

(God and Man) Three Things God Requires

by Zac Poonen

True Christianity involves a change in one's heart and behavior, characterized by sacrifice, humility, justice, and kindness.

Duration: 1:07:13

Scripture: Micah 6:7-9, Micah 6:14, Micah 6:16, Matthew 6:33, Matthew 23:23

Topics: "Faith And Wealth", "Christian Living"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of living by God's rules and not accumulating worldly possessions. He warns that those who prioritize material wealth will ultimately lose everything and be conquered by various challenges and difficulties. The speaker also criticizes preachers who compromise their message for popularity and urges believers to follow Jesus' example of not being in debt. The sermon concludes with a reminder of what God requires from His people: to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with Him.

Transcript

I want to turn to a verse in the Old Testament, in the book of Micah. If you don't know where that is, it's towards the end of the Old Testament. It's about seven or eight books from the end.

The book of Micah and chapter six. Here is a question telling people to ask. With what shall I come to the Lord and bow myself before the God? Shall I come to Him with burnt offerings, with yearling calves? Does the Lord take delight in thousands of rams and ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I present my firstborn for my rebellious acts, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He has told you, O man, what is good.

What does the Lord require of you? But to do justice, to love kindness and to walk humbly with your God. Different religions have taught different things than God requires from man. Things like sacrifice, pilgrimage.

And it's possible that even the Christian Christianity, as we see it in the world today, is sometimes not balanced in presenting what God requires. I'll tell you something. Man is a religious creature, just like man is a sexual creature.

Man is a religious creature. And as much as he's got a lust for sex, he's got a lust for religion. And it's because of that, I mean, we won't ever mistake sex for Christianity, but we can very easily mistake religion

for Christianity.

And we think just because a man is religious, he is spiritual. Lest we think that religion is spirituality, God has given us some practical tests to find out whether we are really spiritual or not. See, our Christian, I mean, our tendency as human beings is to choose a religion or a faith that will not cause us any inconvenience.

A religion or a faith that will benefit us in some way, where we can get some gain, because man is basically selfish. You see that with children, it doesn't matter what religion they are. All children, whatever religion they are born into, are selfish.

And Jesus came to deliver us from selfishness. And if religion, if Christianity has not delivered you from self-centeredness and selfishness, you are religious. You are not at all spiritual.

Don't ever imagine your religion, I want to tell you, even if you call yourself Christian or Evangelical or Pentecostal or Charismatic, your religion is no better than any other religion or animism or evil spirit worship in the world. If your religion has not delivered you from self-centeredness and selfishness and seeking your own gain and seeking a religion that is comfortable and easy and that does not cause you any inconvenience and does not cause you any sacrifice and brings you a lot of gain, maybe an honor or money. You know, it speaks here, I want to come back to Micah, this is what we are going to think about today, but I want to show you a verse before we proceed in 1 Timothy chapter 6. Please keep a finger here and turn to 1 Timothy chapter 6. It speaks here about people who advocate a different doctrine.

Verse 3. And don't agree with sound words. With the doctrine that relates to godliness. The doctrine that leads to godliness.

And then he says about people, in verse 5, who got a depraved mind. That means their minds are warped by sin. Deprived of the truth.

That means they don't know the truth at all. And how do you detect people who got a depraved mind? You know, when you think people got depraved mind, you think a fellow who is always a drunkard or always living in adultery. People who don't have any love for the truth.

Now all of us think that we don't have a depraved mind. We are good people. Here is the mark of a man with depraved mind according to scripture.

A man who thinks that godliness is a means of gain. Whether good news is just a means of making money. What should we do with such people? It says, keep away from them.

Keep away from them. Avoid them. Avoid them.

That's what we should do. And what does it mean for godliness to be a means of gain? Where? See, true godliness always brings sacrifice. I have to give up something I love.

That's how it was for Jesus. And Jesus is the greatest example of godliness. And for him, his life involves sacrifice.

It involves giving up something which he enjoys. Something comfortable in order to suffer for the benefit of others. Not for himself.

Now many people are willing to suffer for their own profit. I mean all the businessmen in the world spend sleepless nights to make money and go to difficult places to make money and take a lot of risks to make money. That's not what I'm talking about.

I'm talking about taking risks and suffering to benefit other people and nothing for yourself. That's how Jesus came. That's the difference between true Christianity and false Christianity.

Between the true faith and the false. That in this faith, there is no gain for myself. There is no profit for myself.

See, this is why we have stood against a lot of Christian work in this country. Where people do Christian work and have made a lot of money. They had nothing when they came into Christian work.

They were poor people when they came into Christian work. But they have made such fantastic amount of money today in Christian work. They built houses for themselves with money earned out of Christian work.

They say, I'm serving the Lord. And these are the type of people we always stand against. It never goes well with them.

They can have a lot of Bible knowledge. Some of them can preach wonderful messages. But they have got a godliness which is a means of gain.

Gain, something for themselves. They are men with a depraved mind. Avoid them, it says.

Avoid them. Avoid anyone who is trying to make any profit for himself out of godliness. Now we may say, I don't make money out of godliness.

