is better than sacrifice. So he's talking about all these things here that we could bring as a sacrifice and offer up and all that is is basically it's religious performance. Now in the Old Testament, they had to do a certain amount of that, but if you're not doing it with the right reasons and the right intent of your heart, all it is is religious performance.

And we don't want to get caught up in that today. What we want to do is we want to understand that God isn't impressed by how we act on Sunday morning. Now, I don't want you to get me wrong.

We can come in here, we can praise God, we can worship God, and we can have a time of fellowship with other believers that gives us strength to go out into the world for the rest of the week. But it's easy to act like a Christian on Sunday morning. What God wants us to do is act like a Christian every other day of the week also.

That's where the work comes in. That's the most important part of what we're called to do. This verse here where Micah gives the answer to the people of what can we bring to God, he said, the Lord has told you what is good.

And there's three things that he lists here that we should be doing. And John Henry, if you're taking notes and putting points on, this is the three points here. The first one is to do what is right.

The second one is to love mercy. And the third one is to walk humbly with your God. And I'm going to talk about those three points here so we can get a simple understanding of being able to do that.

The first point is to do what's right. Now that's where we get tripped up a lot of times because we don't really understand what is right in every situation. But God has told us what is most important in the Word of God.

Because if we try to take this Bible and we try to memorize everything in it and make sure that we do what is right strictly by what is written down here, we really can't handle that, can we? It's too much. So God simplified it. He simplified it in order to allow us to be able to understand what it is that he wants from us and that he expects from us.

In Matthew chapter 22, starting at verse number 36, it says, and again, this is where the Pharisees came up and they were trying to trip up Jesus and get him to say something that they could condemn him for because that was the whole point of what they were trying to do. They weren't wanting to really learn from him. What they were wanting to do is trip him up and take him out because he was threatening their power.

So in this scripture, they ask him, Master, which is a great commandment in the law? And Jesus said unto them, Thou shalt love thy Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

On these two commandments hang all of the law and the prophets. So basically what he's saying is everything in that word of God is based off love. It's based off love.

So if you want to know what the right thing is, the first right thing that we need to do is we need to love God. And the second is love people. That's the two.

We love God and we love people. How do we show our love to God? By loving people. We show our love for God by showing love to others.

All right. Now what exactly is this word love? It's an agape word, the Greek agape. And what that literally means, it's an unconditional Christ-like type of love, which means that it's not based upon the way you feel about somebody.

Because I love my wife Mary, but there's sometimes I don't feel that love for her. And she understands that because there's a lot of times she doesn't feel that love for me either, even though she still loves me. It's not all about the feelings that we have.

It's an action word. And here's if any of you have ever gone through the class of the five love languages, one of the things they teach in that love is always a choice. And you can choose to show love through your actions or you can choose not to show love.

All God is telling us is I want you to choose to show love. So what is the right thing to do? Is to show everybody love through our action. That makes it pretty easy, doesn't it? If you're ever wondering, well, what's the right thing to do in this situation? Well, what can I do that is going to show my love for God and show love for everybody else that this involves? And if I'm not doing that, then maybe I need to stop and back up and rethink about it.

If the only person that I'm showing love to through this action is myself, then maybe I'm being pretty selfish with what I'm wanting to do. That's doing the right thing is showing love. You don't have to memorize the Bible.

It's fine if you can memorize it. I like to memorize scripture, used to had a lot of scripture memorized. Now I've got a lot of it that I paraphrase because I don't remember it exactly right.

I told somebody one time, I'm an expert at misquoting scripture. But I think what we need to understand is a simple approach to understanding what it is that God expects of us in doing the right thing is showing love through our actions. All right.

The second thing it talks about here is loving mercy. Mercy, that word literally means that you don't give somebody what they deserve. When you're showing somebody mercy, you don't give them what they deserve.

Now, what does that mean? That means if somebody has been ugly to you, has said harmful things to you, or maybe has physically assaulted you, that you don't physically assault them back. You don't verbally assault them back. Instead, you show them love through your actions.

Now, guess what? Sometimes you have to stand up for yourself, right? But that shouldn't be the first thing that we go to. I'm going to tell you what, I used to, I was pretty handy with my words. And I had some cutting words that I could give people.

And I've had to, after I gave my life to Jesus Christ, I've had to go back and apologize to a lot of people because of the way that I would talk to them and the way I would address them. I was always just worried about myself in the situations. And a lot of you might know Larry Allen, he used to umpire ball games out there, and he umpired the men's softball league when I was playing softball.

He threw me out of a game one time, and then afterwards, Clyde Stuyckleather, who was running the league, threw me out of the league because of the way that I behaved in a ball game. Now, here's the key point. I was right.

I'm going to just tell you right now, I was right, but I didn't have to act the way that I acted, right?

