

[Micah 6:8](#)

Father Knows Best

Introduction

In the 1950s, there was a television show titled *Father Knows Best*. The show depicted a family with wholesome values who were guided by a wise and trustworthy father through the ups and downs of life. He was looked up to as a dad who knew what was best because his requirements were good, even when he disciplined. This meant life was about doing right, showing kindness and walking humbly under father's good guidance. Invariably, the family would drift away from following their father. In his love, though, he could be trusted to bring them back to what's best.

Yes, that's imagery of the good, good heavenly Father. He does justly; He loves kindness, even when He disciplines; He can be trusted to know what's best for His family. That's who He is. And even when the family strays from His guidance, God's love is immutable, or unchanging. And take note, God's love is that we keep His commandments; His commandments are never burdensome ([1 John 5:3](#)).

Following are the three (3) main points of this message. God has shown us what is good; here's what He requires of us:

- Do justice
- Love kindness
- Walk humbly with your God

By the way, these three points are not a prescription to a care-free life. They're not a "to do" list, as if we can find favor with God. They're not about *what we ought to do*, but *who we ought to be*. And who we ought to be is a reflection of the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the epitome of [Micah 6:8](#). He does what is just; He loves kindness; He walks humbly with His heavenly Father. God in Christ, through the work of the Holy Spirit, always knows what's best; His requirements are always good.

1. Do Justice

To do justice means to do what is right, just and fair; doing what is right embraces truth. However, Israel had not done what was right; they had not embraced truth. In fact, God had an indictment against His people. They were worshiping idols and forgetting all that God had done for them. Here's [Micah 6:2](#).

Hear, you mountains, the indictment of the LORD, and you enduring foundations of the earth,
for the LORD has an indictment against his people, and he will contend with Israel.

[Micah 6:2 \(ESV\)](#)

In today's culture what would God's indictment be for His people, the church? Are we worshiping idols and forgetting all that God has done for us? Are we luke-warm when it comes

to doing justice? What's the answer, then, to who God wants us to be as La Crescent Evangelical Free Church (LEFC) and as individuals when it comes to doing what is right, just and fair?

The answer is to be like the heavenly Father; be like Daddy, Abba Father. Trust Him. He knows best. Have a heart like Christ, which is gentle and lowly. Take for example Jesus' encounter with the Gerasenes demoniac. Here was a man possessed by many demons; he lived among the tombs, crying out night and day, and cutting himself ([Mark 5:1-20](#)). No one could control him; no one could help him. In a seemingly hopeless situation, Jesus did justice. He sent the demons out of the man into a herd of pigs, then told him to go and tell his friends how much the Lord had done for him.

When you think about it, God never does anything that is unjust. But you might say: "What about Jesus' crucifixion on the cross? Wasn't that one of the most unjust and unfair events in history?" It appears that way doesn't it? However, in order for God to do justice with regard to sin, He made Jesus to be sin, who knew no sin, in order that in Him we might be made right with God ([2 Corinthians 5:21](#)). Christ willingly paid the debt for His people on the cross. Charles Spurgeon put it this way: "Unless God can be so unjust to demand double payment for one debt, no soul for whom Jesus died as a substitute can ever be cast into hell." Hallelujah! What a Savior! Justice defeated injustice; God's wrath was satisfied; sinners are set free in Christ. That's the gospel, the good news message of the cross.

So, what does it look like for us to do justice in a culture where injustice abounds and moral values are steadily eroding? Well, there are opportunities to do justice, to be an advocate for the least, the lost and the lonely, and to display the gentle and lowly heart of Christ. What about situations where women are considering abortion? What about the family who struggles to make ends meet and needs childcare? What about the elderly man or woman that's homebound or residing in a nursing home, who just wants someone to come and visit?

Those are people and situations to live out a heart for Christ and to do justice. Here at LEFC, there are opportunities to do just that. For example, if you have a heart to pray, laugh and cry with the elderly, come and be a part of our nursing home ministry on Thursdays. If you have a heart for children, volunteer to help with childcare in the Sunday morning nursery or at the bi-monthly meetings of the Mom2Mom ladies group. Consider serving in such organizations as Birthright, Embrace Grace and Safe Families.