It doesn't have to be money. You can get up here and preach. Whether two minutes or one hour.

And when you seek honor for yourself, you are just as filthy with a depraved mind as any person who is making money in the name of Christianity. Absolutely no difference. In fact, you could be worse.

Because that fellow is obviously making money in the name of Christianity. And you can be doing it for honor. Anything that we do for gain, you can pray.

You can pray in a meeting and have a depraved mind. Because you are praying not to God. You are praying to impress people.

What a wonderful prayer you are. You got a depraved mind. Seeking gain.

Please remember this all your life, my brothers and sisters. If your Christianity brings you some gain, and it may not be money. Could be money.

But honor. You are of a depraved mind. Anything where you seek a reputation for yourself, for your spirituality.

You are gaining something. Godliness was never meant to be a means of gain. What did Jesus get? Look what he had in heaven.

And look what he got on earth. If you want to understand what Christianity is. Look at the honor he had here.

And look at the shame he got here on earth. Look at the comfort he had in heaven. And look at the discomfort he had on earth.

If you want to understand what true Christianity is. But for many Christians today, let me tell you this. Many Christians today, their Christianity comprises only of attending meetings on Sunday.

Perhaps one more day a week. And to ease their conscience, putting a little money in the box. Singing, they really enjoy singing.

Which worldly person doesn't enjoy singing? Good music. The world is full of people who love good music. And all the worldly musicians become millionaires through selling their CDs.

And Christian musicians become millionaires too through selling their CDs. It's all profit, profit, profit, profit. If you want, you know, we have spoken in the church about Babylon and Jerusalem.

The false church and the true church. And it's very easy. Sometime when you get time.

It's very easy. Just read Revelation 17 and 18. Just two chapters.

And there it speaks about the beast, which is the political kingdoms. And the harlot, which is Babylon. And in chapter 18 you read about business.

Wherever religion is mixed up with politics and business, you got Babylon. Wherever God and money, people try to mix. You can't mix it.

It's like oil and water. You can't mix oil and water. You cannot mix God and money.

And wherever people mix God and money, that is Babylon. Wherever it is. That is why I always say, don't go and join a Christian organization and get a salary.

People are trying to mix God and money. Doesn't the Bible say, the Lord has ordained those who preach the gospel should live of the gospel? Sure. Peter received gifts.

Jesus received gifts. You read in Luke chapter 8 verses 1 to 3. Jesus received gifts. He didn't get a salary.

There is a lot of difference. Salaried Christianity is Babylon. I don't care who is involved in it.

That's how they make all their pots of money and build huge houses and think they are serving God. They will discover in eternity they were serving themselves. Don't be fooled by that.

Because it's gain. It's gain. There are a lot of people today in Christian work who are earning 10 times what they would have got if they were doing a secular job.

They don't have to struggle. People in a secular job are struggling, struggling, struggling to make ends meet, to somehow meet their ends. They have got to travel long distance.

They have got to be yelled at by difficult bosses. But people in Christian work, they have got everything. Is this Christianity? Not the Christianity of Jesus Christ.

It's a counterfeit. I have proclaimed that all my life until my dying day I will proclaim it's a counterfeit. And we will stand against it.

Godliness which is a means of gain. And so people choose a Christianity which is comfortable, which doesn't cause any much problems. They will pray loudly in the meeting.

How much do you think they pray in private? Zero. But in the meeting, boy! They are the first to pray loud and impress everybody with their prayer. Go and see how much they pray at home.

Hypocrites and frauds. They talk about self-denial. How much will they fast in their life? Pretty close to zero.

What are they interested in? They are not interested in God. If they were interested in God, they would be doing a lot of things in secret that nobody knows about for God. They are interested in honor.

The honor of praying and saying good things and clever things. It's all a fraud. It's hypocrisy.

God hates it. But a lot of people choose that type of Christianity because it doesn't cost anything. It's a sort of a dignified version of the Christianity that Jesus brought.

So let's turn back to Micah. So what shall I come before the Lord with? Shall I come with all my burnt offerings and impress everybody with my calves that I'm bringing and 10,000 rivers of oil? Verse 7. You know, sometimes people say, Brother Zac, you say some extreme things. Exaggerate.

Do you know that all the prophets exaggerated? 10,000 rivers of oil. Verse 7. What's that? Who brings 10,000 rivers of oil? Have you ever seen one river of oil? Do you know Jesus exaggerated? You see, you swallow a camel and you strain out a mosquito. Who swallows camels? Have you ever seen anybody who swallowed a camel? You got a beam in your eye.

Try putting a beam inside your eye. It's people who don't read the scriptures, who don't want their sin to be pointed out. That's how they hated the prophets in the Old Testament.

Oh, you exaggerate. That's the only way people will wake up. Cut off your right hand.

Who said that? Not me. Jesus. Pull out your right eye.

The trouble is today a lot of people, they haven't read the Bible. Or if they've read it, they've forgotten it. That's why they don't know what true Christianity is.

And they think today's preachers are hard. I'll tell you, in my lifetime, 43 years as a Christian, I have never heard a preacher, in my life, preach as hard as Jesus. Not even one.