You're going to find that out a lot, that you're going to be right in an argument or in a disagreement, but that doesn't mean that we have to act the way we act. I didn't have to throw the ball at Larry Allen. I didn't have to cuss him out as I was leaving the field and after the game in the parking lot.

I didn't have to act that way. But I was a selfish individual at the time, and I was just worried about myself. If I hadn't cussed him out in the parking lot, I wouldn't have got thrown out of the league.

But anyway, that was the end of my softball playing for that year. We all have moments that hopefully don't define us, right? We all have moments to where we don't show mercy to somebody who has made a mistake or done something wrong, has harmed us in our eyes, has harmed us. All he did was miss a call in a game.

He missed it badly, though. But anyway, he didn't really hurt me at all, you know? But it hurt my feelings, and I expressed my feelings in a not-a-positive way. Now, showing people mercy, another word for mercy is compassion.

Showing people compassion in these situations. Now, it doesn't just say that we have to show people mercy. It says we have to love mercy.

Now, it's easy for us to love mercy when we're the one receiving it, right? When somebody's being merciful to us because they're not giving us what we deserve, such as God has been merciful to all of us. If you're a believer, if you're a born-again Christian, then you've experienced the mercy of God because you have wronged God in a multitude of ways. Every one of you in here, you have.

Probably still do, right? Still need that mercy. And I love that mercy that God gives me, but what he expects me to do is to love it so much that I love to show mercy to people. I have to love the opportunity that I get to give people mercy.

Now, that's harder. That's a little bit harder to love that opportunity, right? It's one thing for us to have to show mercy. You know, we have to show mercy if we expect to receive mercy, but it's another thing to love that opportunity to give it.

Now, you want to know how I, the only way that I can see that I can love that opportunity is every time somebody wrongs me, I think of when I've wronged God, and I think of how he has forgiven me and shown me his grace and his mercy, and then I just want to be able to pay that forward. You just want to do that, right? Any of you ever go through a McDonald's or someplace, and you get up there, and somebody in front of you paid for your bill, and you got your food for free? Now, my immediate feeling is, well, what's the next guy's bill? I'll pay it. You know, you want to pay it forward.

You want to pay it forward. That's what God wants from us, is to understand the mercy that he

has given us, and for us then to pay that mercy forward to the next person, and to want to do it, to love to do it. That's the second thing that he's required from us.

The third thing that he requires from us is to walk humbly with God. Walking humbly with God, most of the time we don't even understand what humility really is. I go back to, I've got a lot of experience with a lot of different preachers, and I had a preacher one time who stood in front of the congregation, and he said, I'll stand here as humbly as I can, and he put his head down and batted his eyes, and I thought, if you're sitting here telling me that you're standing here humbly, then you're not humble.

Right? We think that humility is a posture that we take, and it's not. Being humble is a way of life. It's a way of life.

Now, how is it that we can be humble? Being humble doesn't mean that we think less of ourselves. It means that we think more of God. We don't have to think of ourselves any less, but what we have to do is we have to understand that it's not all about me, and truthfully, it's not about what I have done or what I've accomplished.

Because if you asked me if you could go and list these accomplishments that you've had, every accomplishment that I have done that has been worth anything at all, it wasn't me doing it, it was God allowing me to do it or working through me to do it. It wasn't about me. It was all about Him.

I can't do anything good of my own. If I try to do it of my own good, I also got thrown out of a basketball league one time. I wasn't going to tell you that, but I was an angry young man when I was in my 20s.

I'll just tell you that. But the only good things that I am able to do are when I am trying to show the love of God to other people in my life. If I'm trying to do it of myself, then it usually doesn't go right.

It just usually doesn't. Humility. Humility is looking at people and seeing them through the eyes of God and understanding that that person is more important than what I am.

Now that's hard for us to do. Now we can do that with our family a lot of times. We can put them above ourselves, but to do it with total strangers, that's what we're called to do also.

It's being content with where we're at in every situation. It's being content with our place in this world, with our job, with our finances, with everything. But here in the United States, we are so full.

We're so entitled because we're never content with what we've got. We always want something else, right? We want a new house. We want a new car.

We want to go on a big vacation. We want more money. We want to be able to buy the nicer

things for ourselves and for our family.

And here's the place that we've got to in the United States. If somebody is content with their spot in life, then we'll say, well, they just really don't care. They're not ambitious.

They're lazy. Because they are content with where they're at. And we'll also call them probably not even Christians when actually they're probably more presenting more of a Christ-like approach to everything by being content with what they've got.

And people that are like that, things aren't important to them. The thing that becomes important to them are other people. You ever notice anybody like that? It seems like they don't have much in the world, but boy, they've got a lot of friends.

And they like those friends, and they like going and spending time with them and talking to them. Relationships is really what this should be all about. And here's a point I want to get to on this.

