

Do Not Murder

Just like the Israelites, there are lowercase-g gods all around us, influencing our priorities, our morality, even our eternity. When God gave Moses the Ten Commandments, He wasn't just handing down a list of do's and don'ts, He was providing a plan to battle the lowercase-g gods in our lives.



INTRODUCTION

The 6th commandment states that we should not commit murder, while differentiating between killing, murder, and murder of the heart. This command shows us how to love our neighbors, encourages us to live responsibly, and reveals the universal need for forgiveness.

STARTER QUESTION

1. Pastor David said that not murdering is insufficient, we must also eradicate hate from our hearts'. Have you ever found it difficult to forgive someone? What was the effect of your lack of forgiveness in your life and/or in your relationship with that person?

INTO THE WORD

2. Read Matthew 5:21-26 and 1 John 3:15. Consider a time you may have felt convicted in hateful or angry feelings towards another person. How did that conviction affect your words and actions towards that individual?
3. Read 1 John 2:9. How can harboring hatred for another person/group of people hold you back from moving forward in your walk with God?
4. According to Luke 23:34, while on the cross, Jesus asked God's forgiveness for those who crucified Him. Why do you think this was the first thing He said? How does this demonstrate the importance Jesus places on forgiving others?

APPLICATION

5. Have you ever experienced the hatred of another person? Did it embitter you to hate them or embolden you to offer them forgiveness? What did you learn from the experience that you can apply in the future?
6. Jesus says that we are obligated to forgive even if we believe someone does not deserve our forgiveness. How can forgiveness bring physical, mental, and/or spiritual freedom? How should we react if someone refuses to forgive us?
7. Pastor David explained that the 6th commandment does not only warn against physical murder, but murder of the heart as well. Moreover, it is not only a command not to murder, but a commission to live responsibly and to preserve and protect life. How is this different than the way you have interpreted this commandment in the past? Does this change the way in which you will follow this command going forward?

PRAYER

Father God, thank You for Your laws, which instruct us how to love You and our neighbors, who are created in Your image. We ask that You forgive us for the anger and hate to which we so easily cling. We want our thoughts, feelings, and actions to reflect Your love and mercy. Help us to forgive others as You have so graciously forgiven us. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.