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If you want to get to heaven you have to be more faithful than so-called religious teachers who claim to be doing what God requires...they are more concerned about outward appearance.

Jesus tells his disciples they have to be more righteous than the Pharisees...the religious lawyers people looked up to. The word *righteous* comes from the Modern English *rightwise...or rightways...walking in the right way...being faithful*.

Faithfulness is more than outward appearance or rigid compliance to a set of rules and regulations. If we are truly doing what God requires of us...faithfulness compels us to do everything we can to be reconciled to those with whom we are in disagreement...before it's too late...especially when it comes to anger.

The Sixth Commandment states it is against God's law to murder another human being. The Pharisees applied a literalistic interpretation to the Commandment...murder was the unlawful premeditated act of killing another human being without just cause or reason.

Jesus interprets the Sixth Commandment to include more than just the horrific crime of murdering another human being. Anger, hatred, maliciousness, slander, mean-spiritedness, and unwillingness to forgive are just as deadly in God's eyes as shooting someone to get rid of them. When we say something nasty to or about someone we murder them in our heart.

The Great Commandment heard at the beginning of every Mass summarizes the Ten Commandments: Love God above all else; and love others in the same way we want to be loved. When we come to Mass with anger or hatred in our hearts we are in the danger zone and about to commit murder in spirit. Time to do more than just ask God to forgive us for having bad thoughts.

When we are angry with someone without a good reason or act badly toward someone we are really saying, "You are bothering us and

we are going to treat you as if you are dead". When we allow anger to get out of control it can lead to outright hatred.

Hate is the opposite of what Christians are called to do...LOVE. Hate and love are not compatible with each other. Love means doing what's in the best interest of others. Hate isn't in their best interest...and it certainly isn't in ours. And there is never a time when it is OK for us to hate another person!

Jesus never says don't get angry; he says don't angry without a just cause, without a good reason. And then do something to try to alleviate the anger before it consumes us. And anger left unchecked will eat up every part of our being...mind, body and soul.

Is there ever a time when it is OK for us to get angry at someone? Yes, but only if we act out of LOVE and our intent is to try to get someone to change their unhealthy and dark actions...to get them back walking the *rightway*. Our goal must always be to make things better.

In the Gospel Jesus tells us when we are about to offer a gift at the altar and remember we are angry with someone...a friend...a member of our family...someone in church...we should first go reconcile with that person...then come back and make our offering.

The General Confession at every Mass is our opportunity to examine our consciences to make certain our hearts, minds, and souls, are in love and charity with our neighbors. We must make this a personal confession, before we presume to receive the Body and Blood of Jesus in the Sacrament of the Altar. Are we angry with someone for no reason or some petty reason? Now is the time to get rid of that anger...and replace it with love...try to make things right again.

Reconciliation with others can only come from the heart and a real desire to be *righteous...faithful...to what God requires*. We have to make the effort at reconciliation even if the other person resists our efforts. And we need to make the effort now before it's too late.

And we should always remind ourselves they are the Ten Commandments...not the ten suggestions!

