

Exodus Our Journey – 6th Commandment - Love and Hatred.

Give overview to this portion of the sermon series.

1. Background Application

- a. How many of you remember the first murder in the bible? Yes, it was when Cain killed Abel.
- b. They were the first two recorded children of Adam and Eve.
- c. If you read the story of these two, you may notice a conspicuous absence of family grief.
 - i. Adam and Eve aren't around to grieve or cry out for their dead son.
 - ii. But the bible says that God asked Cain where his brother was after the slaying to which we have the famous reply, "*Am I my brother's keeper?*"
 - iii. It is what God says next that ought to grab our attention and shake us up.
 - iv. "*What have you done? Listen! Your brother's blood cries out to me from the ground.*" (Genesis 4:10).
 - v. The anthropomorphic language here implies that even Cain ought to be able to hear his brother's blood crying out from the ground in God's words of "Listen!"
 - vi. A principle is also unveiled here that runs throughout the bible as well.
 1. Twenty-two times in the bible the term "innocent blood" is mentioned.
 2. **Innocent blood always "cries out" to God for justice.**

2. What is Murder?

- a. Our passage today is the commandment that was written in principle on men's hearts long before it was written in stone during the Exodus and the giving of the Law.
- b. Exodus 20:13 "*You shall not murder.*"
 - i. Some of you are familiar with the translation "thou shalt not kill."
 1. The Hebrews understood as "you shall not murder."
 - ii. Four simple words, you'd think we would understand them by now.
 - iii. **The definition of murder is "To kill or take an innocent life"**
 1. If this definition is as simple as it sounds, then...
 2. Why is it that we have protests outside of our prisons trying to spare the life of a murderer before he is executed for his crimes?
 3. Why is it that we try to ban weapons, thinking that in some way it will reduce the number of murders in our nation?
 - a. If it were the fault of the weapon, then the command would say, "You shall bear no arms or weapons lest you kill an innocent person"
 - b. But the command is much simpler.
 - c. Why is that?
 - iv. It is because murder doesn't just happen.
 1. Guns and knives and rocks and clubs aren't accused, prosecuted and punished for murder.
 2. People are.
 3. Cain wasn't punished for the weapon he used but for the evil in his heart.
 4. And that is because murder – the taking of an innocent life, occurs because there is something in the human heart that is disposed toward hating someone enough that they would will that person not to exist.
- c. You might notice that this can be quite a "hot topic" and a tough one to cover in just one sermon.
- d. We are going to examine a number of aspects of this commandment and our society's response to this commandment this morning, but most importantly, we will also look at how Jesus understood this commandment as did the early church.

3. The Value of Human Life

- a. Much of the current debate over this commandment arises over how we perceive the value of human life.
- b. Lets look back at what happened after the flood, when animals were given to mankind as food and God addresses the problem of blood.
 - i. Genesis 9:6 *"Whoever sheds man's blood, By man his blood shall be shed, For in the image of God He made man."*
 - ii. Do you see why death had to be the consequence of murder? Because of the value of each and every human life.
 1. That value is solely based upon this statement: *"For in the image of God he made man."*
 2. **Man is made in the image of God.**
 - a. We can go back to the first chapter of Genesis and find in Genesis 1: 26: *And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth. 27: So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.*
 - iii. What does it mean to be God's image?
 1. **To be in the image of God means that we comprise a likeness, a shadow of or reflection of the character of God.**
 2. Man's infinite value comes from possessing the indelible (although perhaps marred) image of God.
 3. Someone this week sent me a very interesting email. It was a software program that said it could reconstruct my face by answering a bunch of questions. So I did. Eyes, normal, lips, medium, hair gray, skin tone, tan, glasses, oval face...etc. Then I hit a button and it said, processing. Then suddenly a picture pops up on the screen...wow! It was a picture of Jesus and text reminding me that I am in his image. So are you. And as such, you are infinitely valuable.
 - iv. To destroy a man means to attack God.
 1. Man is a creature dear to his Creator, and therefore ought to be so to us.
 2. Even though that image may be marred by sin, it does not diminish the value of the life that God has imparted.
 3. **The principle here is that he who unjustly kills a man defaces the image of God and thus dishonors God.**
- c. Our society has been changing what value it places upon human life for the past 50 years.
 - i. We have forgotten that our true value and worth is not based upon what we can do, what we can contribute, what our abilities are, or how many points we can score in a basketball game.
 1. Our society so stresses what we do as our source of value that people are destroying themselves to feel valuable!
 - a. We work longer hours, we undergo beauty treatments, we go on diets and try botox.
 2. But your value does not come from what you do but from who you are!
 - a. We spend a great deal of time in this church undoing this lie in the lives of people.
 - b. Many of you have been or are going through a study called "Search for Significance" and have begun to understand where your value comes from.
 - c. Your value comes from being made in the image of God!