Those organizations advocate building healthy relationships in the lives of families, especially women and their babies, both born and unborn. By the way, the elders are examining how LEFC could best support and serve these organizations. In fact, there are those at LEFC who are already volunteering with Safe Families, such as Nate and Chelsea Steen. Ask them about their experience to serve others in this regard.

In the Bible, God says that we are to be doers of His Word and not just hearers. Here's [James 1:22](#).

But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.
[James 1:22](#) (ESV)

Who will be a doer of the Word like Jesus? Who will be an advocate for justice in the life of the unborn or the newborn? Who will be an advocate for the elderly homebound or those in a health care facility? Will that advocate for justice be you or me? When Scripture says, "Love your neighbor as yourself", will we be hearers or doers? Because when we're doers of God's Word, we're following the good, good Father who knows best. And when we're following the Father who knows best, doing justice synchronizes in perfect harmony with wanting to love kindness.

2. Love Kindness

To love kindness is the covenant-keeping kind of love, which says, "I'll love you no matter what." The Hebrew word for this kind of love is hesed. Hesed love is completely undeserved kindness. Christ Jesus' love is hesed love. His love surpasses all knowledge. Remember, love and kindness are genuine when they are fruit of the Holy Spirit. Here's [Galatians 5:22-23](#).

²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,
²³ gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.
[Gal 5:22-23](#) (ESV)

To love kindness is to love those who are unlovable, whether friend or foe. To love kindness stems out of a delight and joy in who God is. To love kindness is genuinely motivated from a heart that treasures the God who created others in His own image. It's a reflection of God's hesed love, the kind of love that loves kindness.

In the parable of the Good Samaritan, Jesus tells of a man who loved kindness and mercy ([Luke 10:25-37](#)). He was a Samaritan. Samaritans were looked down upon by the Jews. Yet, he stopped to help a man robbed, beaten and left for dead on the side of the road. Meanwhile, a priest and a Levite passed by on the other side. The Good Samaritan's compassion indicated a love for kindness, a desire to love mercy, even for the unlovable.

A love like that can't be concocted or manufactured. The only way we can love like that is to have a heart that treasures God as the Father who knows best, the One who loves kindness. Think about this. What is the most important commandment in the Bible? Here's the answer from [Mark 12:30-31](#).

³⁰ And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.' ³¹ The second is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."
[Mark 12:29-31](#) (ESV)

When Jesus spoke those words, a scribe responded with the following statement: "To love God with all of the heart and with all understanding and with all the strength, and to love one's neighbor as oneself, is much more than whole burnt offering and sacrifices ([Mark 12:33](#))." In other words, to love kindness is more valuable than the finest and costliest offering or sacrifice. Would thousands of rams, or ten thousand rivers of oil, or even sacrificing a firstborn child for my sin please God? ([Micah 6:6-8](#)). No! Only God knows best when He tells us that He desires mercy and not sacrifice ([Hosea 6:6](#)).

In Jesus' ministry, the Pharisees, who were the Jewish religious leaders of the day, were very good at loving sacrifice, but not loving mercy. They prayed, tithed and knew the law up one side and down the other. However, they grumbled when Jesus had mercy on tax collectors, prostitutes and lepers. In essence, the Pharisees looked down their self-righteous noses at Jesus and others. You can just hear them now: "I'm glad I'm not like those people; if only they were like me." Let's ask ourselves: "Who do I look down my self-righteous nose at?"

To love kindness is to love mercy, which is God-honoring. The Lord Jesus honors His heavenly Father. In honoring His Father, Christ is the only One to love kindness perfectly. His loving kindness and mercy were displayed when He bore the sins of those He came to save on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness ([1 Peter 2:24](#)). And all those who did receive Him, who believed in His name, He gave the power to become children of God ([John 1:12](#)). Because God knows best, all of His children are adopted into His family, saved from the power and penalty of sin through the cleansing blood of Christ shed on the cross.

How about you? Have you received by faith through God's grace the loving kindness and mercy of Jesus to save you from your sins? Do you realize that God shows the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward all believers in Christ Jesus ([Ephesians 2:7](#))? To paraphrase what a lady at a local nursing home once said to me, "Why would anyone reject the gospel message of the love, mercy and grace given in Christ?" Today, you can either reject the gospel or receive it. What will you do? Because for those who receive Christ, there's an immeasurable delight in walking humbly with your God.

