

Series: The 10 Commandments

Title: The 6th Commandment: Life-Giver or Life-Taker?

Text: Exodus 20:13 & Matthew 5:21-24

Breaking the Ice:

1. Identify someone in your life that you experience as a life-giver. What is it about them that makes them a life-giver (their actions/attitude/demeanor/etc.)?
2. Identify someone in your life that you experience as a life-taker? What is it about them that makes them a life-taker (their actions /demeanor/etc.)?

Questions for Discussion/Reflection:

1. The Old Testament differentiates between “to kill” [qatal; i.e. self-defense, capital punishment, *just war*] and to “murder”. Why is this distinction so important to make?
2. The Old Testament not only condemns what we would today call “manslaughter,” premeditated murder or murder in the heat of the moment/crime of passion), but it also condemns the loss of life through negligence or recklessness (parapets on roofs/bulls that are known to gore). What are current ways we can take life through negligence or recklessness?
3. In contrast, what are ways we can proactively seek to protect, preserve, and better the lives of others?
4. Jesus shows us that we can be life-takers not only through our outer-life [actions], but through our inner-life [attitude/words/thoughts]. What are ways that you see this sin play out in your own life?
5. Jesus shows us our sin as life-takers so that we will repent of it and turn to Him as our Life-giver. How does the life Jesus that gives us move us from despair or denial to rest in God’s grace and a life of obedience?
6. Jesus also shows us what it means to be a life-giver in every way. In his life, he puts on full display the fullness of the Old Testament portrait of what it means to be pro-life (defense of the weak, poor, restoration of physical life, care for the vulnerable, gracious speech, compassion/empathy for the lost). What life-giving attitudes/actions do you see in the life of Jesus that are lacking in your own life? What are a few steps of obedience that you think God is calling you to take in being a life-giver?
7. How do you think other people around you experience you (as a life-giver or as a life-taker)? Why?
8. Homework: Ask someone around you this question [#7] and listen to their answer without either justifying yourself in response to their critique or dismissing their compliments.
9. In our politicized culture, American Christians often fall into the trap of viewing the 6th command *primarily* or even exclusively through the lens of political policy or parties [example: Republicans point to pro-life policies; Democrats to refugee care at the border, concern for the poor, etc.]. Why the 6th commandment will undoubtedly influence the way that we think about political policies, why is it so important to view it first in regard to our lives as Christians and our ministries as churches? What do we miss when only or even firstly make our applications of the 6th commandment in terms of politics?