

Bible Studies for Life: September 27

Honor Life • Exodus 20:13; 1 Samuel 26:7-11, 22-25

By Becky Brown



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The second grouping of the Ten Commandments contains six concepts from The Lord which govern our relationships with one another. Commandment Six from Exodus 20:13 is our focus for this week. The Tyndale Bible reads: "Thou shalt not kyll." The Wycliffe Bible reads: "Thou schalt not sle." The King James Version reads: "Thou shalt not kill." The New Living Translation reads: "You must not murder." The English Standard Version reads: "You shall not murder." Pick any version of Scripture. You will see that God honors life. Life is God's alone to give and to take away.

The Hebrew word for "kill" in this passage (raht-zach) means to actually take a life. It means to erase a person from existence either on purpose with pre-meditation or accidentally. Whether you "kill, kyll, sle, or murder" another, the life is taken never to be returned. God alone is the Author of life. He should be the Finisher of life as well. When we take life, we put ourselves in God's place. He considers life as sacred. Murder is an attack on God Himself.

In the preceding commandments, God has established His unchallenged first place, His sole authority, His holy name,

and His Sabbath day of rest. He has shown life through procreation via the establishment of the home and family. He has ordained that honor be shown to parents.

“Thou shall not kill” expresses God’s value for every life. Culture today does NOT value life. Murder rates are skyrocketing. Video games train our kids to kill and then they simply have to “press one” for a new life to keep on playing. In 1973, our own U.S. Supreme Court legalized the taking of life by abortion and has upheld their decision at every occasion. In our nation alone, over sixty million babies (3,000 per DAY) have died in the womb since the Supreme Court stepped in; one-third of what would have been our current population never saw the light of day. Human trafficking rips children and adults right off the street and robs them of their dignity by stealing their lives from them. The next arena of decision-making will involve euthanizing (putting to death) the marginalized, the physically and mentally impaired, and the elderly. Christians must stand against the culture and remind the world that God values life.

Though murder is one person’s decision against another, murder can actually leave a man standing and bearing only a near-mortal wound. Jesus said so. In the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew chapters five, six, and seven), Jesus pinpoints and exposes murder by anger and hateful words and character assassination. Murder will certainly take a life but it can also leave a wounded brother verbally injured.

We have looked each week at the life of King David to see how he lived out the Ten Commandments during his reign. David lived approximately four hundred years after Moses, Mt. Sinai, and the stone tablets. We find two incidents recorded in First Samuel chapters 24 and 26 that describe how David valued life. King Saul knew that that the young shepherd David had been chosen by God to be king in his place. Saul had attempted to kill David with a spear. Saul and his men were chasing David through the desert areas of Southern Israel, intending to

destroy him. Twice, David had the opportunity to kill Saul. In both cases, David refused to do that or allow it to be done by his own soldiers. David saw Saul as the anointed one of God. Saul's life was spared because David valued life just as God values life.

In one encounter, Saul was in a cave where David and his men were actually hiding. David was close enough to kill Saul but he just cut off a piece of his robe instead. In another encounter, David and one of his men actually entered Saul's army camp and were able to get close enough to take his weapon and his water jug. They did not take his life. David left an excellent example for his men of the value of life.

I have lost three friends to suicide. The taking of one's own life also usurps the authority of the Lord. All three of these were believers in Jesus. I will see them in Heaven. Meanwhile, we have lost the joy of days with them in our lives. From womb to tomb, God is in charge of death and life.

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