They are all pretty wishy-washy compromisers. Every one of them buttering people and seeking honor for themselves. That's how most preachers are because they want a religion that makes them popular.

They want a Christianity that makes them popular. That's why you have a bunch of preachers today who've got nothing to say. The word of the Lord is rare.

Because nobody wants to hear it. Paul told Timothy in 2 Timothy 4, he says, be careful in the last days. There are going to be preachers who just tickle people's ears.

That's what they are. And here it says, okay, verse 8. That's what I want to look at. God has told you, O man, what is good? What does the Lord require of you? Please remember these three things all your life.

To do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God. What does God want from you? To do justice. To be fair.

Absolutely fair, and just, and righteous. In all your dealings. Number 1. Number 2. What does He require from you? He requires from you to be kind to all other human beings.

Number 3. He wants you to walk in humility. Humility with your God. Walk humbly with your God.

You do these three things, and you got a real faith. And I'll tell you, you got to pay a price to do these three things. It's easy to come to meetings and pray and sing and things like that.

But to do justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God. Do you know that Jesus said the same things? Turn to Matthew chapter 23. I'd always known Micah chapter 6 and verse 9, but I hadn't noticed that Jesus, Micah 6 verse 8, but I hadn't noticed that Jesus also emphasized that.

In fact, the overall ministry of Jesus, you see that He emphasized that a lot. Justice, kindness, and walking in humility before God. But He brings it all together here in Matthew 23, where He's telling the Pharisees, and when He spoke to the Pharisees, He was exposing false religion.

False religion, Babylon in Jesus' time was the Pharisees. And He said to them in verse 23, Woe to you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! He said, you've got a religion where it doesn't cost you anything. You tithe the mint and dill and come in.

But you've neglected the weightier provisions of the law. And what are those weightier provisions of the law? Justice, and mercy, and faithfulness. And I assume that by what Jesus was referring to Micah chapter 6 verse 8. What does God require you to do? Justly.

To love mercy. It says in the King James Version, To do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God. That is faithfulness.

These are the things you should have done without neglecting the others. That means, Jesus is saying, I'm not saying you should stop coming to the meetings. I'm not saying that you should stop giving for the Lord's work.

No. But those are secondary to loving justice. And being absolutely fair.

And being kind to other people. And walking humbly with your God. If you don't do those three things, the Lord is saying, all this other religious activity is a lot of garbage.

All your praying and all your giving and everything that you do for honor. To do justly. I want to turn to James.

James was one of those people who emphasized practical Christianity. Practical Christianity. James, you know, he's the one who talks about faith without works is dead.

Faith without works is dead. That means, which does not produce the type of works that Jesus wants to produce. You know, we know that salvation is by faith without works.

There's no works before. All our works before we are saved are useless. But after we are saved, the Bible says, we are His workmanship created unto good works.

Ephesians 2, verse 8 says, by grace are you saved, not of works. And the next verse, verse 9 and 10 says, but we are created unto good works. That means, before salvation, no works.

After salvation, plenty of works. That's what Ephesians 2, verse 8 to 10 says. But, for a lot of Christians, there's no works before salvation and no works after salvation either.

It's just faith. Faith, faith, faith, faith. That's a deception.

And so, James is writing to such people, he says, faith without works, James 2, verse 26, faith without works is dead. And he says, he compares that to a body that doesn't have any breath. You know, a body that's got 10 fingers, 10 toes, 2 eyes, 2 ears, 1 mouth, nose, everything looking perfect except that the man is dead.

That's all. A body where all the doctrines are right, and you do all the right things, you come for all the meetings, and you do all these right things, but there's no breath there. And the Lord, and the Holy Spirit is saying here that all your so-called faith, right doctrine, right activities, all useless if it does not produce works.

And what type of works is he talking about? Justice, mercy, and walking humbly with your God. For example, he talks about personal favoritism in verse 1. Or in other words, partiality, verse 9. If you show partiality, you're committing sin, and are convicted by the law as transgressors. And you keep the whole law, verse 10, and you stumble at one point, that means you're partial.

You're as guilty, verse 11, as the fellow who committed adultery, and the fellow who committed murder. How many of you sitting here believe? I want to really ask you, please be honest, don't answer me, answer yourself. How many of you believed before this morning that partiality is equal to adultery and murder? I don't believe there's anybody here who believe that.

Do you know the amount of partiality I have seen in Christian circles? It's absolutely amazing. Everywhere I see, Christian leaders favoring their children. It's difficult to see a man who's upright, and who's absolutely impartial in this area.

Who says, I will treat my children just like anybody else's children. Everywhere I've seen it. Where is, because why is it, why are they partial? Because they don't believe it's equal to adultery and murder.

Those people would never do, commit adultery and murder there that way, but they feel partially, that's okay. Look at the number of Christian organizations today where a man builds up something and then he hands it over to his son. He grooms his son to get a prominent place in the organization he has built up.

Do you want me to name them? You just look around in Christian circles and see if it's not true. They groom their children to have prominence. I saw it long before we started this church and I said, I will never do that in my life.

