If you choose…you can keep The Commandments. OT.YrA.6Sun

They will save you.

This is the opening line of our First Reading from the Book of Sirach

that points to the Gospel today

about observing the Commandments.

Today's Gospel from Matthew emphasizes the relationship

between Jewish Law (The Old Testament) and the teaching of Jesus.

The Old Testament simply says… do this or do that.

Jesus amplifies on that and says if you do this or if you do that

you will then have the Kingdom of God.

Matthew reassures his Jewish readers that Jesus has not come

to abolish the Laws of God but to fulfill them.

In other words, the Old Testament Law is good but it is a minimum.

Good enough isn't good enough.

Jesus wants us to go deeper into ourselves

to understand <u>How</u> we obey the Law.

To be a Disciple of Jesus the foundation of our lives must be Love.

Love of God. Love of one another.

Love and you will always obey the Law.

Let's look deeper into what Jesus is teaching today.

First, understand that this is still the Sermon on the Mount.

2 Sundays ago we listened to the Beatitudes

listed in the Sermon on the Mount.

Blessed are the meek, the merciful, the peacemakers.

Until Jesus came along the Law looked like,

thou shalt not do this. Thou shalt not do that.

Or, thou shalt do this. Thou shalt honor the Law.

But Jesus is saying, this is how you honor the Law,

by listening and doing.

Jesus is saying, Happy are you who tend to the poor.

Happy are the meek who hear me…

for they will have the whole world.

Happy are you that mourn

and hold your neighbor's hand when they are in pain.

Happy are the peacemakers.

These people that do not run from conflict

but actually bring people together…from children to adults.

Last week from the Sermon on the Mount

Jesus taught us to be the Light to the world

so that others may see your good deeds

and glorify your heavenly Father.

That is what the Scripture is saying.

All during the Christmas Season we heard

that a new Light was coming into the world, which was Jesus.

And we are asked to pass that light on.

In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus is saying

that together (Jesus & all of us)

will bring a new Light and Hope to the world.

Today in our Gospel Jesus teaches us

how we are to obey God's Law.

And, Jesus gives us a few examples.

The first example from the Old Testament Law is Do Not Kill.

But Jesus says we must not even get angry

or use insulting words with others.

Our Gospel says that whoever says to another, "You Fool",

will be liable to fiery gehenna.

What Jesus is saying is that must deeply respect the dignity

and right of every person who is unconditionally loved by God.

We may disapprove of the deed, but we must love the person.

Jesus also connects the Old Testament Law with the here and now,

with the altar we have right here before us.

Jesus is saying life and worship cannot be separated.

We all come to the altar to receive the Eucharist, right?

But right before we come to this point at the altar

we are asked to give a Sign of Peace.

That is what Jesus is teaching us in this Scripture.

Go first and reconcile with your neighbor

and then come and offer your gift.

That is the meaning of the Sign of Peace

which we share with others before we share in the Eucharist.

It is not just a handshake and a hug.

It is a reconciliation with your neighbor.

How often do we piously go to Mass

when we have deeply hurt another person?

We cannot say we love Jesus if we are hurting others.

The second example of how we are to obey God's Law is adultery.

Jesus moves us from the external act of adultery

to the interior thought of adultery.

He tells us not to even think about the it.

When we internally think of adultery,

we are objectifying another person

for our own pleasure.

According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church,

"Sin is an offense against or disobedience to God's Commandments,

preferring to do our own will rather than the Will of God."

Dynamic Disciples of Jesus love God,

love Jesus, love their neighbor.

Dynamic Disciples work with Jesus

to build the Kingdom of God.

Dynamic Disciples work to restore God's peace

that was intended on the first day of Creation.

God said, "Let there be light, and there was light."

Today that light is you doing the small gestures of Love every day.

It is your choice to keep the commandments as Jesus teaches us.

Today they will save you.