

The TENDER Commandments  
Exodus 20:13 6th Commandment

WELCOME: THE GREAT LIE FROM THE MOUTHS OF PARENTS

“Sticks and stones may break my bones but words can never hurt me.”

Oh yes they can, and in fact they are the seeds of murder.

INTRODUCTION

So today we come to a commandment where we probably think we can breathe a bit easier, right? After all, we're not murderers. That is the commandment for this morning. It is short and simple-

Ex 20:13 Do not commit murder.

We are free and clear. NOT SO FAST MY FRIEND.

Sufjan Stevens – John Wayne Gacy Jr. – serial killer, who lured victims by dressing as a clown and hid bodies under the floorboards of his home. ... Stevens writes...

And in my best behavior  
I am really just like him  
Look beneath the floor boards  
For the secrets I have hid

David Brooks, NY Times

<https://mobile.nytimes.com/2012/03/20/opinion/brooks-when-the-good-do-bad.html>

*It's always interesting to read the quotations of people who knew a mass murderer before he killed. They usually express complete bafflement that a person who seemed so kind and normal could do something so horrific.*

*David Buss of the University of Texas asked his students if they had ever thought seriously about killing someone, and if so, to write out their homicidal fantasies in an essay. He was astonished to find that 91 percent of the men and 84 percent of the women had detailed, vivid homicidal fantasies. He was even more astonished to learn how many steps some of his students had taken toward carrying them out.*

*These thoughts do not arise from playing violent video games, Buss argues. They occur because ... We're natural-born killers and the real question is not what makes people kill but what prevents them from doing so.*

As we continue, my prayer is that in this series, we'll all understand that

-The Ten Commandments ARE NOT ABOUT WHAT God WANTS FROM US, BUT WHAT HE WANTS FOR US.

-Remember that THE Ten Commandments ARE SOMEONE WE MEET BEFORE THEY ARE SOMETHING WE OBEY.

The context of the Ten Commandments is to be understood as a Covenant commitment ceremony (marriage),

Stipulations Relating To Loving  
LOVE FOR God IS SINGULAR – EXCLUSIVE  
Love for God is SPIRITUAL  
Love for God must be Sincere  
Love for God must be Safe Guarded  
Honor Your Father and Mother

**Exodus 20:13 Do not murder** = lit. “no murder” properly to *dash* in pieces, that is, *kill* (a human being), especially to *murder*: - put to death, kill, (man-) slay (-er), murder

**Matthew 5:20-24**

**You have heard that the ancients were told, 'YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT MURDER' and 'Whoever commits murder shall be liable to the court.'**

**22But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be guilty before the court; and whoever says to his brother, 'You good-for-nothing,' shall be guilty before the supreme court; and whoever says, 'You fool,' shall be guilty *enough to go into the fiery hell.***

**23Therefore if you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, 24leave your offering there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering**

**The bible says that Every HUMAN life is an infinite value! Why?**

“Image of God” – That which makes us different from the plants and animals. That which makes us rational, personal, capable of love and communication, creativity, and the ability to envision that which was not. Maybe the best way to describe this is to think of us as mirrors.

C.S. Lewis – “God makes the feeblest and filthiest of us into dazzling, radiant, immortal creatures, pulsating all through with such love and energy and joy and wisdom as we cannot now imagine. We will become bright stainless mirrors reflecting back to God His own boundless power, delight and goodness. That is what we are in for, nothing less.”

**The bible shows that every person is immortal glory.** Think about who every other person in the pew around you. The reason that Gold was so valued by the Ancients, was not simply because it was scarce, but because it was timeless. IT didn't go away, rust, fall apart, go to pieces.

Listen, friends, billions of years from now, when the mountains out there that look so big are worn down to pebbles, when the Sun which so looks bright, has burned itself out, it's just a little 3' x 5' dim light. Billions of year from now when the mountains are worn down and the Sun is spent, the people that are sitting around you in this pew will still be around. That's the Christian message. The Christian message is that human beings have been given an immortal soul. Nature is mortal. We will outlive her.

Now that is mind numbing and little bit hard to take in, but it has the most absolutely practical ramifications. Neither on an individual basis, nor on a corporate basis, can we write people off by saying, “I / we don't have to love them, to be concerned for them; they aren't worthy.”

**There is nothing as valuable as a human being made in the Image of God.** It changes everything!

That is the foundation of the BIBLICAL understanding of man, morality, and ethics.

To better understand this commandment, let's go back to week 3 of the series and the USES OF THE LAW. Remember the terms – INSIDE OUT and SWINGING DOORS?

Each commandment has an “inside” and “outside” aspect. There are external behaviors that are forbidden – MURDER. And there are InSide issues that are addressed as well.

### OT focus on THE OUTSIDE ISSUES OF killing innocent life

- Murder (does not include self-defense)
- All cruelty and violence
- Abortion
- Suicide and Euthanasia

Historically, those are things that most major religions have seen as wrong. We go against the wisdom of the ages when we begin to move away from the value of human life.

The OT isn't only focused on the external of the command, because its laws also seek to preserve life – Cities of Refuge, gleaning, Jubilee, etc.

### NT focus through Christ on the INSIDE ISSUES OF THE heart

Matt 5

Failure to obey this command can be seen in many ways of relating to others:

Do you do them harm?

Do you encourage someone else to do them harm?

Do you smile when you hear that harm has come to them?

Do you destroy with words, then say, “JUST KIDDING”?

Do you simply not care?

They all come from the same seed. **Murder comes from the same seed as apathy, scorn, indifference, rudeness, anger, resentment, contempt, and bitterness.** The whole tree, even forest is in the acorn.

