

Subject: God's Moral Law – The Sixth Commandment

Scripture: Exodus 20:1-13

This is the one commandment that most people probably think they have kept. They say they haven't murdered anybody. But there is more to this commandment than you might think. First, I want us to think about what is not covered by this command.

I. THE KILLING THAT GOD APPROVES

- A. Killing animals – God gave permission to kill animals for food. God instructed His people to offer animal sacrifices.

Exodus 20:24 *An altar of earth thou shalt make unto me, and shalt sacrifice thereon thy burnt offerings, and thy peace offerings, thy sheep, and thine oxen.*

- B. Killing in self-defense

Exodus 22:2 *If a thief be found breaking up, and be smitten that he die, there shall no blood be shed for him. If someone is breaking into your house to steal your property or to hurt you, you have a right to hurt or kill him to protect yourself.*

- C. Killing in war

1 Samuel 15:3 *Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass.*

- D. Killing in capital punishment – The Bible says that anyone who deliberately takes a life should forfeit his own.

Genesis 9:6 *Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man.*

Exodus 21:12 *He that smiteth a man, so that he die, shall be surely put to death.*

Exodus 21:15 *And he that smiteth his father, or his mother, shall be surely put to death.*

Exodus 21:17 *And he that curseth his father, or his mother, shall surely be put to death.*

The seriousness of the crime is shown in the punishment it deserves. There has been some debate about the death penalty and whether a Christian ought to support it. God instituted the death penalty. Some people claim that capital punishment does not deter crime. That's not true. God approves capital punishment.

Romans 13:3-4³ *For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same:*⁴ *For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.*

The Sixth Commandment literally in the Hebrew says, "Thou shalt not murder."

II. THE KILLING THAT GOD FORBIDS

- A. Intentional killing

- 1) Murder – On average, about 60 people are murdered every day in the U.S. FBI statistics show that roughly 20,000 murders take place every year. After Cain murdered his brother Abel, God confronted him with the crime.
***Genesis 4:10** And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground.*

 - 2) Suicide – No one has a right to take his own life. Life is a gift from God and no one has the right to take it. The most prominent suicide in the Old Testament was King Saul. The most prominent suicide in the New Testament was Judas. You know what kind of men they were. Is it possible for a Christian to take his own life? Yes it is possible, but it is never God's will.

 - 3) Abortion – Thousands of unborn babies are killed each year inside their mother. This is a crime against human life and a sin against God. In Proverbs 6, God reveals a list of things He hates, one of which is “hands that shed innocent blood.” The government will protect some animals, but it won't protect precious babies inside their mother. When does life begin?
***Jeremiah 1:5** Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.*

 - 4) Euthanasia (mercy-killing) – Most of us remember the name of Jack Kevorkian, known as Dr. Death. He performed many assisted suicides, claiming that he was doing these people a great favor. He was trying to play God, and that is never right.
- B. Indirect killing – Many who would not be guilty of intentional killing are guilty of indirect killing. This is causing someone else's life to be shortened by the things they are doing.
- 1) Killing by degrees – For example, this takes place when an unruly child puts his parents in an early grave because of stress and worry. Two sons came home drunk one night. The father met them when they got home. He put two pistols on the kitchen counter and said, “Why don't you boys go upstairs and shoot your mother. What you are doing is killing her little by little.”

 - 2) Killing by influence – An example of this are those associated with the alcohol industry. When someone is drinking, we say he is “intoxicated.” If someone is intoxicated, he is poisoned. To enable someone to do that is a sin.
***Habakkuk 2:15** Woe unto him that giveth his neighbor drink, that putteth thy bottle to him, and maketh him drunken also, that thou mayest look on their nakedness!* Another example are those involved with the sales and distribution of illegal drugs. ***Galatians 6:7-8**⁷ Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.⁸ For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting.*

 - 3) Killing by silence – If you know that someone is going to be murdered it is wrong to just stand by and do nothing. ***Proverbs 24:11-12**¹¹ If thou forbear to deliver them that are drawn unto death, and those that are ready to be slain;¹² If thou sayest, Behold, we knew it not; doth not he that pondereth the heart*

*consider it? and he that keepeth thy soul, doth not he know it? and shall not he render to every man according to his works? The Bible says that we have guilt on our hands if we stand by and do nothing to prevent someone's eternal death. **Ezekiel 3:18** When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand.*

C. Invisible killing – This is a type of killing that no one else sees, but God writes it down in His book as murder.

- 1) Character assassination – This is a way to kill someone with words, slander, lies. To ruin someone's name is, in effect, to kill him.
- 2) Murder of the soul

More people are guilty of this kind of murder than you think. Think of Satan himself. John 8:44 says “he was a murderer from the beginning.” He didn't go around killing people, but by tempting Adam and Eve, he caused spiritual death and physical death to come on the whole human race. If people do not repent of their sins and receive Christ as Savior, they will suffer eternal death, separation from God in the lake of fire. How could a person be guilty of murdering someone's soul? It can happen in the home when ungodly parents never teach their children about the Lord and never take them to church. Their children grow up and die without Christ. Those parents will be guilty of soul murder. It can happen in school. A teacher may corrupt the thinking of his students by teaching them to reject the Bible and the Christian faith. They are marked for life and they die without Christ. Their blood will be on his hands. It can even happen in church. A liberal, ungodly preacher or teacher replaces the truth of God's Word with false teaching. The souls who come under the influence of that kind of teaching have been murdered.

- 3) Hate in the heart

Matthew 5:21-22 ²¹ *Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment:* ²² *But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca (a term of contempt), shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.* Hate is a spirit or attitude of murder. You don't have to shoot a man to kill him. You can have murder in your heart, Jesus said so. Some people are full of hate and bitterness. In the eyes of man, they are not guilty of murder because they have shed no blood. But in the sight of God, they are guilty. If the law can prove that someone is planning to assassinate the President, it can prosecute and convict him. But the law is limited in its search for evidence. It can't search what a man thinks, but God's law goes deeper. His moral law searches the heart and sees evil thoughts. **1 John 3:15** *Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.* You'll never be convicted in a human court for this, but in God's eyes it is murder.

God values life and Jesus Christ came to give life. **John 10:10** *The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.*