- ii. One arena where the image of God is important for establishing the value of life lies in the abortion question.
 - 1. Abortion is directly related to the mistaken notion of human importance being determined by personal usefulness or individual wanted-ness.
 - 2. If a pre-born baby cannot grow up to be a useful person within society or if a pre-born baby will not be a wanted person within a family, that baby is viewed as being less important than other children and unworthy of life.
 - 3. If we say that a pre-born child's importance is based on their usefulness or wanted-ness, why would anything change after birth?
 - a. The following case actually happened. A woman sought an abortion but the abortion was unsuccessful and the-unborn-to-be-aborted child was born. That child is set aside, not fed, not attended to and allowed to die.
 - i. One politician has argued that a child born after a botched abortion should have no Constitutional protection to life until it is taken home. (Newsweek, 10/2, 2000, p. 82)
 - b. That's the logical conclusion for those supporting late-term abortions; because if a woman has a right to end the life of her child one minute before birth, what difference is there at one minute after birth?
 - i. What has changed about that child? Nothing, except geography.
 - c. One ethicist at a prestigious Ivy League school argues that there should be no Constitutional protection for a child until age 2 when one begins to become self-conscious.
 - i. This ethicist argues that prior to that time, parents should have the right to decide whether they want to preserve the life of their child or terminate it. (Newsweek, 9/13, 1999, p. 80)
 - d. This is because the value of life our society ascribes to a person is based not on whose image they are in but upon their usefulness to that society.
 - 4. So when do we get the image of God.
 - a. Is the image of God ours by right at age 2 with self-consciousness or at birth with separation from the mother or at viability when we can survive outside the womb or at conception when all the genetic material is present for making a person?
 - b. Such questions lead us to the terrible position that a person's value is based upon *someone else's* criteria.
 - i. Usefulness or wanted-ness are very subjective.
 - ii. The fact that we are created in the image of God gives us individual value regardless of how anyone else views us.
- d. I could at this point chase a rabbit and pursue the arguments for and against capital punishment. But we can do that tonight, come if you want a lively discussion! But it is not appropriate for this sermon today.

4. How did Jesus Interpret this Commandment?

- a. I am going to go out on a limb this morning and ask all of the murderers in this congregation to identify themselves.
 - i. Has anyone in here ever been guilty of breaking this commandment?
 - ii. Hmm, no hands. Either you are really good folks or you are really good liars.
- b. Matthew 5:21-26 21 "*You have heard that the ancients were told, 'YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT MURDER' and 'Whoever commits murder shall be liable to the court.'* 22 "*But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be guilty before the court; and whoever says to his brother, 'You good-for-nothing,' shall be guilty before the supreme court; and whoever says, 'You fool,' shall be guilty enough to go into the fiery hell.* 23 "*Therefore if you are presenting*

your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, 24 leave your offering there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering. 25 "Make friends quickly with your opponent at law while you are with him on the way, so that your opponent may not hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the officer, and you be thrown into prison. 26 "Truly I say to you, you will not come out of there until you have paid up the last cent."

