



**New Mount Zion M.B. Church  
Bible Class May 4, 2020**

***“Understanding The Ten Commandments”  
#6<sup>th</sup> Commandment***

**When Moses brought down the Ten Commandments to Israel, they were brought down by a man who had killed another man.**

**Remember that Moses killed an Egyptian taskmaster who had been beating an Israelite slave. That's when Moses ran for his life and wound up shepherding sheep for forty years and this establishes the fact that there were already laws in place against murder.**

**Exodus 2: 11-15**

# What does "thou shall not kill" mean in the Ten Commandments?

It literally means thou shall not murder.

To kill someone is not the same as murdering them according to the Bible. Murder is the unlawful taking of a human life. The command not to murder applies to human beings and not to animals. God gave animals to mankind for his use (Genesis 1:26 - 30, 9:1 - 4). But this does not mean that humans have the right mistreat animals and the environment (Genesis 2:15, Deuteronomy 22:6 - 7, 25:4, Proverbs 12:10).

**The Sixth Commandment, in whatever translation you read it, is not “You shall not kill” but rather, “You shall not murder” and killing and murder are not the same thing at all. Killing is sometimes necessary for nations to defend themselves from invasion. This means that they must kill or be killed, but that’s not the same thing as murdering someone.**

*At the heart of these questions is this issue: Who possesses the authority to take human life? Who has the right to make that decision? You are not to deliberately kill premeditatedly or in the anger of the moment. We must control our tempers. I believe that taking another person's life is not our right to decide. The Sixth Commandment reminds us that God is the giver of life, and He alone has the authority to take it or to grant humans permission to take it.*

*Some believe that this extends to participating in the military or fighting for their country. However, the sixth commandment does not seem to mean the inadvertent taking of a life in the defense of one's country. Jesus said there would be wars with us until He finally returns and establishes His own kingdom (Matthew 24:6-8).*

*The Bible says that wars come because of the sinfulness of the human heart. Notice James 4, which specifically talks about this. But there are numerous occasions mentioned in Scripture when God ordered the battle. In Genesis 14, God directed Abraham to do battle with the king to rescue his nephew, Lot. It is also important to notice that the battle was in self-defense, not to simply take loot or territory belonging to another. Genesis 14:20 says that God delivered the enemy into his hands.*

*Ancient Israelites, under the Old Covenant, could kill other humans under very special circumstances such as punishment for certain sins, for example, murder (Exodus 21:12 - 14, Leviticus 24:17, 21) and adultery (Leviticus 20:10, Deuteronomy 22:22 - 24).*

*God also allowed the Israelites to engage in warfare and even gave them instructions about waging war (Deuteronomy 20:1 - 20). He also recognized that humans might accidentally kill each other, and he made provisions for this (Numbers 35:9 - 34, Deuteronomy 19:1 - 13).*

*The primary reason God hates murder is that out of all creation, only humans are made in his image and likeness (Genesis 1:26 - 27, 9:4 - 6). Even before the codification of the Ten Commandments at Mount Sinai, the murder of other human beings was wrong (Genesis 4:8 - 12, 4:23 - 24, 9:4 - 6, Exodus 1:16 - 17).*

*In Matthew 5:21 -26, Jesus amplifies the meaning of the sixth commandment "thou shall not kill." He brings out that to commit murder means more than just killing someone, it means having an angry and unforgiving attitude towards them (Matthew 5:21 - 26).*

*The apostle John elaborates on this by writing that to hate someone is the same as murdering them. He states, "Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him." (1John 3:15, NKJV).*

## *Justice versus mercy*

*God's preference is for us to be merciful. He is especially merciful to anyone who repents. "Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live." Ezekiel 33:11. That is how God thinks. That is the way He wants us to think. When her accusers brought a woman caught in the act of adultery to Jesus, what was His reaction? Her accusers would have gladly stoned her to death had Jesus agreed to that punishment.*

*Such was the penalty allowed by law for such an offence. But although He in no way condoned her sin, neither did He condemn her to death. Instead He commanded her to “go and sin no more.” John 8:11. He showed mercy and gave her the opportunity to reconsider how she was living and change her ways to avoid the judgment to come. Eventually we must all give account of ourselves before God. James warns us, “So speak you, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty.” James 2:12. God will eventually administer justice to all who refuse to repent.*

*Did you know that you can murder someone without committing the actual act? How is this possible? Jesus told us when He was teaching about hatred.*

*Murder like all sin, beginnings in the human mind (Matthew 15:18 - 19, Mark 7:20 - 23) it starts as a thought, in this case hatred, which leads to the action of murder (James 1:13 - 15, 4:1 - 3). The opposite of hating someone is loving them, we should even love our enemies (Matthew 5:43 - 48), seeking not revenge, but looking for ways to help them (Romans 12:17 - 21).*

*Hatred, which is the same as murder (1John 3:15), is unforgiving, vengeful and hostile towards one's enemies. The more we walk with God and do his will, the more we will fulfill "Thou Shall not Kill."*

## *Hate is murder*

*The Bible shows that hate is the attitude of murder. The apostle John wrote: “Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him” (1 John 3:15).*

*The Bible also shows the dangers of our words and that we can murder with our tongues (Proverbs 18:21; James 3:5-8).*

*Under the New Covenant a change occurred in the meaning of 'thou shalt not kill.' Just as Christians are to no longer execute sinners, so they should not wage carnal war, but spiritual warfare (John 18:36, 2 Corinthians 10:1 - 6, Ephesians 6:10 - 18, 1Timothy 1:18 - 20, 6:11 - 14, 2 Timothy 2:3 - 5, 4:6 - 8).*

*Christians must be peacemakers (Matthew 5:9, Romans 14:19), forgiving those who do them harm (Ephesians 4:29 - 32, Colossians 3:12 - 14, Matthew 6:9 - 15, Mark 11:25 - 26), treating their enemies with love (Luke 6:27 - 36) and not seeking revenge (Romans 12:17 - 21, 1Peter 3:8 - 12).*

*One way to avoid murdering someone in your heart is to see the depth to which we have been forgiven. But another powerful way to avoid hating someone (murdering them in your heart) is to listen to how Jesus treated His enemies. He prayed from agony on the cross to those who put Him there,*