Never. Not even my wife will have any prominence in this church. No relatives of mine are going to have any prominence in this church.

The thing is, we haven't seen the rest of Christianity and that's why you don't appreciate it sufficiently. I tell you it's everywhere. It's in the flesh.

It's in the flesh to be partial to your own children. It's in the flesh to be merciful to your children and be very hard on other people's children. That is what I mean by partiality.

It's absolutely in the flesh to be very kind and good to our children and very hard on other people's children. That is partiality. And I want to tell you God hates it.

And all our prayers and our Bible knowledge is all garbage if you are not just. Justice means being absolutely impartial. And you don't have to be a Christian leader.

You see yourself. The way you criticize other people's children and let me see whether you do that when your own children come to that place. Somebody else's child does something and boy! You are on that person immediately to find fault.

Maybe they have grown up and they are doing something, they are teenagers and of course your children are small. Wait till your children become teenagers. It's fine.

I'd like to see whether you are just as strict with your own children. That's why we see Humbug Christianity everywhere. At least if you have brought up your children in a proper way you have some authority to speak to others.

But the Bible says a man who cannot control his own children when they live in his home. He is absolutely unfit to open his mouth and talk about Christianity. Do you know that? So the Bible says.

That's my interpretation of 1 Timothy chapter 3. It's very clear. If you cannot control your children when they live in your home, my brother, shut your mouth and don't think you know anything about Christianity. Just humble yourself and say, I don't know anything.

Let me first learn to bring up my children properly where they listen to me and are subject to me. Some of us haven't taken that seriously. Children are wild, disobedient to parents, they do what they like, go where they like and we are trying to act as spiritual Christians.

We are not. It's very very important to recognize these things. To be absolutely impartial.

If your son does something wrong, it's wrong. And I believe sometimes we have suffered because we have spent our time criticizing other people's children. Now what's the result? You want to see what's the result? You have reaped what you have sown.

See the condition of your children today. You were an expert to find fault with other people's children and God says, I'll teach you a lesson in your life that you'll never forget. You'll reap a hundred times what you have sown.

And you're reaping today, right? And when you reap, my brother, sister, just humble yourself and say, Lord, I am reaping. Please forgive me. And learn a lesson from that.

You young people, learn a lesson from other people who are reaping. If I see a farmer's land full of weeds, I'll try and find out, how did that fellow get weeds? I say, God, please save me from getting weeds in my life. And I believe one of the reasons is this partiality.

There's a lot of it, my brothers and sisters, found in your flesh. If you think we're talking about some strangers in some other distant place, we're not. We're talking about us.

We're talking about us. I'm not speaking to the walls and the doors and the furniture here. We're talking to human beings.

We're talking about us. You know that we, there's partiality in us. There's a lack of justice.

If you borrow money from someone, and he needs it, don't you think it's unjust not to return it? Don't you think it's unjust? And if one month, due to some problem, you cannot return it, what should you do? You should go to that person, humble yourself. Say, I'm sorry, sir, I cannot return it this month. Can you please give me a little more time? That's what Jesus said about one man.

In the parable, he said, one man went to his creditor and said, have mercy upon me. Have you ever gone to your creditor, from whom you borrowed money and said, please have mercy upon me? No, that requires humility. To be just is to be absolutely fair, particularly in money transactions.

In our, see what it says in Micah, further down. I just want you to see that. You know, if you read the Old Testament prophets, I'm sorry that some of us don't read the Old Testament prophets enough.

Particularly the minor prophets. I call minor prophets, they are pretty major in their message. Those are the ones from Daniel onwards.

Particularly the ones after Daniel. You read books like Micah, Nehum, Amos, read it in the Living Bible, I would encourage you. It will just take you a few minutes to read some of those.

They have written very, very brief letters. I want you to read this, for example. Micah chapter 6, after he says about, listen, the Lord wants you to do justly and walk, love, kindness, Micah 6 verse 10 he says, your sins are very great.

I'm reading the Living Bible. Is there to be no end of getting rich by cheating? Are you getting rich by cheating? Are you cheating on your income tax? Are you cheating? Are you telling lies? Do you go to your auditor and ask him how to cheat? Plenty of auditors will tell you how to cheat. Cheating on your tax.

The homes of the wicked are full of ungodly treasures and cheating scales. That means they try to make money by selling something which is going to cheat that person in some way. You know the scales, that means you don't give a correct, like a lot of sales people portray an item as very wonderful when it's not so wonderful.

Because they want the other fellow to buy it. Like all these Amway people. They want people to buy it.

What is the whole purpose? The whole purpose is profit for myself. You are not seeing the good of the other person. Lying in scales means business.

And the Lord says, shall I say good to all you businessmen trying to do business with your bags of false deceitful weights? How can God be just if he says I'll say good when you do all that? Verse 12, your rich men are wealthy through extortion. Taking money from others. You are so used to telling lies that your tongues can't even speak the truth now.

Okay, what's going to be the result? Conscious I'll teach you a lesson. Verse 14, you will eat, but you'll never have enough. All that money you got by cheating other people, you'll spend on hospital bills and many other expenses which you would not have had if you were upright and honest.

