

5:30 p.m. - March 24, 74 P. M. WXRJ ✓

DOING YOUR THING

Judges 17:6

INTRODUCTION:

Now no one knows where this phrase came from, but everyone seems to know what it means. This is a day in which we have a changing scene. And such phrases are used as hanging loose, hang up, turning on, getting high, and doing your thing.

This is done in reference to sex, drugs, alcohol, ^{and} just plain down doing as you please. ^{kindness}

Tonight we have a text. ^{//} In those days there was no king in Israel. Every man did that which was right in his own eyes. ^{//} Now this text is repeated again in the last verse of the book of Judges. 21:25 - every man did that which was right in his own eyes.

This says something about the state of independence. A condition in which people were taking matters into their own hands and doing their own thing. This was exactly the condition. Gen. 6:5. ^{Noah} And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. The Bible is full of illustrations of this - and we could spend a great deal of time speaking on this subject. Because it touches the spot. I might clarify this. When a man has broken an arm, the surgeon must find the exact spot where the fracture is. He may take an X-Ray, and yet he may feel along and gently press his fingers - saying, is it there. And the patient says no. Is it there, no. Presently when the surgeon touches another spot - ouch says the man. He has found the broken part and it hurts. It is one thing to hear a man preach down about other people's sins. Men will say that is splendid. And will

want all their friends to go and hear the preacher. But let him touch on their individual sin, and declare as Nathan did to David - thou art the man..... and they say, I do not like that. The preacher has touched a sore spot, we call it.

Some people get their foot in a hard buckle not by trying but by exaggerating some facts. Heard of preacher given to this practice. Deacon discussed this - preacher very confident - Deacon all help - Agreed - low whistle, sign Cool it - Preacher preaching Samson tying the tails together with the same - Those forgers had long tails - would believe 30' long - Deacon whistle - Preacher buckled up, come to think - 20' D-W - About 10' 19' W - ex. my opinion - now you can go on W for head off but it not going to cut their tails off another foot.

There are very few people who do not like to do just what they think is right in their own eyes. If you are honest with yourself, how much attention do you give to the Bible and to what God has to say about things. Now last Sunday night, in the chapter preceding this text, we dealt with Samson. You remember Samson spent his time with three different women and this got him in trouble. And of course, when he was finally captured, the first thing they did in the 21st Verse of Judges 16, they put out his eyes. They blinded him. And that was a cruel ancient custom. There are instances in history as well as in the Bible. 2 Kings 25:7, Numbers 16:14, where they deprive the person of all power to do harm. In some nations, they put out the eyes of all their slaves. Persia, it was not uncommon to have the king punish a rebellious district by exacting so many pounds of eyes. The executioners go and scoop out the eyes of those they met, until they had the weight required. Sometimes the eyes were pulled or cut out. Sometimes a red hot iron was drawn before them, sometimes the pupil was pierced, and sometime the whole eye was put out. Many times the victims died. Samson had his eyes put out. He was bound with brass chains. He was grinding grain in the prison. Turning the millstone by hand. Now instead of serving God, the result is, because he was blind he could no longer see what needed to be done in God's kingdom. They had a festival, and Dagon, their fish God was worshipped. They went and got Samson out in the 25th verse and made sport of him. From the upstairs balcony, there is the face of a woman, Delilah. Looks down upon Samson. There are 3000 men and 5 Philistine Lords. But this is the time in V. 30, when Samson makes a prayer unto God. He says let me die with these. And he says, I will give my life. And this is a pretty good sermon for a backslider, I pointed out. Because the spiritual power that you have is given for

Joseph Smith

the good of others. Now through sin, when you lose that power by grinding at the mill, and following these women - Samson cannot help anybody. He could not help a grandmother, an orphan. He could hear the cries of his people - and that is the problem today. Sometimes a back slider has gone so far away from God, and is so indifferent that you can't get them back to God. Now, he wanted to feel the hand of the Lord upon him again. He is not thinking about Delilah. He is not thinking about the harlot that he slept with but he is thinking about God. He says strengthen me. And he wanted to deal with his enemies in the closing part of his life. He wanted to do business with God. And so he offered himself a willing sacrifice. And of course, we read how he destroyed the heathen temple and his relatives came and picked up his body and carried it home and buried it.

