

Good evening – well tonight we come to the 6th Commandment: “Do not murder”.
And as we look at this commandment two questions spring to mind
What does it really mean and how is it relevant?

After all, we have a good idea of what murder is and, for most of us,
it is not one of the greatest temptations of life.

*“Oh, once in a while I may think “how convenient it would be if rich Uncle Bert died”
(not that I have a rich uncle Bert) or*

How nice it would be if the boss didn't come back from holiday!”, but murder?

Nope - Not us.

Most of us will get no closer to murder than watching “Inspector Morse?”

And that all seems pretty remote.

But actually this commandment goes deeper than that...

Jesus links it to anger.

And if Jesus is right,

then that's worrying because this commandment becomes
not only relevant

but something that we have all broken - many times.

While very few of us murder, many, many of us get angry!

So what I want to do this evening is to talk about two things:

- Why we should we not kill - and although that sounds pretty obvious – if we want to talk about Afghanistan (War), Capital Punishment, Abortion, Euthanasia, Suicide – we realise is actually not so obvious; and
- secondly how does this commandment apply to our everyday life.

Two ideas:

Why we should not kill; and

How it applies to us.

So let's get stuck in with: Why?,

1. Why should we not kill other people?

Deuteronomy 5v17 simply says “[You shall not murder](#)”

The Hebrew word that we translate for “murder”,

literally means “to slay” or “to dash to pieces”

So God says “You shall not slay, murder, kill, dash to pieces, destroy, any other human being”.

So the question is: WHY?

Why should we not do this?

Well the answer is both simple and far reaching...

because all human beings are made by God, to have a relationship with God.

In Genesis 1:26 God says “[let us make man in our image, in our likeness let us make them](#)”.

Human beings were made by God, in his image - which means we are creatures capable of a “spiritual relationship” with God

Now this makes us different to animals in that we have a spiritual dimension to our lives, that is beyond existence, beyond life, beyond emotions) –

we have been designed to be capable of having a unique living relationship with God.

Therefore we are not the product of meaninglessness and random chance

– we have a purpose beyond ourselves; and

we are more than just our biology, our physiology, our psychology

– there is an eternal aspect to us that is rooted in our spirituality.

This distinction (between us and biological machines, between us and animals)

has a profound affect on why human life is valuable.

One of the great differences between secular thinking and Biblical thinking is the idea of “what makes a person valuable”.

The secular view, which is gradually becoming more and more pervasive, is that human value is linked to an individual’s physical or mental capabilities.

And thus if you are a ‘*damaged foetus*’ or if you are “*disabled and near death*” then you are more likely to be helped to die than if you were “able bodied and able minded”. This is incontrovertibly true,

Moreover the secular view is that since we are here by random chance we therefore have no eternal purpose and no **eternal** meaning – since we are temporary creatures (we’re here for such a short space of time) we therefore must find our value in the “here and now” and

So it is no surprise that our society therefore sees people’s value in success, high-flying careers, great looks, a particular body shape, good qualifications, or impressive titles. It is of no surprise that we see our value as linked to these things and when we lose them we lose our sense of value.

It is no surprise that we live in a society that rewards people by what they do and what they look like. We give certificates, awards, merit badges, money, applause to people by what they can do and what they look like.

The secular view **values** people by their physical or intellectual attributes in THIS world.

The biblical view rejects this completely.

The biblical view is that **you** have been created by God, made in his image, for an eternal purpose.

You have been made to enter into a meaningful, loving, fulfilling relationship with God

You have been called, to fulfil your potential as his child.... forever

And your task while on this earth is to make a difference by reflecting his glory, his love, his gospel to others.

You are like an ambassador sent by a powerful king.

The ambassador is more than just a man or a woman; they represent the very king himself.

To honour that ambassador is to honour the king.

The ambassador’s job is to represent the King.

Therefore human life (your life) has value

- because it bears the makers image,
- because it can enter into a relationship with God,
- because that relationship lasts forever
- because their task is to reflect that glory

And therefore, the Biblical view is that **we are equally valuable** whether we are world-class athletes or wheelchair-bound quadraplegics; whether we are models or scarred burn victims; whether we are academic geniuses or struggling to pass a GCSE. whether we are homeless or a superstars or struggling with some addiction,

You (and the person next to you, and the person who is not here) holds within them a reflection God you (and they) can have a stunning never-ending relationship with him; and

you have the biggest and best and most challenging job in the world –
to represent God to others...

In other words human life has value regardless of its physical or mental capabilities.

