

The Ten Commandments
Lesson 15: Do Not Murder (Part 2)
Truly Loving Others Through Words and Deeds

1. Jesus Reveals the Heart of God

In His great love, God sent Jesus to die on the cross to redeem sinful humanity. By doing as His Father wished, Jesus showed that He understands and shares God's love for us. We will look at what Jesus revealed about the value He places on people and relationships. We will also examine what Jesus taught about the tragic consequences of murder and those who commit such barbarous acts.

- a. In His Sermon on the Mount, Jesus spoke about murder. Read **Matthew 5:21-26**. What attitude seemed to particularly concern Jesus (**verse 22**)?
 - i. Jesus quoted the Law, but said that whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of judgment.
 - ii. He also spoke of a second point of guilt would be someone who expressed anger through words of contempt or condemnation. Calling another a fool or a "good-for-nothing," empty-headed imbecile (*Raca* in older translations) was an expression of extreme contempt; doing so was sufficient for one to be brought before the Sanhedrin because the name-caller would be accusing the other person not only of being foolish but also morally corrupt or morally worthless. This could potentially destroy a person's reputation. Such insults show a heart in danger of the judgment of hell.
 - iii. In **verses 23-24**, Jesus speaks about dealing with someone who has been offended by something we have done. He said if you are bringing a gift to the altar, leave there your gift before the altar and go and first be reconciled to thy brother. Then you are to offer thy gift.
 - iv. He also said in **verses 25-26**, that you need to agree with you adversary quickly lest he bring you bring you before the judge. Then the judge delivers you to the officer and then into prison. Then you would have to pay the uttermost farthing (cost).

The applications in Christ's teachings are evident: guard your heart and your words for any signs of anger; quickly clear any offenses others have against you; alleviate their reasons for anger whatever the offense. Be on guard against any wrong anger, whether settled anger, slanderous anger, or actions that incite another to anger.

The Ten Commandments do not simply list ten things to do or not to do; but they present areas in which we can work to enhance relationships to build up others. Jesus made sure that His listeners understood this. He clarified the law of personal retribution ("an eye for an eye") found in **Exodus 21:23-25**, **Leviticus 24:17-22** and **Deuteronomy 19:21**.

- a. Read **Matthew 5:38-48**. What did Jesus say about dealing with personal offenses?
 - i. Don't resist evil, turn the other cheek. If sued and they take away thy coat, give your cloak also. If you were asked to go one mile (A Roman soldier could legally compel a person to carry whatever he commanded for one mile) Jesus said go two miles.
 - ii. Jesus also said, "give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow from thee, turn not away." He also says to, "bless those that curse you, do good to them that hate you and pray for them that despitefully use you."

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- iii. Jesus was teaching that we are to bear with being imposed on, or personal slights and not to retaliate.
- iv. In **verse 43-48**, just as our heavenly Father displays love, we are to do the same. God shows His love to everyone by providing sunshine and rain to all. We are called upon to “love our enemies,” not just our neighbors. To the law, “You shall love your neighbors,” the Jewish religious leaders had added “and hate your enemy.” But Jesus cleared up the matter by saying, “Love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you.”

So, those who are His children should act as the Father does. Loving those who love you and greeting those who greet you is no different than what the most sinful and corrupt non-Christians do; Jesus used tax collectors as an example. In His day, the tax collector were Israelites who had sold out to Rome to collect taxes. They were despised by the people. Jesus called His followers to a different standard, to the perfection of the Father and the maturity of His kind of love. This is a standard, that only Christ could meet fully, and it is only as we surrender to Him that we can expect to see His kind of life and love working in and through us.

- b. “Who is my neighbor?” An expert in the law asked Jesus that question. Read the account of **Luke 10:25-37**. Summarize who a neighbor is and what it means to love one’s neighbor.
 - i. A neighbor is any person in need that we come in contact with. Being a neighbor is showing mercy, compassion, and extending a helping hand. It is giving more than lip service.
 - ii. A scribe or “lawyer” tested Jesus with a question about inheriting eternal life, and Jesus responded with a question about his understanding of God’s requirements. The man then quoted the two laws that summed up all of the Law, Jesus did not give him a long list of rules and regulations to keep in order to earn eternal life; instead, our Lord accepted the scribe’s answer and said, “*do this and you will live*,” a requirement no one can live up to.
 - iii. Then, because of his self-righteousness and want to “justify himself,” the man asked, “Who is my neighbor?” Jesus responded with a parable about a Samaritan. (Samaritans were despised by most Jews because they were descendants of Jews who had intermarried with Gentiles after the Assyrians conquered Israel in 722 BC, and also because they did not follow all of the Jewish laws.)
 - iv. The story is about a man that was going down the road from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell among thieves who stole his clothes and severely wounded him. A priest came upon him and passed by on the other side of the road. A Levite “came and looked” and also passed him by. But when a Samaritan saw the man, he had compassion on him and tended his wounds. He brought him to an inn for further care and gave the innkeeper two days wages to cover his needs, also promising to pay for anything more that was necessary on his returning trip.
 - v. Jesus asked who proved to be the wounded man’s neighbor—the priest, the Levite, or the Samaritan? The expert in the Law replied, “The one who showed mercy toward him.” Then Jesus said ...”Go and do the same” (**Luke 10:37**).