“What’s the difference between a murderer and a grumpy person. What’s the difference between a murderer and you?”

The answer is: it’s all relative. It’s **not** a qualitative difference, but a **quantitative** difference. Imagine anger, slow distaste and dislike for somebody, that grows in to resentment, that grows into a desire to see somebody else knocked down, and finally grows into murder.

Eph 4 – Don’t let the sun go down on your anger, and do not give the devil an opportunity. What may seem like a small thing – an acorn- is really an opportunity for the EVIL ONE.

What is the difference between you and a murderer? Jesus says the answer is, the, it’s only a quantitative difference. We murder with our hearts and words, while the killer actually acts on it. There IS A FUNCTIONAL DIFFERENCE, but both hearts are rooted in the same thing. It may look like an acorn, but it contains all the seeds of murder.

There was a man named Thomas Watson, who wrote an interesting commentary on the 10 Commandments, and he says “There are 4 ways to break the 6<sup>th</sup> commandment?”

1. You can break the commandment by killing somebody with your hands ( or hiring someone to do it for you)
2. By killing someone with the mind. (Jesus said this...hating is murder with the mind)
3. By killing someone with the tongue, pen, or FB post, or tweet.
4. If you withhold, from someone who is perishing, the help that you had the power in your hand to give.

When you withhold, withdraw, or neglect to give to someone that which is necessary to preserve and strengthen their life

**IMPLICATIONS for respecting life – SWINGING DOORS** – not only what is forbidden, but the opposite is required. Do what you can to promote life and the wellbeing of others. VOV p. 325

**Do you feel the weight of your neighbor's glory?**

NOW LET'S BE PRACTICAL: APPLICATION POINTS

- Do people feel valued by you?
- Do people, having spent time with you, sense that you take them seriously, that you focus on them lovingly, that you are concerned no matter who they are?
- Do people go away feeling that you make them feel significant?

Do you look around at church, school, work, or a social event and say, "look at all these valuable people; I wonder how I can some way show them the honor that is due to them, how can I love them, find out what their needs are."

Do you treat them like that or do you think, "Do I want to be here, are these the kind of people I want to mix with? Are we talking about the kinds of things here that I find interesting? Will these people give me the status, look and reputation I want?"

Do you use people? Or do you love people?

Do you honor people?

Are you feeling the weight of the case for a life of compassion? Every human being is in the image of God. One way to fulfill this positive aspect of the command has been put into our Membership class...IF IT WASN'T THERE when you joined, then please make this your commitment today.

You can promote Harmony By Means Of Giving Only Good Reports.

**Definition Of A Bad Report:** *"It is using words, speech patterns or facial expressions to put someone else in a bad light. It is, intentionally or unintentionally, damaging someone else's reputation with information that does not need to be shared. It is encouraging or spreading discontent or discord among others."* – Bill Gothard

**Regarding Good Reports**

*"In obedience to the Word of God, I hereby commit myself to the goal of giving only good reports. When this is not possible, I purpose to remain silent or to privately go to the person, confirm my goal, and explain the offense that would hinder me from giving a good report. I hereby purpose to approach an offender in a spirit of genuine love having first examined and corrected my own attitudes and actions. Only if I am unable to restore an offender will I share the problem with others according to the principles of Scripture. When I violate this goal, I purpose to ask forgiveness knowing that God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble."*

**PROACTIVE COMPASSION:**

You may not be able to help everybody, but is there one person, near or far away, that you can help directly? Mercy Ministries in WALKER COUNTY, mentoring, or global support ministries like Compassion Int'l.

What would it look like for Highlands to be a life enriching community in Walker County? This is a question to unpack in our small groups.

Implications for from the TENDER Commandments for all of us:

Underneath the TEN commandments runs the current of God's gracious forgiveness.

God gave the Ten Commandments for the equipping and preserving of His People for their mission to be a light to the nations, but He knew they would fail every day. So, the follow up book is Leviticus where God shows the people how to get back into a right relationship with Him- through washings and sacrifices. God provides a way or restoration.

There is a beauty to forgiveness that we would never know had we never sinned. It should NOT BE a license to sin or an excuse for sin, God gives a solution to our sin.

Don't miss the beauty of God's grace and forgiveness, even as He gives us the Law, which is itself a gracious instruction.

But those rituals could never fully atone for our sin.

Thus far, we've seen how each commandment shows us our need for Jesus –as a SAVIOR, not just an example.

He is a savior who empowers His people, and we need his power to live out the positive side of the 6<sup>th</sup> commandment. Doing so will require FORGIVENESS.

God forgives us when we deserve death, so we too can forgive those who we have killed in our hearts and minds. Or the person we simply wish wasn't around or in our life.

WHO IS THAT PERSON IN YOUR LIFE? Someone's face has been popping up.

Compare your attitude to the beauty of God's forgiveness and grace towards us.

God wants to work that same beauty in our lives through forgiveness and the keeping of the 6<sup>th</sup> Commandment.

### Sixth COMMANDMENT AND ROOTS, BRANCHES, FRUIT

The 10c show us the Nature of God, so we can sink our ROOTS INTO HIM

God is a gracious Father, who gave His Son for us. Jesus was murdered by evil men, and God designed it and used it to give us life.

They show how we are to RELATE TO THE OTHER BRANCHES

We can't simply ignore other and think that we're obeying the command to Not Murder. We must be pro-active in promoting life.

They show what the fruit of Loving God an Others looks like.

Being for life is a fruit of a life lived in the Love of God as Father.

ABC'S OF COMING TO FAITH

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