

WORD

"You shall not murder." **EXODUS 20:13**

The sixth commandment, *"You shall not murder,"* is perhaps the only commandment viewed by many as having the least relevance in their lives. But this commandment teaches us about life and the condition of our own hearts. In this lesson, we will look at three truths that we can learn from this commandment.

1 Man is made in God's image.

"Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed, for God made man in his own image." **GENESIS 9:6**

God created man in His own image and likeness (Genesis 1:26). God Himself is the author of life and our very existence is tied to Him. Man is unique from all creation because we are God's image-bearer. This is why God values life, and anyone who takes life in his own hands will be accountable to God. What does the Bible say about man? (Psalm 8:4,5)

2 Life is God's gift to man.

. . . then the Lord God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature. GENESIS 2:7

Respect for human life comes from acknowledging that life is God's gift to us. Although other living creatures made by God possess life, only in man was life created with the breath of God. Life is precious; we have to regard it highly. Our respect for human life is reflected in the way we treat other people, and how we respond to those we interact with. According to Paul, how are we to value others? (Philippians 2:3)

3 Murder begins in the heart.

⁶The Lord said to Cain, "Why are you angry, and why has your face fallen? ⁷If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door. Its desire is for you, but you must rule over it." GENESIS 4:6,7

Cain became jealous of Abel because of God's favor on him. But how did an inner struggle of harboring envy and bitterness end up in murder? It all started in Cain's heart. That's why the Lord told Cain, ". . . *sin is crouching at the door . . . but you must rule over it.*" The word *crouching* means to lie down as an animal when waiting for prey. If we allow hurts and envy to dwell in our hearts, we could end up falling into the same trap of deception like Cain. How should we deal with anger, according to Ephesians 4:26,27? According to 1 John 3:15, what are we called if we hate our brothers?

APPLICATION

- Knowing that life is precious and a gift from God, what is one thing you will change in the way you relate to others starting today?
- Is there anyone in your life you need to forgive? What are you going to do about it starting this week?
- How can you guard your heart against envy and bitterness? Is there anyone you are walking in accountability with? How can you go deeper in the Word of God?

PRAYER

- Thank God for the gift of life and the eternal life we have in Jesus Christ.
- Ask God for the grace to overcome the challenges you might have in your relationships.
- Pray that you will be a vessel of His love and righteousness in all areas of your life, and that others will see your example.



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