The thing that you have in common between doing what is right, loving mercy, and walking humbly with your God is every one of them are about relationships on what we have. Loving people is all about relationships, right? You show love through your actions with people. That's what it's all about.

It's not about, oh, man, I love this boat. I'm going to show it with my actions by waxing it out and making it shiny. Or my car.

I'm going to wash my car three times every week because it's a sharp-looking car, and I want everybody to understand how sharp it looks. That's not where we show our love, right? We show our love with other people. And so it's about relationships.

I bring this relationships up every funeral that I ever do. And the reason that I bring it up is because that's a one time when you can get everybody's attention that relationships really are important. Because there's somebody that they love that is there that they can't talk to anymore, that they can't see anymore, that they can't spend any more time with.

And that's what this world should be all about. It shouldn't be about us being out and working all day long, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and then spending what we call quality time with our family, which is one or two hours a week doing something that really probably costs too much money and which causes us to go work more to pay for what we just did. Truthfully, what your children want is your time and your attention.

That's what they want. When they're acting up, that's why they're acting up, because they want your attention. It's all about relationships and especially on the love part.

But even when you go to the mercy, another name for mercy is compassion. That's all about love also. It's about love also.

When we're showing people mercy, we're showing them compassion. We're showing them love through our actions. And then you get to the humility part.

Let me read this. John Ruskin has quoted this, and he said, I believe the first test of a truly great man is humility. Really great men have a curious feeling that the greatness is not in them but through them.

They see something divine in every other man and are endlessly, incredibly merciful. That's a sign of greatness, is humility. It drives me crazy in the world today with all these people arguing about who's the greatest.

And actually, the, now I'm just going to say LeBron James. Anybody know LeBron James? He will tell you he's the greatest. Muhammad Ali used to tell you he was the greatest.

I'm going to tell you what, if you have to tell somebody you're the greatest, you're probably not. You're probably not. We need to understand that humility is one of the things about greatness.

We need to understand that it's not all about me, but it's all about the people that I interact with and making them feel like that they're important. Now, here's the thing. Do I do that? No, I don't.

Not all the time. Sometimes I do. Sometimes I make people feel important.

Sometimes I make them feel little. Now, which one is easier for me? I'm going to tell you right now, it's easier for me to make somebody feel little than it is for me to make them feel great. Doing the right thing is almost never the easiest thing.

Relationships matter. And that's what ties all three of these things together. So if you want to know what it is that God requires of you, it's loving him first and foremost and then loving everybody else and showing that love through your actions.

Because here's the thing. There's some people that say, oh, I just love everybody. Well, I think they're lying when they say that, because I don't know how you can love everybody.

There's some people that are just completely unlovable, right? There are. You're probably thinking of somebody right now. But what we have to do is show those people love through our actions.

And it's not about the way we feel. It's about the way that we act and the way that we behave. And there is a. Let me just say this now.

On families. There is an order to relationships, right? The most important relationship that you will ever have is with your Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. He expects a personal relationship with him.

The second is with your spouse. And your spouse should be more important to you than your children are. That's for men and women.

That's a hard one to say when you've got a little newborn baby that you're that you're holding. And I see all these babies around right now. But the truth of the matter is that baby is going to be a whole lot better off if it has two parents that love God and love each other than the love is just going to flow from there.

It really is. Then after your children becomes your extended family, your church family and truthfully everybody else that you meet. Now you're not going to have the feelings for everybody else you meet.

But that's where the agape, the unconditional love comes, where you show it in your actions. Let me say this also, because I want to I want to make this point right now. Everybody that is sitting here today that has a one or a two or a three in front of your age.

Let me say that again. If you've got a one or a two or three in front of your age, then you need to have a four or a five or a six. Somebody that has a four or five six in front of their age as your mentor.

You do and that person will show you how to make good choices, will show you how to walk the walk. I've had I've had three mentors that that immediately come to mind when I when I start talking about this. One was was a former pastor, Gary Emery, and he was a he was a great mentor to me because he is the one that instilled a love for the word of God within me through his teaching and the way he was able to bring forth the word of God in a way where it actually meant something to me.

Because a lot of times we've got we've got some some people that that don't instill that love for the word and still instead they instill a fear for that word in us. He instilled a love for the word. I had another mentor after him named Jack Golden.

Jack Golden was a big man. He was six foot eight. And Jack Golden, when I was a young teacher, I was I was teaching in here on Wednesday nights and and Jack Golden wouldn't agree with me what I taught, then he would just come up to me and he said, well, have you thought about this? And it wasn't that he told me that I was wrong, but he would just give me a different way of looking at the word.

Now, what ended up happening was Mary and I developed a relationship with with him and and Regina, his wife. And we spent some time with them. Not a lot of time.