Now Samson was doing that which was right in his own eyes. This got him into trouble and it also meant trouble for his people and a collapse of the nation.

That is why in this next chapter, we have this text of every man doing his own thing. Let us look at this more closely.

I. IT LEADS TO IDOLATRY

Let me give you an interpretation of this chapter. And you will discover here that doing your own thing will lead to idolatry.

V. (1) - (Micah) a man lived in the Mt. Ephraim by the name of Micah. He had sort of a quarrel with his mother and the son robs the mother.

V. (2) - It tells us that his mother had 1100 pieces of silver and that this boy had stolen them - robbed his mother of them. And she had saved this great sum of money. She intended to leave this to her son when she died. Or it did

her a lot of good to look upon it and count it over. Now the young man had grown up, he knew this. But he took this away from his mother. And he knows where to find his mother's cash. And he thinks that he needs this. And maybe he thinks that he cannot wait until his mother dies to get his hands on this money. Anyway, he takes it away for his own personal use.

It might have been very tragic that he wished his mother in her grave. As an excuse, as a wicked son, that he might steal from his parents that which he thought belonged to him.

We note the mother curses the son or whoever had taken her money. She spoke this so loud and with such passion that it came to the ears of this son. I do not know what she included in that curse, about the love of money, but money many times causes man to be destroyed in their relationship and the love of money made Micah rob his mother.

It is very foolish now to throw curses around as a mad man, but she put a curse upon ever who robbed her of this silver.

Next Micah is (reconciled) to his mother. The son was terrified with the Mother's curses. He came and (restored) the money. He cannot believe that his Mother's money will do him any good, without his mother's blessings. Nor does he dare to deny the theft when he is charged with it - he cannot retain the money. He brought it back.

It is best not to do evil. But it is next best when it is done, to undo it by repentance, confession, and restitution.

The mother was so pleased with her son's repentance, that she recalled her curses. And she turned them into prayers and into blessings for her son.

(Micah) and his (mother) agree upon turning their money into a god. And setting up idolatry within the family.

V. 3-4 - The mother's idea in the matter was she said, when the silver was restored, she pretended that she had dedicated it to the Lord. She makes a pretension of this either before it was stolen or after she thought the money might be returned. She was going to dedicate it to God.

Now Micah and his mother make an agreement that they will make it into an image of a religious use. And so they undertake a project that was wicked. Now probably this (old woman) was one of those that came out of Egypt. And would have such images made as she had seen there. She perhaps remembered those in her youth. And she had told her son about this, and how they worshipped God by images. And this was something she intended to do.

Now V. 4 - The son complies with his mother. He stumbles at this, the second commandment. She has designed it for her son to make an image. And when the images were made, Micah by his mother's persuasion was reconciled to her and greatly pleased her. She had wholly dedicated the silver to make the graven image. Now all the 1100 pieces - but when it came to be done, she made less than a 1/5 part serve. Even 200 shekels - V. 4, was enough. And indeed, it was too much. That is a teacher of lies.

Now they did in the case of Ananias and Sapphira did in the New Testament. They did not bring the whole price to the Lord.

V. 5 - There is the (corruption) of idolatry - it was here introduced. The man Micah had a house of gods, a house of error. Really it was so - the way of truth - it was all deceit. Idolatry is a great cheat and one of the worst errors.

He made a teraphim - little images, which he might advise with and on occasion receive information and direction, and predictions. Thus, while the honor of Jehovah was pretended, the institution being idolatry and right down demon worship. His ordinances, there was some room or apartment in the house of Micah appointed for the temple or house of God. And the holy garment was provided for his priest to officiate. It was sort of an imitation of those that had been used in the tabernacle of God.

One of his sons was consecrated - a priest of his own getting, and his own making serve to be the manager of it.

Now there is no mention of any altar of sacrifice or incense in honor of these silver gods. But having a priest, something like Laban who had his little idols. They lapsed into idolatry.

