November 1 Worship
Readers- Deb Dancause

Announcements/Joys

Time Of Quiet Meditation- *"But this command I gave them, 'Obey my voice, and I will be your God, and you shall be my people; and walk in all the way that I command you, that it may be well with you."* Jeremiah 7:23

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Opening Scripture- Psalm 107:1-7(page 526)

Opening Chorus- 513- Lord, Listen To Your Children Praying

Responsive Call To Worship-
Leader: When we stand at the edge of fear and worry,
People: God invites us to step into the waters of faith and trust.
Leader: When we stand at the edge of the world's pain and need,
People: Jesus invites us to step into the land of humble service.
Leader: When we stand at the edge of our hunger and thirst:
People: The Spirit invites us to sit at the table of grace.

Hymn of Praise- 599- Lead On O King Eternal

Unison Prayer/Lord's Prayer- God, our guide and our protector, as we gather today in your holy house, open our minds and souls and hearts, that we may be inclined to hear the gentle direction of your spirit in our lives. Help us follow you as you lead us to the land you have created for us, where we may dwell with you and in you. We pray as Jesus taught, saying....*Lord's Prayer....*
"Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen."

Gloria Patri- Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be. World without end. Amen, Amen.

Old Testament Scripture- Psalm 43(page 488)

Special Music-

Gospel Scripture- Matthew 23:1-12(page 857-858)

Reception of New Members- Mary Lou Bessette, Jean Mollica Smith

Children's Time/Echo Prayer/Passing of the Peace

Hymn- 406- O Master Let Me Walk With Thee

New Testament Scripture- 1 Thessalonians 2:9-13(page 1029)

Message

"Do What I Say, Not What I Do"

I can recall my father telling me; "Do what I say, not what I do" on more than one occasion. The occasion that sticks in my mind the most is when he caught me smoking a cigarette that I had take from his pack. When he began to tell me that it was wrong, I pointed out to him that he smoked so what was the big deal. He very emphatically told me that it was because he said so and not to do as he did. I thought that it was hypocritical of him to expect me to not smoke while he was doing right in front of me. I do think that we all have said much the same thing to our kids at one time or another and, yes, it is hypocritical. It has taken me years to realize that what I considered hypocritical was actually a warning not to do what he had done. After many years of smoking, I realized that it was much harder quitting cigarettes than I thought, and my father had not yet found the strength to quit. We all now know that tobacco is one of the most addictive substances known.

Being human, we oftentimes do things that are not really good for us. We want to stop but, well, I don't have to tell you that we find it hard. Telling someone to not do what we are doing is just warning them that it can be detrimental even as we do it. We even find it hard to tell someone that something is harming us even as we do it. There are any number of things we do that are potentially harmful but we continue to do them. Perhaps they are habits or maybe they are actually addictive. When we tell others not to do them we are trying, in our own way, to help them not criticize them. This is something that has taken me years to understand. My father wasn't telling me not to because he wanted to punish me, he was trying to save me from making his mistakes.

There are those, however, who make rules or laws that they will not and do not follow. Given power, some people make decisions that affect others while not obeying their own rules. Some call this; "Rules for thee, not for me." This is where

hypocrisy becomes reality. There is a condition that is more common than we may think among human beings. For some, power becomes like a drug in that the more we have it, the more we abuse it. Having control over others can be intoxicating and the more power they have, the more they want. We see this in all walks of life and it can affect almost anyone.

This is what Jesus was referring to in today's gospel message. He was telling those who were listening that they should follow the teachings of those in power in the synagogues and temples but not to live as they lived. While they were preaching what was correct, they were not living what they taught. Jesus was calling them out, not for their words but for their actions. Jesus was telling His disciples, and us, that it was not the Law that was wrong, it was those who said one thing but did another that was wrong.