God says I'll teach you a lesson. You will eat, but you'll never have enough. You'll still have hunger pains, you'll never be satisfied.

And though you try, and listen to this, though you try and try to save money, you won't be able to do it. Do you have that experience? You try and try to save money, you won't be able to do it. And you never thought that that was a judgment of God.

Do you know the number of Christians like that who try and try to save money and they can't do it? They are not upright. They are not just. They are not righteous in their dealings with other people.

They are not absolutely righteous. Is there partiality in the way you deal with matters? He says it'll come to nothing in the end. And what little you succeed, verse 14, Living Bible, in storing up, you'll lose one day.

Somebody will conquer you. Sickness will conquer you. Something will conquer you and it'll all go.

You'll plant crops, but you won't harvest them. You'll press out the oil from the olives, but you'll never get enough even to anoint yourself. You'll trample the grapes, but you won't get any juice from your wine.

I will make you, the last part of verse 16, the laughing stock of the world. And all who see you will snicker and sneer. I don't believe that it is God's will that any child of His should be in debt.

Because I don't believe Jesus was in debt. He is our example. And if you see 10,000 believers around you as in debt, don't make them your example.

Make Jesus your example. He was never in debt. He was a poor man on earth, but he was never in debt.

He lived with what little he had. If God gave him more, he used more than he had. Paul said, I've learned to be content, whether I have little or I have much.

It's when people are not content, that they want to buy things which they cannot afford. Credit cards. Can you believe that I'm 63 years old and I've never had a single credit card in my whole life? Can you believe it? In this day's world? Because I'm scared.

I'm scared to disobey God. I'm scared to go outside my boundary. I'm more interested in being anointed than buying something which I can't afford.

I'll tell you any day, I'm far more interested in the anointing of the Holy Spirit than having something in my home which I cannot afford. Some of you feel anointing is secondary. I must have this in your home.

See the result. See the result. No wonder the church suffers.

Because we are casual with God's word. Learn to be just, righteous and fair. Don't cheat anyone.

Don't take advantage of anyone. When you do business with someone, I've always felt this. If anyone does business with me, he must always feel that he got a good deal out of me.

Not that I benefited from him. That he benefited from me. That's the way you must do business with... It's alright.

We have to buy and sell. Some people are like that. And I'll give you a simple rule.

Don't sell sheeps and doves in the temple. Don't... There's a market place for all that. Don't sell sheeps and doves in the temple.

Jesus will drive you out one day or the other. I give you my word, Jesus will drive you out. I'll pray that Jesus will drive you out.

All those who sell sheeps and doves in the temple. Jesus is the same. Yesterday, today and forever.

And today His temple is the church. And people who try to make profit out of other people in the church. I will pray with all my heart till my dying day that Jesus will drive them out of the church.

Those who try to make profit from other people in the church. Jesus never drove people out from the market place. Remember that in Jerusalem? He said, you do what you like there.

Don't you ever do it in the house of God. That's all I'm saying. Don't ever do it in the house of God.

Don't sell sheep or doves or anything where you're going to make a profit for yourself. Even pickle. You can sell pickle but give it free.

Or at cost price with zero profit. That's okay. But not real estate and all this amway.

Do it outside. Do it as much as you like. Go all over Bangalore and sell it.

But not in the temple. If you do it in the temple, do it with zero profit. You can do it.

With zero profit or a little loss for you. Even better. That's fine.

Best is you give it free. If you can't give it free, zero profit or a little loss for you. But never again and don't go pushing people to buy what you want to sell.

If they come to you, say, brother, can you give me this? Or they want you to do something, go and do it. And you got to make your living out of it. You got to get your commission out of it.

There's nothing wrong in that. Jesus made a commission. Do you know that? You think he made stools and benches for free? How would he feed his family of eight people at home? Jesus bought wood, made a stool or a bench or a table for people who ordered it, and made a profit on it.

He didn't do business in the temple. He made a profit on it because that's how he had to live on that profit. He had four brothers, two sisters and a mother at home whom he had to feed.

There's nothing wrong in that. But Jesus didn't go pushing people to buy things from him like some Christians have done. That's business.

That's Babylon. I don't care what your doctrine is, you belong to Babylon. We don't want that in this church.

We don't want it. And I pray with all my heart that those who have not repented of doing that, those who don't set it right, those who don't give back money which they have cheated other people like that, I pray that God will drive them out one day from Jerusalem, from his kingdom. Because God hates it.

He hates it. It's not fair. It's not righteous.

Godliness is becoming a means of gain. We want to finish with it. We want to finish with people who are trying to make profit out of being a Christian and taking advantage of other people because they are Christians and we get to know them in the church and take advantage of them.

And you're a bag of scales and you make profit for yourself. Brother, be careful. Be righteous.

Be absolutely righteous. Ask yourself, is that the way you would deal with your son? Would you sell your son a third rate scooter which doesn't work properly? Or a tape recorder that doesn't work? No. Then how do you do that to another brother in the church? There's a lot of partiality in us.