Remember it was 1100 pieces of silver here devoted to the making of an idol. Which ruined religion, especially in the tribe of Daniel. Which was Samson's tribe. Now think for a moment, it was 1100 pieces of silver that was given by each Philistine Lord for the ruin of Samson ^{Philistine} that helped to bring him down.

V. 6 - Our text tells us the cause of this corruption. ¹⁷ There was no king in Israel. There was no judge. Samson was dead. There was no sovereign prince to take over. There was no one to convince Micah of his error or to restrain or punish him. And so he accepted the (disease) of the time and he spread like an infection. There was nothing, every man did that which was right in his own eyes.

And they soon lost sight of the Lord. Without a king to keep order. And without a judge and a leader among them, God's house was fallen, forsaken. And the priest neglected. And all went to ruin.

There is nothing that contributes under God to the support of religion more than (due administration.) I Tim. 1:2.

Now Micah furnished himself with a Levite chaplain.

V. 7 - Now what brought this Levite here, we do not know. He was from Judah - lived in Bethlehem. And he was a traveler, and he came here to Mt. Ephraim - V. 8
Some think he was unhappy, or that he had been persecuted or abused. And neglected and starved at Bethlehem.

Now God made provision for the Levites. But the people withheld their dues and did not help them into the possession of the cities assigned them and it reduced them to awful conditions, where they needed relief. Israel forsaking God - they began to forsake the priests and the Levites. They were warned against this. Deut. 12:19. It is a sign religion is going to decay when good ministers are neglected. And are at a loss of livelihood. Christian people do not provide for the livelihood of Godly ministers - then it is a sign that religion is going to decay. In other words, this man came by. Micah made a bargain with him.

And he said that he would invite him in and offer him the opportunity of this service.

V. 9-10 - He said you will get bread, and he brought him into his family. And he promised him good treatment. He did not ask him about his past service. And he allows him meat, drink, clothes, and a suit to wear. And he also says that he will receive 10 shekels a year. A very poor salary as compared to what God had provided for the Levites.

Now the Levite settlement with him, V. 11 he was content to dwell with man.

For this wage, So Micah, thinking V. 12, that he is a consecrated Levite. He has his building, his everything organized.

V. 13 - Micah was satisfied. Now know I that the Lord will do me good. I will gain reputation among my neighbors. For he would share in the profit of the altar and that God would bless him.

He thought it was a sign of God's favor to him. And his images, that this man be employed. He thought not of the error of his priesthood. Many deceive themselves into a good opinion of their state of reformation. They think that they are as good as they should be.

He felt that God would do good to him. He thought that having a Levite in his house entitled him to divine faith. And so his carnal heart was built up. Believing that these external favors would come his way.

However, this is a sure sign that the house of God is in ruins. When the professed servants of God are seeking work at the hands of men. In other words, this was the poorest guide under Heaven. He that trusts in his own heart is a fool. And what Micah was setting up was a man-made religion. And it was idolatry.

II. IT GIVES SATAN A CHANCE TO DOMINATE LIFE.

Doing their own thing, caused Micah not only to enter into idolatry, it brought his entire life under the domination of Satan. Micah departed from this rule broadly in making a graven image. That was expressly forbidden in solemn language at Sinai - Exodus 20:4. And which a heavy curse had been pronounced against it in Deut. 27:15. He erred by following the thoughts of his own heart. Without asking

counsel at the mouth of the Lord.

For a man to try to carve it out a religion for himself, it is different from what God has appointed. It is in itself, an act of fear religion. That is why it is very dangerous and damaging today for people to follow man-made religions. The only way I know to test your religion is by the Bible. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Now every little thing that is set up in somebody's home as a study group, or as a church, or every little thing that comes off of the printing press that has the name of religion on it, is not necessarily of the Lord. And Satan may get a chance to dominate a person's life through this. Micah first appointed his son and afterwards appointed a Levite, to be the priest. Now, none of these were in God's plan. His son, nor the Levite, because the office of priest was to be filled by the sons of Aaron. And they were the only ones that could execute lawfully the duties of that office. Now the place that he had designated for worship was unlawful also. His own dwelling, his house. That was not an acceptable place for public worship. Because the accepted place was at Shiloh where the ark was.

