

The Law of Love is Much More Difficult

Sixth Week of Ordinary Time – February 12, 2017 – Matthew 5: 17-37

Jesus gives us insight into the commandments as the bedrock of his new law of love. “Jesus said to his disciples: “Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets. I have come not to abolish but to fulfill.” The difference lies in the truth that Jesus is the fulfillment of God’s plan to reestablish a relationship with humanity. This relationship encompasses both the Law of Judaism and the Law of Love which Jesus brings to the world.

Matthew, the gospel writer, is proclaiming that Jesus is the true Jewish teacher of the Law. Matthew would have been writing mostly to Jewish converts, helping them to understand that both the old law and new are one. “Amen, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or the smallest part of a letter will pass from the law until all things have taken place.” For Jesus the Law will not pass away until he has fulfilled his mission at the end of time.

For now, humanity is called to embrace a fuller and expanded interpretation of this Law. “You have heard that it was said to your ancestors, ‘*You shall not kill; and whoever kills will be liable to judgement.*’ But I say to you, whoever is angry with his brother will be liable to judgement...” Jesus has put a twist on the foundational core of the commandments. No longer are they to be met at a minimal level. Rather, they are now to be understood as radiating out of love for God and other people.

This law of love is far more difficult to obey and live. We know that one might not kill their neighbor but now hating that person is also in opposition to the new law which Jesus says is a nonnegotiable. Jesus’ emphasis on the commandment against adultery broadens to include attitude and interior motive towards another person. The Law of Love has no room for evil intentionality. The grounding of all the commandments rests in the love of God. It also rests in the dignity of the person which Jesus is saying can not to be an object for our own desire or hate. The human person is valued by God. We are challenged to love God and neighbor in the same purposeful way.

As we look at the Ten Commandments, we might consider them this week in the light of the Law of Love. The first three commandments rest on our relationship with God. The next three rest on the relationship with those we love. The last four rest in our relationship with the rest of the world. How might our life change if we embrace the commandments as a way to better love, first God and then the rest of humanity as well as all of creation? Jesus is teaching us this week that out of love comes God’s grace and help. Love is still sometimes the most difficult path to choose.

Blessings!


Sue Schettler, PLC

**Questions of
the Week**
February 12,
2017



How is Jesus'
Law of Love
lived out in
your life?



St. John the Baptist
6th Week of Ordinary Time
February 12, 2017

Everyday Disciple

Readings for the Week of February 12, 2017

Sunday

Sir 15:15-20/Ps 119:1-2, 4-5, 17-18, 33-34/1 Cor 2:6-10/Mt 5:17-37
or 5:20-22a, 27-28, 33-34a, 37

Monday

Gn 4:1-15, 25/Ps 50:1, 8, 16bc-17, 20-21/Mk 8:11-13

Tuesday

Gn 6:5-8; 7:1-5, 10/Ps 29:1a, 2, 3ac-4, 3b, 9c-10/Mk 8:14-21

Wednesday

Gn 8:6-13, 20-22/Ps 116:12-15, 18-19/Mk 8:22-26

Thursday

Gn 9:1-13/Ps 102:16-21, 29, 22-23/Mk 8:27-33

Friday

Gn 11:1-9/Ps 33:10-15/Mk 8:34--9:1

Saturday

Heb 11:1-7/Ps 145:2-5, 10-11/Mk 9:2-13

Next Sunday

Lv 19:1-2, 17-18/Ps 103:1-4, 8, 10, 12-13/1 Cor 3:16-23/Mt 5:38-48