Far more than we think. And I believe that's the reason why we got a body without breath. I believe we could have had a far greater anointing in our lives, in our church, in our meetings if we were more righteous and absolutely free from partiality in our daily lives.

In all doings. James says another thing. He spoke about partiality.

He says about being partial to rich people. The Old Testament also said don't be partial to poor people. You see, that's another mistake people make.

There's a verse in Exodus 23 or somewhere. He says don't show partiality to the poor. You see, this is the fellow, the communist who says we must be partial to the poor.

That's equally wrong before God. Impartiality means you don't care whether the person is rich or poor. But that also I've seen.

I've seen people being partial to the rich in the church. I've seen people being partial to the poor and say boy, we're going to drive out the rich. No.

No. That's also partiality. And James says be careful.

Treat everybody alike. Don't treat people of your community in a special way, people of other community in another way. That's partiality.

So, the other thing James says in James chapter 5. He says come now you rich people. Now is the time to cry and groan. He says if you cry and groan now because of your sins, it'll be okay in the future.

There's all the terrible troubles ahead of you. Your wealth is even now rotting away. Your fine clothes are becoming mere moth-eaten rags.

Why? The value of your gold and silver is dropping fast. Why? Because the cries, verse 4, of those who have worked for you and have not been paid have reached the ears of the Lord. You have spent, verse 5, your years on earth having fun, satisfying your every whim and your fat hearts are ready for the slaughter.

In other words, you spend a lot of money on luxuries for yourself and you haven't paid the servants who work in your home properly. Have you ever thought of denying yourself a few ice-creams so that you can give a little money to that poor person who works for you? Have you ever thought of that? What type of Christian are you in any case? If you have never thought of that. Have you only thought of I and my children must enjoy chocolates and ice-cream and all that, but this servant who works for me I'm going to make sure we give him.

What is the minimum pay people give in Bangalore? Let me give that. Are you a Christian? Or a heathen? Do you know the verse in the Old Testament Proverbs which says, a righteous man is even kind to his animals. Have you read that verse? A righteous, leave alone servants, he is kind to his animals.

That means if a cruel farmer who whips his ox gets converted, the ox will wonder what happened when this chap gets converted. That's how it will be. A righteous man is kind to his animals.

Leave alone his servants. What type of righteousness do we have? If you haven't learned to be kind to those who are less fortunate than we are. To do righteously, not only to pay them, it says to do righteously and love kindness.

To be kind to them. To be merciful. To do good to those who do not have what we have.

To be righteous and kind. Let me show you a verse in 2nd Corinthians chapter 8. You know the Bible has a lot to talk about this if we read it carefully. In 2nd Corinthians 8, he is encouraging the Corinthian Christians who are a bit stingy.

You know there is something about the Corinthian Christians. They spoke in tongues and they prophesied but they were pretty good misers. Or pretty bad misers.

Whatever way you look at it. They were misers. But they spoke in tongues and yelled and prayed in the meeting and rushed to the front to testify and all that.

But they were misers. And Paul had to deliver them from their miserly... He says, I want to give you an example of what those fellows in Macedonia did, he says in chapter 8. Those fellows in Philippi. They are not as well off as you are.

You are in that Greek city, all posh place and all that. Those poor fellows in Philippi, they wanted to help the poor saints in Jerusalem. But what about you? You got so much more than them.

What do you do with that? Just satisfy yourself. And so he tells them. He says, learn to give.

Think of Jesus, he says in verse 9. Though he was rich, for your sake he became poor, that you through his poverty might become rich. So he says, what should you do? He says in verse 13. This is not for the ease of others and for your affliction.

He says, I am not saying that you should have a tough time and other people have an easy time. No. I am talking about a little equality here.

Verse 13. At this present time, you have plenty. So you can help them.

At another time, maybe you have need and they can help you. In this way, there will be an equality. Verse 14.

Because the Bible says, look what the Bible says. He who gathered much, verse 15, did not have any lack. He who gathered much had nothing left over.

And he who had gathered little, had enough. What does that mean in practical terms? Now, I don't want the wrong type of people to feel guilty about what I say. I am not talking now to widows or those who are poor.

I am not talking to them. I am not talking to those who are struggling to make ends meet. I am not talking to those who are retired or pensioners or something like that.

No. But I am talking to some other people who have houses. Was there a time in the past, I am talking to people who got enough now in savings and your savings are increasing.

I am talking about to such people. Was there a time, I am talking about this verse. At one time, their abundance supplied your lack.

Now your abundance can supply their lack. Was there a time in the past when you were in need financially and the church, CFC, gave you a gift. Maybe for your wife's delivery or your child sickness or something.

Okay. There is nothing wrong in that. We have to help one another.

Now, now you don't need it. You say, okay, I don't need it now. But, you got some savings.

Have you ever thought of repaying that to CFC so that that money can go to some poor believers in Tamil Nadu? It doesn't occur to your mind? That's what I mean by religiosity. That's exactly what I mean by godliness being a means of gain. Now, if you still have lack, brother, I am not talking to you.