It wasn't like we went and saw him all the time, but we saw them enough that we saw what they did as Christians and the way that they showed their love to other people. And that made a difference in the way that I show my love and Jack told me one time he he said he said, I've got a

fifty dollar bill here in my in my shirt pocket. He said, I don't know who that belongs to, but he said, God will let me know who that belongs to.

And he said, I'm just supposed to give it to them. He said it used to be a twenty dollar bill. Before that, it was a ten.

But he said inflation has now made it towards a fifty dollar bill and he would always keep that in his shirt pocket and he would just give it to whoever he felt like. God was telling him, give it to. He also showed me.

Love for the for everybody in the fact that he went to there was a he lived down outside of Dallas, forget the name of the town. But anyway, there was there was a bar up the road from me and he went into that bar and he gave him his phone number and told them, he said, anybody that needs a ride home because they've had too much to drink. He said, you get you call me and I'll come pick them up and I'll give them a ride home.

And he did that all the time. Now, why would he do that? Because he was showing that person love to get them home safely. But he was also able to talk to them about Jesus Christ.

And he took advantage of every one of those opportunities for people he never met before would go pick them up and drive them home when they were in a state where they couldn't drive theirself. So they probably weren't too pleasant to be around. But he did it anyway.

Another one. Jack has passed. Jack and Regina have both passed away now.

And and Larry Doris was a mentor to me. And what Larry Doris always did was he kept me grounded in the word because I read a lot and thought I had an understanding of the word. And he would just always try to keep me pointed.

He would he would try to get me to stay in the center of the road instead of veering off into the ditch on either side of the road. In my understanding of the word. And you need people like that to to keep you grounded in the word.

Because I'm going to tell you what, the more you read, the more you study, the more you think, you know, but you don't always really know. That's the one thing that I found out is the more that I have read and the more I've studied, the more I know, I don't know. I just don't know some of it, you know.

But here's what I do know. If we always show love. Through our actions, then we'll be better off because of it.

All right. Now, I told you that as far as everybody with the one, two and three in front of your age, you need to find somebody that's got a four or five and six in front of their age to be your mentor. And again, I'm not I'm not saying that you have to follow them around, but you need to introduce

yourself to them and tell them I need help.

Because guess what you do. You do you need help in understanding how to walk the walk of a victorious Christian. The same time that you are doing that, you need to look around at your life.

Whether it's in the workplace, whether it's in the home, whether it's in your family and find somebody that doesn't understand having a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. And you need to take that one person and you need to start witnessing to them, not taking a Bible and beating them over the head with it, but you need to show them through your actions what it means to be a Christian and wait for the opportunity that the Holy Spirit will give you by opening the door for you to be a witness to them. You need to be mentored yourself at the same time that you're mentoring somebody else.

That's what being a disciple and making disciples is all about. Now, what does God require of you? Number one, to do what is right. As long as you're showing the love of God to people, he will honor the intent of your.

That's what God is all worried is concerned about is the intent of our heart, because he knows we're going to make mistakes. He knows we're not going to do everything correctly, that we're going to make bad choices, that we're going to misunderstand what what his word says. But if we're doing it from a point of love to where we are trying to show love to him, then he will honor the intent of your heart.

And he will he will guide you gently into the right direction. Number two, show mercy. It's more than show mercy.

It's give others the same mercy that God has given you. And I want all of you to think right now, when you when you accepted Jesus Christ as your Lord and savior, the joy unspeakable that you felt when you understood that all of your sins were forgiven. And think of that every time you have to show somebody else mercy, you'll find love is in it.

The last is walking humility and contentment. And I added the contentment on myself because here's here's what I find is if we are not humble, then we're not content. Because we think we deserve all of these different things.

Well, truly, if you got what you deserved, you wouldn't like it. You wouldn't. All right, musicians, if you want to come up, we're going to have a song.

Let me just tell you this. We need to understand that we have to put our trust in God for everything, for everything. And if we're not putting our trust in him and we're trusting instead in ourselves, then it's just not going to work out.

It's not. Now, we're going to have what is traditionally called an altar call right now. And they're going to play a song.

And this altar is a place where you can draw close to God. Now, is there anything magical about this altar? No. The magic, if you will, is in the power of the Holy Spirit.

And I want you to understand that the only reason that we ask that people come is because Jesus, every time when somebody was asking for something from him, he told him to come. There was a blind man that was sitting on side of the road that was calling out to Jesus and saying, Lord, help me, help me. And he said, come to me, come to me, make that blind man get up and come to him before he healed him.

There's power in coming to God. There is. If you need a relationship with Jesus, if you don't know him as Lord and Savior, come up and ask him.

And if you need somebody to introduce him, there's plenty of people here that will be happy to introduce you to God. But this altar is open for you to come up with whatever need that you have and bring it to God as they sing.