

INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: **Matthew 5:21-26.**
- B. The sixth commandment (Ex. 20:13).
“You shall not murder.”
- C. American is fast becoming a war zone. Our nightly news broadcasts and morning newspapers are filled with the grisly accounts of one murder after another.
- D. But murder is not a modern problem. The first death on the earth was the result of a murder.
- E. People of character respect human life.

I. BEHIND THE PRINCIPLE.

- A. There are two reasons behind the principle of having respect for human life:
 - 1. Murder steals God’s sovereign right to control the world. God alone should make the appointment of death, not man (Heb. 9:27).
And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment,...
 - 2. Murder desecrates the sacredness of people (Gen. 9:5,6). No one but God has the right to number another person’s days.
“And surely I will require your lifeblood; from every beast I will require it. And from every man, from every man’s brother I will require the life of man. [6] “Whoever sheds man’s blood, By man his blood shall be shed, For in the image of God He made man.”
- B. We have permission from God to take life from everything he created except people. God has invested a part of Himself in us, and killing a person is striking at God himself.

II. THE PRINCIPLE EXAMINED.

- A. God bases His instruction, on the sovereignty of Himself and the sacredness of persons. However, when this law was given the Mosaic covenant made this commandment into several different types.
- B. These types were:
 - 1. Premeditated murder (Num. 35:20,21).
‘And if he pushed him of hatred, or threw something at him lying in wait and as a result he died, [21] or if he struck him down with his hand in enmity, and as a result he died, the one who struck him shall surely be put to death, he is a murderer; the blood avenger shall put the murderer to death when he meets him.’
 - 2. Accidental homicide (Num. 35:10-12,22-28).
(Num 35:10-12) “Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, ‘When you cross the Jordan into the land of Canaan, [11] then you shall select for yourselves cities to be your cities of refuge, that the manslayer who has killed any person unintentionally may flee there. [12] ‘And the cities shall be to you as a refuge from the avenger, so that the manslayer may not die until he stands before the congregation for trial.’”
 - 3. Justifiable homicide (Ex. 22:2).
“If the thief is caught while breaking in, and is struck so that he dies, there will be no bloodguiltiness on his account.”
 - 4. Killing in war (the same God that said “do not murder” sent His people into battle).
 - 5. Capital punishment (Ex. 21:12).
“He who strikes a man so that he dies shall surely be put to death.”

III. REMOVING THE SEEDS OF MURDER.

- A. The sad fact is, when the evil in man’s heart is unchecked, God knows that men and women will simply destroy themselves. He understands all too clearly the roots of murder that grow in the human heart. And were it not for His intervening grace and restraining hand, man could very well have eliminated himself from the world and ended his own history. Yet, God in His love, has not allowed that to happen.

- B. By the time a child grows up in America, he or she will have viewed tens of thousands of murders and acts of violence on television and in the movies. If that wasn't enough, we can now "act out" violent inclinations with a video game or on a computer screen.
- C. We live in an angry world. Drive-by shootings are the order of the day. Killing has become something passionless and cool, with no accompanying sense of remorse. There are wars on innocent civilians, so-called mercy killings, and countless abortions, yet many take no offense.
- D. Now you might be saying, "I've never murdered anyone, so why waste my time with all this stuff?" Here's why... Murder is an act, but it's also an attitude. It's a deed, but it's also a motive. Listen to what Jesus said (Mt. 5:21,22).
 "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 court; and whoever shall say to his brother, 'Raca,' shall be guilty before the supreme court; and whoever shall say, 'You fool,' shall be guilty *enough to go* into the fiery hell."
- E. It strikes me that saying "Raca!" (empty-head) and "Fool!" to someone comes close to writing off that person altogether. What we're really saying is, "This person doesn't even deserve to be alive. I don't want anything to do with this person. As far as I'm concerned, he's dead... and I really wouldn't mind pushing him over the edge."
- F. That is murder in the heart. And that is where it all starts.
- G. I don't have to physically end your life to harbor the thoughts that purpose all the killings in the world. According to Jesus, murder begins with *anger*. Murder begins with *hate*.

IV. THE THOUGHT BEHIND THE DEED.

- A. See Eph. 4:26,27.
 BE ANGRY, AND *yet* DO NOT SIN; do not let the sun go down on your anger, [27] and do not give the devil an opportunity.
- B. Paul says not to close your eyes in sleep without working through your anger. Why? Because 4:27 says that if you let the anger simmer overnight, you're going to give the enemy of your soul a toehold, or beachhead, in your life. Overnight, the devil has the opportunity to plant the terrible seeds of murder in your unguarded heart.
- C. An example of this is found in the very first murder (Gen. 4:3-8).
 So it came about in the course of time that Cain brought an offering to the LORD of the fruit of the ground. [4] And Abel, on his part also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of their fat portions. And the LORD had regard for Abel and for his offering; [5] but for Cain and for his offering He had no regard. So Cain became very angry and his countenance fell. [6] Then the LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? [7] "If you do well, will not *your countenance* be lifted up? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you, but you must master it." [8] And Cain told Abel his brother. And it came about when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him.
- D. How much God loved Cain. He tried to reason with him. He tried to assure and comfort this disappointed, angry man. And finally, He gave him a serious warning. But Cain had nurtured the anger and bitterness in his heart for so long that even God standing in the pathway before him wasn't going to stop him. He walked right around God to kill his only brother.
- E. Here and in the other parts of the Sermon on the Mount Jesus deals with the root of the commandments, not just the fruit. The root of murder is anger... hateful, people-dishonoring anger.
- F. We are like the Pharisees and would rather talk about the externals. But the Lord wants to talk about internal things. He wants us to talk about what's really happening in my heart. And He knows that long before I would club anyone over the head in an effort to end his life, I may begin the process with my thought and then take it even further with my words.
- G. Dealing with anger:
 1. Understand that it is okay to be angry, but it must be dealt with correctly (Eph. 4:26).

2. Do your best to avoid anger-arousing situations and people.
3. Anger is less destructive when we have a good self-respect and spiritual control.
4. Avoid ruminating about the problem which tends to make us exaggerate the situation.
5. Learn to confront without being confrontational.
6. Allow yourself to be controlled by the Spirit and exhibit the fruit thereof (patience).
7. Take your anger to the Lord first (Psa. 73:16,17).

*When I pondered to understand this, It was troublesome in my sight
[17] Until I came into the sanctuary of God; Then I perceived their end.*

CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.

- A. The sixth commandment reads, "you shall not murder" but can be understood through the revelation of JC to learn to control our anger and our tongue.
- B. Do not allow the seeds of murder (anger and hatred) to become implanted in your life.
- C. Let's come back to the principles of the Ten(der) Commandments.
- D. Plan of salvation for non-Xians; erring Xians.