I am talking about people who are well off today and who never think of repaying their old debt to CFC. That is utter filthy selfish corruption. And we've got it in our church.

You won't have anybody talking to you straight like I do, right? My brother, sister, let me tell you this. It's better I talk to you now than Jesus talks to you in the day of judgment. That's why I talk to you straight.

Listen to it. Your abundance should help somebody else's lack. If you have lack, by all means, somebody else's abundance should help your lack.

We believe in that. But what happens when you have abundance? That's when you forget the time when you had a lack. And that's why it goes so badly with you.

That's why you suffer shortage. You sow but you don't reap. And you will continue to sow.

Mark my words. You will continue to sow. You will not reap.

Because you are not righteous. You haven't learned kindness. You haven't learned to repay your debts.

You haven't thought of other people who have a far greater need than you have. You got large gifts in the past when you were in need. What are you doing today when you have an abundance? That's my question.

You wonder, why God is not doing? You got the answer today? Do you get the answer? Sacrifice a little bit in your life and help those who are not as well off as you are. I believe that's the right way. Otherwise you know all this.

The reason why God does not bless us with anointing and with grace and revelation on His word and freshness. Why do you get depressed so often? Do you know that it's not God's will for us to be depressed? I believe depression is a judgment of God on people who have done something wrong in their life. They are not right.

They are not fair to other people. If you are unfair and unkind to your servants, you deserve to be depressed. You deserve to be depressed for the rest of your life.

If you are unfair and unkind to other people and if you are selfish and make godliness a means of gain, you deserve to be depressed. Sure. Till you set that right.

Till you humble yourself and say, God, I don't want to be unrighteous anymore the rest of my life. There is salvation for those who repent. But to those who think CFC is a place of making gain, mark my words.

You will sow and you will not reap. And your children will suffer. What did Gehesi's children get out of the money he made in the name of godliness? What did they get? Leprosy.

They got a lot of interest from their money, I know. But along with the interest, they got leprosy too. Don't let your children suffer.

I have been very careful on this. I say, Lord, I have got four boys and I never want any of them to suffer. One unrighteous thing I have done in my life.

No. Why should another generation suffer because of me? They should be blessed. Be fair.

Be righteous. Let your abundance meet the lack of other people. Don't just think of the wonderful days when their abundance met your lack.

And rejoice in that. That's not Christianity. That's religiosity.

And if that is your faith, your Christianity is no better than any heathen religion in the world. You may come and sit in CFC and sing the songs and break bread. It means absolutely nothing.

The last thing, walk humbly with your God. That means, recognize your need of God. Recognize that there is nothing you have which God didn't give you.

Absolutely nothing. Don't ever look down on somebody in the world as if you are superior to him. You are not.

Everything you got in your life is the gift of God. Don't boast about your children as though they are somebody great compared to other people's children. It's God's mercy.

It's God's mercy. Even if your children have grown up properly and are born again and somebody else's child is gone astray, don't despise them. You know, I'll give you my testimony.

I was born again before I was married. And we tried, my wife and I tried to bring up all our children in the fear of God. I was very thankful that they were in this church.

But when I look back over thirty-three years of being a father, I cannot count the number of mistakes I've made. So many mistakes I made as a father. I punished my children when they should not have been punished.

I was hard on them. I lost my temper and beat them when I shouldn't have done that. So many, many, many things.

And I say, Lord, if they are born again today, it's not because of me. It's in spite of me. Because of your mercy.

And what is the result? Never in my life will I look down on another brother. Even if all his children are wayward. Impossible.

Impossible. I've never done it and I will never do it. Some of you, let me ask you, do you look down on somebody's child? Do you feel sorry what's going to happen to your children? Be careful.

Be careful. Don't criticize somebody else's children. Leave it to God.

He is the judge. And don't ever, ever, ever, ever compare your children with somebody else's. Unless you want to spend your life sowing and getting weeds.

Walk humbly with your God. And say, Lord, if anything has gone well in my life, it's only your mercy. If I have intelligence to earn a living, it's your mercy.

If I have health, it's your mercy. You know, I think of the remarkable health God's given me to travel about. I say, it doesn't make me better than other people.

I'm not better, one bit better than anybody else. It's God's remarkable mercy that's given me health, health, intelligence, wealth. It's all God's mercy.

Acknowledge it. Acknowledge it. It's got nothing to do with your cleverness.

It's got nothing to do with your so-called spirituality. You are not getting what you deserve. Don't ever ask God to say, Lord, give me what I deserve.

You'll get hell. That's what we all deserve. We're getting what we don't deserve.

Every day of my life, I have got from God what I don't deserve. Even today, I have got from God what I do not deserve. May God help me never to forget it all the days of my life.

That I have got in my family what I do not deserve. My children have received what they do not deserve. I have received in this church what I do not deserve.

Walk humbly with your God. Recognize your need of God. The humble man will pray.

People who are proud, don't pray. I can say that without any hesitation. Every proud person here will not pray.

He doesn't need to pray. Why does he need to pray when he can handle everything himself? I have preached for 43 years. Even today, I cry to God and say, God, please help me, otherwise I'll never be able to say what you want me to say.