And it was presumptuous on his part and irreverent to try to set up a place of worship in his own home when God had already established a place of worship.

Now it was for a man to tell God that he would take the matter of his worship into his own hands and decide for himself - when, where, and how he would discharge his religious obligations.

It was an express refusal to accept the mode of worship already appointed by God and exhibited at Shiloh. At no great distance from where Micah lived.

When God had already spoken, it is for every right hearted worshipper to obey. To bring in another mode, to bring in a modification, to bring in something they say

fits in the times. It is most irreverent. It is a misrepresentation of all that God is. And it is wickedness in the heart of them that do this.

And if you give Satan a chance when you do your thing, your life will come under the domination of Satan. It is sad today, but in three areas of our world, and of our society - Satan has domination. First, in the press. Second, in business, and Third, in politics.

Isn't it tragic today that in the press, that the Devil comes to the editor of a great journal or a great newspaper, who has the power and ability to multiply his influence in a marvelous fashion.

But what is the editor's text today. His text is this: "give the people what they want." It seems possible, it seems reasonable, and he hesitates about being truthful and reasonable with his message. He gives the people what they want. And the press must become a mirror of the age. And must renounce leadership. Leadership gives the people what they ought to have.

James Russell Lowell said concerning the modern newspaper, what a pulpit the editor daily mounts - having within reach of his voice 50,000 auditors and not a single nodder among them. What a Bible, upon whose pages the pen of sunshine, or destroying fire the inspired present is even now writing the annuals of God.

Now if the press is going to be an instrument of the most high, instead of an instrument of the Devil, it must begin to awaken the moral responsibility of people.

I think also, the Devil dominates in business - just as much as he does in the home, the store, the market place, in the office, and in the big industrial corporations. His text in business, in the world, is this -- do not mix religion

and business. Another thing in business that reads that is in fashion is this, ("do the other fellow before he does you".)

It's the Devil's business when we accept that definition of business. We are to use our material resources for self and not for the benefit of mankind. Therefore, business must bring back some moral and ethical significance if it is to do God's thing and not it's own thing.

Now the third area is in politics. I think the Devil gets into legislative halls. He puts on the robe of a politician and calls himself a statesmen. My dear friends, you know it is serious business. You know government is the function of man. And it is administered in the name of God for the good of man.

Now some years ago, the speeches in Congress of the United States, were uttered as idealism. The great Senate of the United States, some of the speeches were put out in school books and thrilled and stirred the hearts - and held students spell bound. By the mighty moral enthusiasm. And some of the utterances were carried around the world.

But today, the people perish when they have no vision.

Now if I might illustrate what I am talking about - with an illustration that came out in the Virginian Pilot, March 18th, last Monday, in the morning. There was a front page story of Senator - of a Representative of Wilbur D. Mills, Dem. from Ark. The big headline - Nixon out by November., Mills says. Now the article went on to talk about how that Mills who is very important up in Washington, appeared on a program on C. B. S. T. V. - Faces The Nation. And of course he answered all kinds of questions. Now in this article, it states that he was asked the question about the President's taxes, and the Senator said, as he quoted - he said Senator Long of La.

had said that the President's taxes would go up as high as \$350,000.

Now this was said before the nation. Now further down in that article as the reporter Tim O'Brien, the Washington Post News Service, in writing this up got in touch with Senator Long - and Long who is in charge with the investigation of the taxes and extra taxes of the president. The years 1969-1972. Made this statement - I have never attempted to fix a figure on the amount of extra taxes the President may owe. I have only said that there will be a substantial amount of tax to be paid and this will be up to the IRS and we have found no proof of fraud on the part of the President. He says that anyone who fixes a figure on the President's extra taxes is indulging in guess work. Therefore it seems to me that there are more conflicts than one within just one article in the press. And of course, as they were quoting one of the leading representatives of our government - and who was pressing for this action against the President. What I am saying is, when you do your own thing like that, you will give Satan a chance to dominate all of life. And this is happening.

I would suggest when the press, the politics, and business do their thing - without concern for morals, ethics, they certainly give a chance for the domination of evil.