And the trouble with the secular view is that

if we link the value of life to our abilities

it won't be long before those without a voice, without abilities begin to be discounted and terminated.

if we link the value of life to our abilities

It won't be long before unborn human life is terminated without very much thought

so that today in the West "1 in every 5 'normal' pregnancies ends with an abortion.

if we link the value of life to our abilities

It won't be long before we think some lives are not worth living...

A psychiatrist on the Nuremberg Tribunal described how Hitler implemented the horrors of Auschwitz:

He said "the beginnings at first were merely a subtle shift in emphasis in the basic attitude of the physicians.

It started with the attitude, that there is such a thing as 'a life not worthy to be lived'.

This attitude in its early stages concerned itself merely with the severely and chronically sick.

Gradually the sphere of those to be included in this category was enlarged to encompass the socially unproductive, the ideologically unwanted, the racially different and finally all non-Germans".

if we link the value of life to our abilities

It won't be long before mental health issues explode, because people cannot obtain the models of success that are paraded in front of them.

So that we in the West have a mental-health epidemic much of which (not all, but much of which is) linked to lack of self worth.

The secular "world view" poisons our sense of value.

But you are different and you don't have to believe that rubbish....

David says of God in Psalm 139

You created my inmost being,

you knit me together in my mother's womb,

my frame was not hidden from you when I was made in that secret place,

yours eyes saw my unformed body".

All the way through the Psalm David makes the point

that you are known by God from the very beginning of time

that he watches over you

that he cares for you;

that he has eternal plans for you and

that he will pay everything he has, all that he has, to show his love for you.

You are that valuable to God

You are his image bearer

You are loved by him

You are eternal with him; and

You have been called to most fulfilling and challenging role in the Universe to reflect that love and glory to others forever

Take those truths and apply them to your sense of "who you are" and see where it leads you...

They will change your life.

They will change how you see yourself

They will change your sense of purpose!

Take those truths and see that all human life is equally valuable and precious and apply it to the questions of War, Abortion, Capital Punishment and they will change your view on them too.

But I want to take those truths and apply them to just one thing:
to how we see others,
how we live our everyday relationships in the knowledge of this truth.

2. So, secondly, how does this command change our life?

Jesus went straight to the heart of it.

In Matthew 5:21, he makes the link between Killing, Slaying, Destroying and **Anger**.

Jesus says.

You have heard that it was said to the people long ago,

Do not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.

*But I tell you that anyone who is **angry** with his brother will be subject to judgment.*

Jesus makes the link between Killing and Anger.

And this is relevant because
whilst few of us have ever killed someone, most of us get angry!

Everyone gets angry – **God gets angry**

Indeed **NOT** to get angry when you see injustice or evil means there must be something wrong with us.

So everyone gets angry,

But God says in [Ephesians 4v26](#) “**In your anger do not sin**”.

Anyone can be angry - that is easy. But to be angry with the right person, to the right degree, at the right time, for the right purpose and in the right way - that is not easy.'

So how do we deal with Anger.

The answer is

since we are made in God's image

since we are to reflect his glory

since we are to understand his love and show that love to others

we must do as Jesus does

And it seems to me that Jesus deals with people (that you and I would happily like to strangle) in three particular ways.

And this is the really practical bit!

Firstly, He Respects them, he doesn't Rubbish them.

Jesus says in [Matthew 5: 22](#)

Anyone who says to his brother, 'Raca,' is answerable to the Sanhedrin.

But anyone who says, 'You fool!' (the Greek word is literally “moron”) will be in danger of the fire of hell”.

Now I am aware that 'Raca' isn't one of today's top insults.

But Raca, is actually an Aramaic word which means “worthless one”.

In other words, if we say

“You are not worth anything”.

“You are a waste of breath”.

“You are a moron”,

What we are doing is “devaluing them” and

We have already seen that devaluing someone is the first step towards killing them.

Therefore when someone has hurt us, has disrespected us, has insulted us

Way before the facts are established there is something we need to do.

We need to see them, the same way that Jesus does.
And Jesus sees them as
God's image bearer
Someone God loves
Someone who is capable of loving God and
therefore is of eternal value

Its too easy to rubbish people when **we feel** rubbished!
But if we are secure in God's love,
if we know that it is HIS opinion of us which counts
If we are completely convinced that
We are of eternal value;
Then we can show that to others.

Abraham Lincoln said, "Before I argue with someone I spend one-third of my time thinking about myself and two-thirds thinking about them"

So before we go in with all guns blazing we need to take some time out.
'Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry' (James 1:19).
If we speak when we are angry we will make the best speech that we will ever regret.

