

# “THE SIXTH COMMANDMENT”

Text: Exodus 20:13

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## INTRODUCTION:

1) The rampage of murder today: Murder is one of the most stunning crime in the world today. From the gruesome beheading of innocent people by ISIS to gang violent murder of opponents to killing on personal vengeance, some of us had become numb to see, read or think on crimes like this. In cities like Chicago, Oakland, St Louise, New York, Baltimore and others, police and FBI are overwhelmed by the rapidly increased number of murder cases. To some people, life isn't important. Today, July 16, a gunman murdered 4 Marines in a cold blooded shooting in Chattanooga, TN. On top of that, murder of unborn babies in the name of “women's right,” and “abortion on demand,” even paid by tax payers' money and supported by the government, is a social disorder of legalized crime against the innocent but sanctioned by the Supreme Court.

2) Biblical teaching on murder: “You shall not murder.” (Exodus 20:13, NIV, Holman) The Hebrew word, *rasah*, killing of people, not animal. The root means more than the act of killing, but also the meditated intent of killing, so it is best translated as “murder” than “kill.” The Bible doesn't prohibit killing but forbids killing by intent, murder. God allows killing in wars, and sometimes war is the only way to settle conflicts between right and wrong, and good from bad. The Bible also allows death penalty decreed by judges, not by people taking the law into their own hand for revenge.

(Exodus 21:24-25, Genesis 9:6) God endows power to judges to exact punishment on crime and evil doers. (Romans 13:1-5) It is both biblical and socially just to punish willful murderers with death penalty. The phrase “sanctity of life” should be reserved only for the innocent and the defenseless. To see it any other way is either a direct violation of the spirit of justice of God or being brainwashed by political correctness of the day.

CAUSES OF KILLING AND MURDER: Just to list a few:

1) Anger is the leading cause: “But on Cain and his offering God did not look with favor. So Cain was very angry and his face was downcast...Now Cain said to his brother Abel: Let's go out to the field. And while they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him.” (Genesis 4:5, 8) When anger in a man's heart is not being dealt with properly, it could engulf a man and his mental power to do the most vicious thing, to kill. That is why many defense lawyers love to use “insanity” as excuses in trail of murder cases. How many will kill someone when he is in his normal mind setting?

2) Evil thoughts in the heart: When Jesus was teaching on the uncleanness in the heart of man in Mark 7, he called the attention of his audience to check on what was in their mind and heart that caused them to commit many of the sins we all are included. He particularly warned us the serious consequence of harboring evil thoughts that could lead to murder. “For from within, out of men's hearts, come evil thoughts...murder.” (7:21) Jesus wasn't talking about

accidental killing, he talked about murder from evil thoughts. Evil thoughts are thoughts we hold against others, hoping or wanting evil happen to others. Most of us won't go that far to harbor evil thoughts to murder, but many wish evil will come to those whom they hate, like we wish them to go to hell. Most of us don't see the power of evil in our hearts as vicious weapons of killing, but evil thoughts against others could lead to killing when opportunities arise. On July 16, the Jury on the trial of James Holmes found him guilty of murder of all 165 counts. He murdered 12 persons and wounded dozens of others in a midnight movie show in Colorado in 2012.

3) Murder in power struggle: After the failed rebellion of Absalom, King David was surrounded by people who were involved in power struggle and were suspicious of each other. In order to secure their position in the kingdom and gain trust of the king, they schemed in power struggle that led to killing of each other. (2 Samuel 20:1-10) Eventually Joab, the most trusted general of David murdered Amasa to protect the king and secured his position. Many books were written on history of kingdoms and their internal struggle against one another recorded many of these kind of murders among the elites.

4) Murder to cover up sin: 2 Samuel 11 recorded the darkest chapter in the life of King David. He didn't just violated the law of God and the trust of his faithful soldier Uriah by committed adultery with the soldier's wife, he also schemed to murder this faithful soldier by the hand of his trusted general Joab in order to cover up his illicit act as a king. This led to the rebellion of his own son, Absalom, murder in his own family and incestuous acts among his children. The only

way to be cleansed of sin is to ask for forgiveness of God, (1John 1:9) not by committing more sin and crime to cover up.