III. IT RESULTS IN DANGEROUS DECEPTION.

Doing your thing, doing your thing results in dangerous deception. To cast off the authority of the Creator entirely and to frame your own religious ideas is a misrepresentation of all that God is, without a single exception. This is very deceitful and very dangerous. Because it makes a great deal to do with the external ceremonies and the observances. Micah gave himself a great deal of trouble with the

externals. But we do not find evidence to prove that he had any real love for God. Or of they was any delight in communion with God in his heart. This pretense as seen in many cases. Hosea 7:14, Mal. 3:14, Matt. 6:5,7,16, I Kings 18:26. But think of Mary sitting at the feet of Jesus listening with breathless attention to his gracious words. View the Publican as he smites his breast, feeling unworthy. Listen to the invalid saying if I could just but touch him.

Micah had a whole housefull of religion. He had many Gods in it. Was he not a Pharisee. He had a high profession of religion. He was not right at any one point. He was not right when he hired the Levite. He was not right to have a sanctuary of God in his own private home. It was not right for him having images representing God. It was not right for anyone to carve out his own religion. In truth he was wrong, all over.

It is tragic that this unGodly man thinking himself a Christian. And there are people that think some little short formal prayer is all they need each day. No need to attend divine services now and then. Or give a coin for a religious purpose once in awhile. Or to have a fairly good reputation for good morality. They feel this is proof enough that they ought to be on the Christian list. But they are strangers to the power of religion. They have no experience. They have no heart that is warmed with the love of Christ.

The Bible says, as it tells the story of Absalom. He was a young man who went about doing his own thing. He had long hair. He rebelled against his father. He ran away from home. He was part of the establishment. But he was opposed to it. He hated the military. He tried to start a revolution. But he ended up hung up by his long hair in an oak tree. Now there was never a human father who loved his son more than David loved Absalom. He tried to communicate with him but he wouldn't listen.

You remember that Jesus told about that boy who went off into a far country. He said I want to do my own thing. It is part of the restlessness of our times. Of course, there comes a day when a youth is supposed to leave home. When he gets married, the Bible command, therefore should a man leave his father and his mother and shall cleave unto his wife. And they shall be one flesh. To be sure, a young person is supposed to leave home when he gets married and assumes the responsibility for a family. But the boy that Jesus talked about ^{like} Absalom left home for excitement and pleasure. And there are (boys and girls) today who leave home for excitement and pleasure. They hope to find happiness. But they discover frustration and emptiness. There are young girls in this big city who cry themselves to sleep at night wishing they could swallow their pride, go back home to their father and mother. There are many families in which (boys and girls) have left with no forwarding address. Like David, they weep for their prodigal every day.

Now Absalom was doing his own thing. We read about him going on the top of a house, and engaging in public immorality with (10 women) in the sight of all Israel. 2 Sam. 16:22. There seems to be no sense of shame in this young man and his immoral display. He had content for God, for God's law. And there are few outside of those who put their faith in Jesus Christ and have his spiritual resources at their command that can resist the compelling power, that is within and on the outside, in this day - to do their own thing. They shun the very appearance of evil.

There can be but (one result), when people do their own thing, and every man does that which is right in his own eyes. That is (sin) And the book of Romans analyzes this for us - the wickedness of a man. There is none righteous, no not one. Rom. 3:10.

There is none that understandeth - V. 11. That is that is in tune with God's understanding of things. There is none that seeketh after God. And is now righteous. And that is what is wrong with man. By choice he goes this way.

They are all gone out of their way - V. 12. They have drifted away by choice.

They are all together become unprofitable, to God, and there is none that doeth good - no not one. Men do not think this is so. That men do good in some respects when they do what is right in their own eyes. Their throat is an open sepulcher - V. 13. Like a grave, with dead bones in it and a decayed body. With their tongues they use deceit. Lying comes naturally with them. Children lie as soon as they can talk. Deceit is in part of even the youngest child.

The poison of asp is under their lips. V. 13. Their tongue burns and hurts with poison.

Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness - V. 14.

And out of the abundance of the heart, the man speaketh.

Their feet is swift to shed blood.

Cain was simply a natural man, and he killed his brother.