When we study the Old Testament books that contain the "Laws of Moses," we discover rules and laws that seem to overwhelm our sense of what is right or wrong. How in the world are we supposed to live up to what they say? There are 613 commandments in the first five books of the Bible. These books are called the Pentateuch, or the Laws of Moses. These laws cover various aspects of life, including moral conduct, religious obligations, and civil justice. Understanding these laws helps us grasp God's holiness and guidelines for a righteous life. These laws can be classified primarily into three categories: ceremonial, moral, and civil laws. Ceremonial laws relate to worship practices, rituals, and religious festivals. They illustrate how the Israelites were to honor God during community worship. The moral laws, which include the foundational Ten Commandments, outline ethical behavior and interpersonal conduct. They remain relevant for guiding Christian living even today. Civil laws address societal order and justice, providing regulations for community life among the Israelites. While Christians are not bound to follow these civil laws, their principles inform justice and fairness.

Why did God give these commandments? Understanding the purpose behind the laws offers deeper insight into His nature and our relationship with Him. The laws reflect God's holiness and justice. They set a standard for His people, demonstrating the importance of purity and righteousness. When we observe God's commands, we reveal His character to the world. Christians may wonder whether all laws apply today. The New Testament clarifies this distinction. Jesus, in fulfilling the law, emphasized the most critical aspects of God's commandments: loving God and loving others. In Matthew 5:17, Jesus states, "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them." His life and sacrifice fulfilled the requirements of the law.

Jesus is not telling us to ignore the laws, He is letting us know that even though the laws are difficult to follow at best, it is through Christ, whose sacrifice fulfills

all the laws that we may find salvation. He breaks the 613 laws down into 2 main laws; “Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one; 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. The second is this, you shall love your neighbor as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these.”(Mark 12:29-31)

If we do as Jesus commands us to do, we will never have to worry about doing what anyone says when we do what Jesus does. Praise Be to God. Amen.

Prayers of the People- Jesus, teacher and Lord, when we hear your criticism of the behavior of the scribes and the Pharisees in the gospel today, we wonder what has changed. People still place unwarranted burdens on others, still demand preferential treatment, still abuse positions of leadership. We are ashamed to confess that this does not only happen in society at large, it happens also within us. Forgive our participation in practices which inflate our egos at the expense of others. Jesus, forgive us when we parade our piety and expect favored treatment, forgetting that you emptied yourself of power so that you could be the servant and Savior of all. Forgive us when we care more for impressive outward appearances rather than inner dispositions shaped by tolerance and love. Jesus, forgive us for any behavior which is experienced or perceived as hypocritical, any actions which lack integrity and justice. Renew and refresh us with your gentle and selfless Spirit, Lord, so that we know what it is to be your followers not only in name, but in reality. In the name of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Amen

Communion Hymn- 374- Here, O My Lord, I See Thee

Thanksgiving Prayer- Dear Father, we are truly grateful for Your Son, Jesus Christ, and His sacrifice on the cross. As we partake in this holy communion, we thank You for the gift of salvation and the love that s, the Lord is one; and you surrounds us. May this bread and wine nourish our spirits and strengthen our faith. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Closing Hymn- 553- Just A Closer Walk With Thee

Benediction- Go now, in the freedom of the gospel of Christ. Encourage one another to lead lives worthy of God and walk together in service and humility. Let your words and your lives be one in Christ. And may the God of lasting love open the way before you; May Jesus the Messiah be your one instructor; And may the Holy Spirit lead you on into the promised land of God’s kingdom and glory. We go in peace to love and serve the Lord, In the name of Christ. Amen.

***Church Covenant-** "We covenant with the Lord and with one another to bind ourselves in the presence of God to work together in His holy ways. We will strive to be doers of the Word and not hearers only, to be firm in the faith, quickened in hope, and constant in charity. And, we will consecrate our time, talent, substance, and influence as heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ."

****Welcome-** We welcome you with joy in the common life of this church. We promise you our friendship and prayers as we share the hopes and labors of the church of Jesus Christ. By the power of the Holy Spirit may we continue to grow together in God's knowledge and love and be witnesses of our risen Savior.