3. Walk Humbly

To walk humbly with God is a very good thing, but it's also a difficult thing. Walking humbly with God means keeping in step with Him and not running ahead. It's sort of like power walking. Power walking involves keeping up a brisk pace, yet being disciplined enough to resist the urge to run. Walking humbly with God involves a disciplined pace, which means keeping in step with the Holy Spirit. Here's [Galatians 5:16-17](#).

¹⁶ But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. ¹⁷ For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do.

[Gal 5:16-17](#) (ESV)

In the various translations of the Bible, walking by the Spirit is defined as to keep in step, follow, or surrender. Those words imply a humble submission to the Spirit. However, our flesh, the world and the devil would rather we walk in the flesh and gratify the desires of the flesh ([Galatians 5:17](#)). As Scripture states, the Spirit and the flesh are opposed to each other. In essence, there is a war being fought within ourselves; this war is waged on the battlefield of our heart.

Scripture indicates that David was a man after God's own heart. Even so, David was a sinner just like you and I. Amidst the wars, bloodshed, murder and adultery that marred David's life, he knew that God knows best. David realized that walking humbly with God was a matter

of having a humble heart. Here's [Psalm 51:17](#), which is a Psalm of David written after he had committed adultery with Bathsheba.

The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

[Psalms 51:17](#) (ESV)

A broken spirit and contrite heart is the key to walking in humility with God. Walking humbly with God implies submitting to His authority. Since He is the good, good Father who knows best, you'd think all of us would aspire to be obedient and to walk humbly with God. But we don't. Instead of submitting to God's authority, we'd rather do what we want to do. In fact, our sinful flesh often rises up in pride and says, "I want to be God; I know what's best."

John Piper, author, pastor and founder of Desiring God ministry says this about humbly submitting to God's authority: "I have to feel and think and say and act in a way that shows I am not God." So, that means every fiber of who we are - our feelings, words, thoughts and actions - humbly submits to God. But who can do that? Not one of us. So, we have to look to Jesus. He is the only perfect example of walking humbly with God. Take a look at [Luke 22:42](#).

“Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done.”

[Luke 22:42](#) (ESV)

Here is Jesus, fully God and fully man, in agony in the Garden of Gethsemane on the night He was betrayed. In fact, His sweat was like great drops of blood as He prayed. The Lord Himself is praying earnestly to His Father that not His will, but the Father's will be done. Here is the perfect One who obediently humbled Himself to the point of death, even death on a cross ([Philippians 2:8](#)). We can't humble ourselves perfectly, but we can strive to be like Jesus. In fact, the Lord calls us to follow Him in this regard, as the apostle Paul writes in [Colossians 3:12-13](#).

¹² Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, ¹³ bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other...

[Col 3:12-13](#) (ESV)

How about us? Would the true intentions and desires of our hearts exemplify walking humbly with God? What's in our hearts anyway? Is there arrogance or humility? Is there forgiveness or resentment? The answer to these questions is a litmus test to the authenticity of whether we're walking humbly with God or not.

Conclusion

As I was preparing this sermon, the Holy Spirit was not only inspiring me what to write, but He was also convicting me to "practice what I preach." The conviction is that [Micah 6:8](#) is not who I really am. Admittedly, I don't live and own God's Word as much as I think I do. I forget what the Father says is best; I drift away from the truth that His commandments are not burdensome. He's the good, good Father who loves His sons and daughters with a steadfast love, a hesed love.

So, ponder this question: What would be the impact on the world, the nation, and our community if the church, including LEFC, lived out [Micah 6:8](#)? Unless God shows us what is good, we have no ability to do justice, love kindness or to walk humbly with Him. And remember, all of the best sacrifices we could ever offer won't please God. In addition, let me reiterate that what God requires is not a "to-do" list. It's not about what we ought to be doing, but who we ought to be in His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

So in conclusion, looking to Jesus is the only hope. He received injustice in order that God's justice was satisfied on the cross. His love for kindness means sinners like you and me, who receive Him by faith, have freedom from the penalty of sin and death. Jesus walks humbly with His Father, and we can too. Even as we are expected to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling, we need to remember that it is always God who works in us to will and to work for his good pleasure ([Philippians 2:12-13](#)). Trust Him. He knows best. Amen.