Destruction and misery are in their way. There is no going up - always going down. And the way of peace they had not known- V. 17.

There is no fear of God before their eyes - V. 18.

Now there are several things here - there are (no exceptions) God counts everybody the same. He says again and again - all, are under sin. All are gone away out of the way. All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. Likewise he says, none - none are righteous. None understand. None seeketh after God. Do good - or does good. And then God cries out - no, not one.

Micah should have known the (first commandment). Thou shalt have no other Gods before me. He did not love God with all his heart, mind, soul, and strength.

And neither do you) or some of those that I am preaching to tonight. Now there may be people that would say tonight - I have tried to live up to the Ten Commandments.

(But have you?) You say I have never killed anybody - but have you ever hated anybody. You say I have never committed adultery, but have you ever looked on a woman to lust after her. The Scripture says you have committed adultery already in your heart. God knows your heart.

Police men - shot in Chesapeake

Crime increases because men do their thing. There is more crime and criminals than there are policemen. It is a bigger business than the railroad, agriculture, and laws multiply - taxes increase and our reforms in law. But all the wickedness springs from the human heart because man is a sinner and the world is full of this. And it continues because human hearts are blighted.

It brings back an illustration at (Olton, Texas) years ago in a revival - 200-300 people in a Morning Service and they were having testimonies and confessing their sins. For two hours men and women confessed to cursing and drinking, and dancing, and grudges, their neglect of duty - and in the midst of the confession a man arose and trembling to his feet, and he said I have been guilty of all the sins that other people have mentioned. I curse, I live in sin. But the meanest thing I ever did in all my life, until 3 o'clock this morning (I rejected Jesus Christ.) I did not surrender to him, nor love him, nor serve him - and that was my greatest sin. He was exactly right. (Only a rotten heart full of sin and love for sin can keep anybody away from Jesus Christ.) The person who wants to do his own thing. Today you are not a Christian if you did not come to Jesus, the first time you heard of his love and his message - your heart is black with sin. You love sin, you chose sin. And you deliberately turn your wicked heart away from the light of God, away from truth, away from righteousness to walk in darkness. Nothing in the world shows a wicked heart like staying away from Jesus. Now this is not the preacher's opinion.

But this is the plain teaching of Jesus. And this is the condemnation that light has come into the world and men love darkness rather than light. Because of evil, and everyone that doeth evil hateth the light. Neither cometh to the light - lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, and his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God. John 3:19-20. No man can serve two masters for either he will hate the one and love the other. Or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. There is no half way ground. If you do not love Jesus and trust and serve him, then you hate him, and despise him. And that is the plain word of God. Nothing in the world proves that you are a sinner so forcefully as the fact that you do not trust Jesus and obey him with all of your life.

A column in a newspaper had an (ad) in it - Emma come home, all is forgiven,
Mother is sick and wants to see you.

I do not know what wayward girl had broken her mother's and father's heart. But I just know that the anxious loving hearts of her parents reached out through the great city begging her to return, to accept the forgiveness which was already offered before she even asked for it.

Think tonight, as in the past weeks, the Hearst family have been pleading and working, and trying to get their kidnapped daughter released. This is sin because (every man is doing his thing) That little army or whatever it is believes they are doing their thing. Now I close with this illustration about the mother who put the wash out on the line. It looked white. They left it over night and for got it. He slept in the loft. The next morning it had snowed. The barn was covered, the cedar trees bending with snow, and the wash did not look so white. What had happened.

Dr. Martin

If you put your life up besides Christ, you will see the difference. Now if

you have been insisting upon doing your thing, why not look at something that is what, that is perfect. Christ is perfect. Now Micah in doing his thing certainly resulted into dangerous deception because it meant in the downfall of his life. Because he was dominated by Satan. God says tonight, Isa. 1:18 - pointing his finger at you, come now, and let us reason together - saith the Lord. Thou your sins be as scarlot, they shall be as white as snow. Though they be red like snow, they shall be as wool. Have you ever wondered what it would be like to have a clean life, as white as snow. Then here is your opportunity. Instead of doing that which is right in your own eyes, make a decision tonight to do that which is right only in the eyes of God.