

For the Family

Read together Matthew 5:21-26

Talk about how most people have never murdered anyone, but all people get angry at one time or another.

It's easy to get mad when something we don't like happens to us. The more we think about what happened, the madder we get. We might want to yell at someone, call them names, or hurt them.

If we stay angry, we will probably do something that will hurt someone else, hurt ourselves, and make God sad.

Jesus wants us to take care of our anger by making peace with whoever we're mad at. He even said if we're at worship, and remember we're mad, to leave and go to that person and try to make peace. Jesus doesn't want us to hang on to our anger.

Tell a story of a time when you were mad at someone, but you decided to make peace. Explain that even though it was hard, it was the right thing to do. Talk about how making peace with that person was better than staying mad, for them and for you.

Read together Matthew 5:9:

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

Talk about how being a peacemaker is being like Jesus. Jesus came to earth to make peace between people and God. Jesus wants his followers to be peacemakers too. That means making peace with people who have made you mad.

Review the first six commandments:

Put God First
Worship Him Only
Keep God's Name Holy
Keep the Lord's Day Holy
Honor Your Parents
Do Not murder

Pray together that you will be able to be a peacemaker when people make you mad. 4



THE TEN COMMANDMENTS: ETCHED IN STONE

You Shall Not Murder The Sixth Commandment *Exodus 20:13*

Last Week: God started the Ten Commandments with: "No other gods;" "No idols;" and "Don't take my name in vain." God then told them to remember the Sabbath, to keep it holy. He told them they had six days to get their work done, and on the seventh they, along with all their household, including animals, were to rest from their work. God reminded them that He created the world in six days, and rested on the seventh. He blessed that day and made it holy. Therefore, He expected his people to honor that day as well.

(We are doing the sixth commandment this week. We will look at the fifth commandment next week.)

This Week:

The first four commandments had to do with Israel's relationship with God. The 5th through 10th commandments had to do with their relationships with each other. They were the fundamental requirements which would enable the Israelites to have a cohesive community where the people would be free to serve God and to serve each other.

The sixth commandment is the prohibition against murder. It is a short commandment, only 6 syllables in the Hebrew. Reading elsewhere in the Bible, we find the reason for this prohibition: humans are created in the image of God; they have inherent value. Jesus expanded on this commandment, showing the connection between anger and murder. He exhorted his followers to be peacemakers, rather than those who hang on to anger. 1

Observing

1. What do we learn about God in this commandment?
2. What principles from this commandment can we bring to our world?
3. How might we restate this prohibition in positive terms?

Connecting the Dots

1. People: Created in the Image of God

Read Genesis 1:26-27 (see also: Genesis 5:1; 9:6)

What do you think it means that humans are created in the image of God?

What differences can you think of between humans and other animals?

How should this affect our attitude toward others?

2. Jesus and the Sixth Commandment

Read Matthew 5:21-26

What does Jesus add to the commandment? Vs. 22

Verses 23-25 contain several imperatives. What are they?

Glen Stassen and David Gushee, in their book *Kingdom Ethics: Following Jesus in Contemporary Context* (InterVarsity Press: 2003) call verses 23-25 the “Transforming Initiative.” Jesus references the Old Testament law, explains the heart of the matter, and then offers a way to change one’s heart, to fulfill the original intention of the law. This change can be called the transforming initiative.

If the transforming initiative in verses 23-25 is followed:

What will the angry person become?

What will happen to their anger?

What will happen to their ‘enemy’?

3. Anger and Murder

Read 1 John 3:15-16

What is the relation between anger and murder?

What is the relation between love and laying down one’s life?

Continuing the Journey

1. Do you value all human life?

Do you struggle in valuing anyone or any group of people?

What can you do to value all people as being created in God’s image?

2. Is there any hidden anger in your life? What might be causing it? (hurt, fear, impatience, unmet expectations, threats, others?)
What can you do to deal with your anger?

3. Is there anyone with whom you need to reconcile?

What will you do to initiate the process?

4. What can you do to transition from anger to love?

How can you lay down your life for another? (Be specific)

Next Steps:

- I am so thankful for God’s grace—regardless of my past failures and choices.
- I will guard my attitude and my heart against anger and hatred of other people.
- I will value all human life, knowing that every person bears the image of God.

Memory Verse – Exodus 20:13 –You shall not murder.

During this series we will be memorizing a simplified version of the 10 Commandments. Here are the first four:

*You shall have no other gods before me.
You shall not make or worship any idol.
You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain.
Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.
Honor your father and mother
You shall not murder*