Jesus saw the value of people,
So who is it that really gets you going!
Who is it that makes you angry and pushes your buttons – who is it?
You must see them as Jesus sees them
Someone God loves
Someone who is capable of loving God and
Someone of eternal value

Firstly, don't Rubbish them – Respect them
Secondly, for Jesus

2.2. Right anger Resolves, it doesn't make us Resentful.

In Matthew 5:23 Jesus teaches us the importance of dealing with disagreements as soon as you can.
*Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar.
First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift - settle matters quickly.*

If we hold onto our injuries, if we will not let the anger go – it will embitter us...
*A cricketer named Bryn Derbyshire was given out "LBW" and it was quite fair!
This "injustice" upset him so much that after the match,
he tried to reverse his car over the umpire.
The umpire leapt clear but hurt his leg and
members of the opposing team ended up smashing Derbyshire's car with cricket bats.*

*In court Derbyshire, aged 37, admitted causing bodily harm by dangerous driving.
And a Nottingham Crown Court gave him a three-months suspended sentence and a £400 fine.
But what he found most difficult was that 59-year-old umpire, Joseph Purser said afterwards at a press interview 'I stand by my decision. He was out.!!'*

Derbyshire had sat and fumed all day at the injustice of the Umpire's decision.
He had replayed in his mind what he wanted to do, what he **could** so,
he had licked his wounds and savoured his sorrow –
and as he brooded he became bitter.

Bitterness will kill US, our relationship with THEM, AND our relationship with God.
Its not worth it!

When something has gone wrong.
Do what Jesus did - Be the first to “give”

*I read this wonderful story in the Readers Digest.
Apparently, rush-hour traffic in New York is hugely frustrating.
Well one day a young lady driver darted her car out of side street into the stream of traffic causing the car behind to brake quite hard and sound his horn continuously!
Anyway about 30 yards later the traffic comes to a halt and a big man gets out of the car behind and angrily stomps towards the lady's car.
Seeing him coming, this attractive young lady jumps out of her car,
runs up to the guy (big smile on her face) and before he could say anything she throws her arms around him, hugs him, and plants a huge kiss on his cheek! Says she's sorry
Then she was back in her car and driving away, leaving her antagonist standing in the middle of the street – speechless, confused **and with a big smile on his face!***

*I've been causing traffic jams for days now in Southover High Street and it still hasn't happened to me!
What you see there is a triumph of reconciliation!*

Right Anger Respects, it seeks Resolution (even if you have to humble yourself);
and Thirdly, What we see in Jesus, is that

2.3 it seeks to redeem NOT to take Revenge

God says in Romans 12 *“do not BE overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good”*.

Naturally, **we** want to “get people back”, to “get even”, to “hit out” and to hurt “just as they have hurt us”.
And there is some Justice in that (an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth) – that seems fair.

But Jesus goes beyond Justice, and takes us into Grace.

Jesus calls you to go beyond fair...

To **win** them back, not to **get** them back

James Crawford was seriously irritated.

He had just spent 2 hours in a queue, dealing with a surly clerk and the insane regulations of Guildford Social Security.

On the way home he stopped to buy a cricket bat for his son and

when he got to the checkout - the girl at the register said "Cash or Card, Sir?"

And James unfairly snapped "Cash" and then realising his rudeness apologised and explained

"how he'd spent all morning at Social Security arguing with the most unreasonable people"

The girl replied sweetly "Shall I gift-wrap the bat Sir - or are you going back there?"

Someone once said

to give evil having received 'good' is demonic;

to give good having received 'good' is fair

to give good having received evil requires God'

And I guess all of tonight

the practical application:

don't rubbish but respect

don't be resentful but resolve

don't take revenge but redeem

all of that God given wisdom...

Isn't worth a “hill of beans”

Until we ourselves understand, for ourselves, that this is what Jesus has done for us.

When Jesus looks at our life and all the things we have done to hurt and ignore him and all the things we have failed to do to help others

he could so easily get angry at the hardness of our heart, our selfishness, our small mindedness...
he could have so easily consigned us to the rubbish heap
and written us off
and taken his revenge by walking away.

He could have done that to you and me
and that would have been fair...
But the truth is
he sees past our faults
he invites us into a relationship with him
he calls US to reflect his glory and love forever

And if we don't know that – tonight is a waste of time
And therefore until we understand that,
until it is personal,
until we see for ourselves...
the values he places on us
the humility he shows in coming to earth
the sacrifice he made to win us back

we will never truly place any value on our enemies
we will never humble ourselves for them
we will never make the sacrifice...

If you have problems with Anger,
if you have a broken relationship with someone and you know God's love
then you need to seek to resolve and redeem that situation
for your good, for their good and for God's glory.

This is your calling
you are made in the image of God
you have been designed to show God's love to others
you have been destined to shine with God's glory forever.
It is what makes you of eternal and supreme value
That nothing and no-one can shake.