Each thief had the heart of a murderer and a taker (**What’s yours is mine**). The priest and the Levite had self-righteous hearts and care only for themselves (**What’s mine is mine**). But the Samaritan had the heart of God (**What’s mine is yours**).

- c. Jesus continually dealt with matters of the heart. Read **Mark 7:14-25**. In **verses 21-23**, Jesus notes that murder and other sins come from within—the heart of men. In the passage, Jesus lets the

Pharisees know that eating foods on a certain list or eating foods that are forbidden, do not make someone righteous or unrighteous. Foods are only temporary provisions, eaten and then eliminated. But that which is in the heart (that is, what a person truly thinks and feels) can come out and defile him or her. Evil thoughts, all kinds of immorality, and murders all begin inside not outside.

Jesus taught His disciples and other followers the full meaning of the commandments. He wanted them to understand the intent of the Law in each of the Ten commandments and in all His Word. The intent of the sixth commandment is not just to prevent murder but to encourage God's people to continually care for others.

2. Jesus Redeems The Human Heart

Jesus did not come simply to inform us of the love and will of God, He came to transform the hearts of men and women so that they could experience and express the life of God. Let's see more about how He leads us to fulfill the sixth commandment to prevent murder and promote care for others.

Jesus emphasized the importance of making amends for any offense that may give someone else cause for anger toward us. What about when someone personally offends us? What did Jesus reveal to His disciples about this matter? Peter poses a question that gave Jesus the opportunity to carefully explain how to deal with others' sins against us.

- a. Read **Matthew 18:21-35**. What did Peter suggest (**verse 21**)? How did Jesus reply (verse 22)?
 - i. Peter suggested forgiving someone seven times, putting limits on forgiveness. Jesus said seventy times seven—taking off the limits.
 - ii. The central truth that we see in **verse 23-34** is that God has forgiven us many times and we need to treat others the same way.
 - iii. Forgiveness is a major part of loving others.
 - iv. The rabbis of Jesus' day said that one should forgive another for the same offense three times. Peter went further and suggested seven times. Jesus cleared up the matter and suggested seventy times seven or unlimited times.
 - v. The parable that Jesus told was not about earning forgiveness but about expressing forgiveness.
- b. How did Jesus deal with offenses against Him? Did He ever personally deal with anger? Look at **Mark 3:1-6**. What question did Jesus pose to the Pharisees in the synagogue (**verse 4**)?
 - i. Jesus asked if it was lawful to do good on the sabbath days, or to do evil? To save life, or to kill? The Pharisees held their peace. And when He looked round about them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, he healed the man with the withered hand.
- c. Jesus fully understood human wickedness and went to the cross with that knowledge. Considering what Jesus did in going to the cross, read **Romans 5:6-11**. How is humanity described in those verses? What did Christ do about our condition?
 - i. While humanity was without strength and even enemies to God, He demonstrated (commended) His love toward us by giving Christ to die for us. He sent His righteous Son to die for unrighteous mankind.
- d. Christ, realizing everything there was to know about every person who has ever lived, declared from the cross, "Father forgive them for they know not what they do" (**Luke 23:34**).

- e. Paul gives the Colossians instructions concerning the old and new self (**Colossians 3:5-8, 12-13**) to mortify (kill, put off) the old deeds of the body, that bring the wrath of God on children of disobedience. He lists anger and several other things in **verses 5 and 8** that need to be taken off as “old rotten garments.” Paul also lists some things in **verses 12 and 13** that as the chosen (elect) of Christ we should put on as new garments. And even as Christ has forgiven us, we should also forgive others.
- f. The apostle John also dealt with matters of the heart, including murder, in 1 John 3:4-18. What types of persons does he contrast (**verses 4-10**)?
 - i. John contrasts those that continually commit sins (habitually practices sin) as being children of the devil with those that continue in righteousness as the children of God. Where he writes “doth not commit sin” it means practice or habitually sin.
 - ii. **Verses 11-15**, give the insights that the message from the beginning is that we love one another. We should not be as Cain, who was of the wicked one the devil, who slew his brother, because his own works were evil. Whosoever hated his brother is a murderer, and no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him (**v. 15**).
 - iii. Love is defined as meeting the needs of others. We perceive the love of God, because He laid down His life for us. We ought to lay down our life for our brother. We should not love in words and tongue, but in deed and truth.

