

The Ten: Killing Murder

Dr. John Carmichael

[Exo 20:1-2, 13 NASB95] 1 Then God spoke all these words, saying, 2 "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. ... 13 "You shall not murder.

- 8,000 murders and 100,000 acts of violence. According to the American Psychological Association, before children finish elementary school they have been exposed to those numbers. In a review of 1000 case studies, 980 have established a link between violence on screen and those in real life. Some sociologists have concluded that we have recreated a culture of death.
- Of all the Ten Commandments, most everyone agrees with this 6th one.
- Hebrew, *lo ratzach*, is one of eight words defined to kill. Each has a nuance. This one refers to the unlawful killing of a human being. It forbids the unjust taking of a legally innocent life.
- Biblically there are some situations where taking a life is not only permitted but actually warranted. Included are self-defense, just wars, and responsible execution of a death sentence by the government.
- Both testaments address the sixth commandment.

What do NT believers need to know about the 6th Commandment not to murder?

Here are six issues that help NT believers understand the 6th Commandment.

I. The Commandment Against Murder is Rooted in the Image of God

- a. Human life is sacred because we are made in God's image.
- b. Murder is not just a legal crime but a violation of God's divine order.
- c. [Gen 1:26-27 NASB95] 26 Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; and let them rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the sky and over the cattle and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth." 27 God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.
- d. [1Jo 4:20 NASB95] 20 If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen.
- e. God wants us to see everyone as an 'image bearer.'

II. Suicide: Taking One's Own Life Violates God's Sovereignty

- a. Life is a gift from God, and He alone has the authority to give and take life.
- b. Suicide results from despair, but God offers hope and healing. God has not given us the right to kill ourselves.
- c. Additional NT truth:
 - i. [1Co 3:16-17 NASB95] 16 Do you not know that you are a temple of God and [that] the Spirit of God dwells in you? 17 If any man destroys the temple of God, God will destroy him, for the temple of God is holy, and that is what you are.
 - ii. [1Co 6:19-20 NASB95] 19 Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? 20 For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.
- d. Call on God! [Psa 34:17-20 NASB95] 17 [The righteous] cry, and the LORD hears And delivers them out of all their troubles. 18 The LORD is near to the brokenhearted And saves those who are crushed in spirit. 19 Many are the afflictions of the righteous, But

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the LORD delivers him out of them all. 20 He keeps all his bones, Not one of them is broken.

- e. Ask for help from people. You are not alone. Do not tolerate suicidal thoughts. There is no shame in getting help. Many of the mighty people of God asked to die and despised life. Get help!!!

III. Abortion: The Unborn Are Created by God and Have Value

- a. The Bible affirms life in the womb as part of God's plan.
- b. Taking the life of the unborn is a violation of God's commandment.
- c. [Psa 139:13, 15-16 NASB95] 13 For You formed my inward parts; You wove me in my mother's womb. ... 15 My frame was not hidden from You, When I was made in secret, [And] skillfully wrought in the depths of the earth; 16 Your eyes have seen my unformed substance; And in Your book were all written The days that were ordained [for me,] When as yet there was not one of them.
- d. [Jer 1:5 NASB95] 5 "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, And before you were born I consecrated you; I have appointed you a prophet to the nations."
- e. Luke 1:41-44 – John the Baptist leaped in the womb, showing life begins before birth.
- f. We are called to protect the unborn!

IV. Euthanasia: Trusting God with Life and Death

- a. Ending life prematurely, even for mercy, usurps God's role as the giver and taker of life.
- b. Complex issue. Ethical questions. We always have a duty to provide basic nourishment, we do not always have a duty to provide extraordinary measures. There is a difference in terminating life and terminating treatment.
- c. Ryken: Historically, voluntary euthanasia almost always becomes involuntary.
- d. But "death with dignity" is still death, "assisted suicide" is still suicide, and suicide is wrong.
- e. We must be constantly vigilant to do what is necessary to preserve life while at the same time allowing someone who is terminally ill to die.

V. Capital Punishment: Justice Belongs to God

- a. The Bible acknowledges governmental authority to enforce justice, but we must ensure justice is righteous and fair.
- b. While capital punishment is permissible in Scripture, it should not be used carelessly or unjustly.
- c. Do not avenge yourself. [Rom 12:19 NASB95] 19 Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath [of God,] for it is written, "VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY," says the Lord.
- d. The government has the right to exercise justice. [Rom 13:4 NASB95] 4 for it is a minister of God to you for good. But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for it does not bear the sword for nothing; for it is a minister of God, an avenger who brings wrath on the one who practices evil.
- e. Ryken: "To kill and offender is not murder, but justice."
- f. Leave revenge to God and responsible government.

VI. Hatred: The Root of Murder Begins in the Heart

- a. Jesus equates hatred with murder because it fosters the same spirit of destruction.
- b. Christians are called to love their enemies and pursue peace.
- c. [1Jo 3:15 NASB95] 15 Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer; and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.
- d. [Mat 5:21-22 NASB95] 21 "You have heard that the ancients were told, 'YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT MURDER' and 'Whoever commits murder shall be liable to the court.' 22 "But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be guilty before the

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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.

- e. Love vs hate. No murky middle.
 - f. Heidelberg Catechism: I am not to dishonor, hate, injure, or kill my neighbor by thoughts, words, or gestures, much less by deeds. Calvin: Murder of the heart.
 - g. Ask God to help you deal the envy, anger, and desire of revenge. Ask Him to heal your heart where you have been wounded.
 - h. Develop your walk with God so you can see everyone through His eyes and from His perspective.
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- **As believers, we must stand for life in all circumstances, from the womb to the grave.**
 - **We are called to be agents of God's love, peace, and justice in a world that devalues life.**
 - **Repent from any form of hatred or disregard for life.**
 - **Commit to being a voice for the voiceless and a defender of God's sacred gift of life.**
 - **Trust in Christ, who offers eternal life to all who believe in Him.**