5) Murder to protect turf: After he was outwitted by the Magi, King Herod committed the most despicable crime as a human being by murdering all the baby boys born in Bethlehem to protect his position as king of Judea. (Matt 2:16-18) This kind of evil acts repeated throughout history by the rich and powerful to eliminate opposition, to protect one's turf and control of power and wealth. Things like this happened in ancient time as well as modern days.

RELATED ISSUES ON TAKING OF LIFE: The following is written strictly based on biblical teaching. I understand that there are special cases happened at different times under difficult situation where there is no perfect solutions. Some people may have different opinions and disagree with biblical principle or find it difficult to follow. I agree on all of the above. But we are studying the Commandments of God and we have to see clearly what does God expect us to do when we face those situations.

1) Suicide: Taking one's own life: Since we are children of God, believers of Christ and people of light, our life is with hope and strength from the Lord. Most of those who committed suicide to end their lives did so because they didn't see light at the end of the tunnel of life. When we put our hope of life in our own hand or the hands of others, we certainly will lose heart and the strength to continue going forward. While I am sympathetic to people who feel no hope

nor meaning to continue living, I want to encourage all of us to build our relationship with the Lord stronger so we may have hope and strength to face challenging situations of life. Killing oneself can not change anything except the person himself, but certainly will leave behind so much pain, suffering, sense of doubt and loss to his family and friends. It is also a story of life that has failed on the power of God. Say no to suicide.

2) Abortion: Taking the lives of the defenseless: I am talking about abortion on demand as popular and protected by law. The Bible clearly indicates that life is a gift of God and it begins at conception, Psalm 139:13-16. Except in the case of protecting the life of the mother, termination of life by human hand is a crime against the innocent and defenseless, the unborn babies. Abortion on demand as it is today is a hideous crime no civilized world should condone much less promote or protect. Many of the aborted babies were results of illicit sexual encounter without marriage that is another shameful sin. Christians should say no to abortion on demand.

3) Euthanasia: How long should a life live? The Bible clearly states that life is created by God and is a gift of God. So, only God can determine how long a life will live. On top of that we can't justify that man has the authority or wisdom to determine the end of a life or to prolong a life artificially regardless of our emotional tie or human reasoning to do one way or another. Euthanasia, to assist some one to die faster, or using artificial means like a ventilator to prolong a life, I can't find biblical support on either one of this. If we truly believe God has the ultimate control of all lives, we need to allow

God to make that decision. I realize that these are controversial issues and opinions on both sides are valid in some way. The bottom line is who should be the one besides God to make that difficult decision if a life should or should end. May be the words in Ecclesiastics 8:8 can shed some light on this for us: “There is no man that hath power over the spirit to retain the spirit; neither hath he power in the day of death.” (KJV)

### WHAT SHOULD WE DO ABOUT LIFE?

1) We should respect all human lives: Politicians play with life for political gains. When a black life was taken, it burnt a city block and aroused the nation in flame including all level of the government from the president to the local police. But when a white life was taken, nothing, no word from the White House or the AG, the FBI or any rousing politician. Why is this? This is a show of politics over the value of life. Christians should respect all lives, black lives, white lives, older lives, younger lives and the lives of the unborn. We respect life because we respect God, the giver of all lives. No Christian should take any life, be it his own or the lives of others, because all lives are sacred and deserve protection.

2) We should live a worthy life: In biblical sense, long life doesn't always equal to good life both in the eyes of God and man. The length of life isn't important as the quality of life is. The value of a life is not measured by the number of years, but by the fruits that life produced. Many great men in history, both in God's kingdom and the secular world, didn't last any longer than others. But they lived their lives to

become blessings of others and they brought glory to their creator God. Paul set the best example for us on how to live our lives that make the most sense. He said, "I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, offer up your bodies (our physical life) as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God." (Romans 12:1) We can't control the length of our lives, but we certainly can control what kind of life we want to live as the