You cannot depend on your experience in any area, even in that which you have done the most. You are proud if you don't pray, if you don't seek for God's help. No wonder, things are not as good as it should be.

Because you don't feel the need of God. Do you feel the need of God in your life? When you have a problem in your home, do you feel the need of going to God and say, God, please sort out this. I can't do it.

You got to do it. That's walking in humility. Why should we fast? A humble man never asks that question.

Proud people ask that question. Why should we fast? I never want to go that way. I'll tell you honestly, I don't know.

Why do you do it? Because Jesus said it, that's all. For a humble man, that's enough. Jesus told me to do it.

I don't want to be so clever. Lord, I don't exercise my heart. It says in Psalm 131 verse 1 and 2. I don't exercise my heart in all those high mighty things which I can't understand.

But Jesus said it, I do it. That's humility. To say, Lord, I'll do it even if I don't understand it.

I want to walk all my days in humility. What do I have that I have not received? Grace. Have I overcome some sins in my life? Oh, that's God's grace.

It's got nothing to do with me. I never will look down on a man who loses his temper because I know that without God's grace I'll be worse than him. I will never look down on a drunkard.

Do you look down on drug addicts? I don't. Do you look down on somebody who accidentally fell into adultery? Never in my life have I done it. I'll tell you who I get mad with.

Those who exploit others and especially they do in the name of Christianity. Those who sell sheep and doves in the temple. Those are the ones Jesus got mad at.

But people fall into drug addiction. I'll never despise a smoker. I will never despise a woman who wears lipstick and wears jeans.

You think God's bothered about these things? I tell you God's bothered about injustice. Not about whether a woman's hair is short or whether she wears jeans or whether she doesn't even cover her head. Or whether she wears gold.

I have my convictions but I don't despise other people who do that. No! I want to walk humbly with God. Let me recommend that way to you.

God has blessed my life tremendously. I don't deserve it. But I've tried to do what scripture says and I would recommend that to you.

Be fair. Don't be partial to your own children. They could be wrong.

Your children could be wrong. Acknowledge that. I remember when my children were here and the Sunday school teacher would say something about them.

And I'd tell my children that's right. Listen to your Sunday school teacher. Be submissive to authority in the church.

I would never let them feel they are Zachary's children so they have a little freedom. Garbage! I would have destroyed them if I had done that. You're nobody.

You're just like any other child. That's all. I'm not going to be like those other Christian leaders.

If you're wrong, you're wrong. I'll agree with that Sunday school teacher. We let our children suffer because we don't follow the principles of scripture.

Can we repent? At least do it right from today. May God help us. Let's just bow our heads before God.

God doesn't speak to us to condemn us. Never. God did not send his son into the world to condemn the world.

He speaks to us that it might go exceptionally well with us. Not just ordinarily but exceptionally well if we follow his laws. You say, Lord, give me light.

One of the greatest marks of God's blessing is that he gives you light on your spiritual pride, arrogance, despising of others, unkindness to others, unmerciful attitude to others, partiality, favoritism, favoritism to your family members, comparing your family with somebody else's and all this type of satanic garbage that he's dumped into your life. Throw it out today. Throw it out and say, I'm going to follow Jesus.

I'm going to walk recognizing I have nothing and I am nothing apart from the grace of God. I believe it will go exceptionally well with you. I believe it will fill you with the spirit long before you desire it even.

Before you call, he will answer. But we got to come to him with empty vessels. We got to get rid of those stuff which we saw today in our vessel.

Now we understand why he couldn't fill us. Because our vessel was filled with other things. If it involves a little sacrifice in the days to come, go ahead and do it.

Do it. It will do good to you. Don't let your children suffer.

If you don't do it for your sake, at least do it for your children's sake. We're dealing with the ruler of this universe. We're not dealing with just any Tom, Dick and Harry.

We're dealing with almighty God who runs this universe. Let's humble ourselves before him. Let's fear him, reverence him, respect him and give him the respect and reverence for his word and his commands that is due unto him.

And let's get rid of this Christianity which makes profit for ourselves. Finish with it once and for all and set right everything in the past and say, Lord, I'm going to start with a clean sheet. I'm going to live before you.

Don't get angry at God's word. Humble yourself. I believe it can go exceptionally well with every single one of us without exception.

Let's have that faith. Lord, when I reach rock bottom, I still know you love me and you want the best for me. Thank you, Lord.

Thank you. No earthly father loves like thee. No mother ever so mild bears and forbears as you have done with me, your sinful child.

Thank you, Lord. Thank you for your mercy. I want to thank you for your fantastic, tremendous mercy upon my life through many, many years.

I don't deserve to stand here. I don't deserve to sit in the last seat in this church. But you've been merciful to me and you've been merciful to all of us and I want to thank you for that.

Father in heaven, be glorified in us as a church. Help us to bring satisfaction to your heart. We don't care what the world thinks about us.

We don't care what the Christian world thinks about us. We want to bring satisfaction to your heart. That's all we want.

If you are satisfied, we can afford to do without the opinion of everybody else. Thank you, Father. In Jesus' name, Amen.

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