3. For Me to Follow God

We have seen how Jesus forgives us and also calls us to forgive. This is essential if we are to fulfill the full intent of the sixth commandment. It means more than not murdering; it means care for others, nurturing them, protecting them, and providing for them. How are we to do this?

We have seen that the act of murder stems from a seed of inner hatred. Such intense hatred can develop as a result of coveting (the desire for something that belongs to another), as in the case of Ahab and Naboth (**see 1 Kings 21**). Hatred also finds its origins in the sins of lust and adultery, as in the case of David, Bathsheba, and Uriah (**see 2 Samuel 11:1-17**). Furthermore, hatred can develop because of an injury inflicted by another’s hate or greed. The Scripture speaks to these and other issues of the heart. In so doing, it reveals how to avoid murder as well as how to protect and provide for life, seeking the fullest blessing for that life.

- a. First, we must deal with murder at the source. What do you discover in **James 4:1-3**? Where do “quarrels and conflicts”(NASB) or “wars and fights” (NKJV) originate?
- b. Read **Ephesians 4:17-24**. How does Paul address the heart of the problem? What is life like for those who don’t know the Lord, according to **Ephesians 4:17-19**?
 - i. Look at **Ephesians 4:20-24**. What difference does the new life make?

Application: In **Ephesians 4:31-32**, Paul continues to speak of matters of the heart, giving practical guidelines for avoiding murderous acts and providing the right kind of care for others. Below are some actions we need to take when dealing with any offense, any seed of murder. These are under two broad categories—**LET GO FULLY** anything associated with selfish anger and **EMBRACE QUICKLY** everything associated with forgiveness. Look at each point and make application as the Spirit reveals any area of need.

First, LET GO FULLY. Read each of the following words found in Ephesians 4:31 and record its application to your life.

Bitterness (The Greek word *pikria* translated “bitterness” describes something that cuts or pricks, like a sharp arrow that wounds. The word can refer to a sharp, pungent, or acrid taste; for instance, it is used to describe the taste of poison. Many things can wound and bring bitterness. Let go of any bitter feelings that you have, a bitter mindset, or a bitter direction of your will.)

Wrath (The Greek word *thumos*, translated “wrath” is used for the type of anger that flares up quickly. It often comes from a bitter heart.)

Anger (*orge*—anger that burns steadily, like a smoldering fire ready to erupt. This often accompanies bitterness and wrath.)

Clamor (*krauge*—noise, outcry. This can be found in a heated argument or at a point of frustration.)

Slander (*blasphemia*—cutting, critical, downgrading remarks, verbal abuse. Blaming others and exacting revenge through words are often the fruit of bitterness and anger.)

Malice (*kakia*—wickedness, evil that wants to harm another. This is often expressed through violence or some other form of revenge.)

A progression of corruption often starts with bitterness. Bitterness is like a wound that becomes infected, causing continually increasing pain and illness if not dealt with. It sparks and flares up, then burns continually, revealing its presence in critical remarks and name calling that leads to evil acts: violence, hatred, revenge, and even murder. **Ephesians 4:31** says to let it “all...be put away from you.” Just let it go! Release it to the Lord and His will. He will deal with any necessary retribution; He does not want us to exact vengeance (**see Romans 12:17-21**).

Second, EMBRACE QUICKLY everything associated with forgiveness. After you have let go of all that is associated with bitterness and anger, quickly embrace these marks of grace, allowing the love and compassion of Christ to fill your life. Read each of the following descriptive words found **in Ephesians 4:32** and record its application to your life.

Forgiving (*charizomai*—to graciously forgive, to show gracious favor. Be continually forgiving each other.)

Tenderhearted (*eusplaghnos*—“well feeling,” full compassion. Be always tenderhearted, sensitive to the unique needs of others.)

Kind (*chrestos*—to be useful, helpful, profitable, to furnish whatever is needed. Be ever kind, looking for ways to provide practical help.)

Homework: Read Genesis 2—3

Lesson Topics: No Adultery, Treasuring One’s Mate God’s Way. (December 1)