- i. The 6th commandment did not outlaw *hatred* per say.
 1. Even though this is in fact the *cause* of killing.
 2. Jesus uses the "*you have heard...*" "*but I say to you*" pattern of teaching his listeners.
 3. He does this because the letter of the law was being observed while the intent and spirit of the law was not.
- ii. In this passage, Jesus makes anger with a brother a sin equal to murder; and also, such derogatory statements as "Raca" and "you fool," subject to the penalties of murder.
 1. Why would He do such a thing?
 2. Commentary Note: There are three kinds of offences here, which exceed each other in their degrees of guilt. 1st. Anger against a man, accompanied with some injurious act. 2dly. Contempt, expressed by the opprobrious epithet raka, or shallow brains. 3dly. Hatred and mortal enmity, expressed by the term moreh, or apostate, where such apostasy could not be proved. Now, proportioned to these three offences were three different degrees of punishment, each exceeding the other in its severity, as the offenses exceeded each other in their different degrees of guilt. 1st. The judgment, the council of twenty-three, which could inflict the punishment of strangling. 2dly. The Sanhedrin, or great council, which could inflict the punishment of stoning. And 3dly. The being burnt alive in the valley of the son of Hinnom
 - a. Have you ever used a racial slur? That is the use of "RACA", which is punishable like murder because it denigrates a person made in the likeness of God to less than that.
- iii. There are several reasons:
 1. **Hatred must be nipped in the bud or it will fester into an act.**
 - a. That act may not be actual murder, but may be its equivalent.
 - b. We will treat someone with such disdain that we will denigrate the truth that they are in the image of God.
 - c. In a very real sense, we will disavow their eternal value given by God simply by developing an attitude toward them.
 - d. This can be expressed through our thoughts and derogatory words.
 2. **Anger with your brother is a foundation for murder.**
 - a. Many of us in this room would never raise our hand against another person...but we may have an attitude of having nothing to do with a brother because they have wronged us.
 - b. I wonder if you have ever thought about what it means to "have nothing to do with someone" because you are angry with them?
 - c. You might say, "I don't want to be in the same church as them"
 - i. Would you want to be in the same heaven as them?
 - ii. Could you stand to see them eternally happy?
 - iii. Probably not if you hated them or were sufficiently angry toward them.
 - iv. Have you ever been so hurt by a brother or sister in Christ that you felt you could no longer be around them? I know I have.
 1. What would I say if I saw them in heaven? "Excuse me, but I gotta go?" (where?)
 2. There will only be room for one of you in heaven!
 3. **Hatred is opposed to love.**
 - a. Here is a powerful principle that John writes about in 1st John.
 - b. 1 John 3:14- 15 "*We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love abides in death. 15*

Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer; and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.”

- i. This passage is one of three passages in the same letter from John that deal with this issue. (1 Jn 3:14-15, 1 Jn 2:7-11, 1 John 4:17-21)
 - ii. He is stating how you can know you are saved.
 1. *“We **know** that we have passed out of death into life **BECAUSE** we love the bretheren.”*
 - a. Loving won't save you. But you there is no way you are saved if you don't love.
 - b. John is saying that a person is living a lie if they claim to be a Christian and do not love their brothers.
 - c. That is, if they “hate” or nurse grudges, etc. they are living a contradiction.
 - iii. He is also tying hatred and murder together.
 1. *“Everyone who hates is brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.”*
 2. What is hatred? Miso: to hate, pursue with hatred, detest to be hated, detested. Used 43 times in the N.T
 3. What if as a Christian, you have a terrible argument with another Christian. One so serious that you leave that church and go to another, hoping you never run into that person again.
 - a. Folks, this happens every day!
 - b. You are making a deliberate choice to “hate” your brother.
 - c. This is incompatible with being a Christian.
 - d. The bible says that you as good as a murderer if you have such an attitude
 4. And if you continue in that attitude you are simply **PROVING** that you don't belong to Christ.
 5. You don't lose your salvation, you simply **PROVE** you never had it!
 - iv. There is such a thing as a blind spot in the Christian.
 1. A wound can be a tough thing to mend.
 2. But once made aware of the nature of this sin, if you continue to nurture it, you may be evidencing whether or not you belong to Christ.
 3. If the love of Christ will not move you to reconcile, nothing will. Not even the threat of hell itself!
- 4. Love is the fulfillment of the Law**
- a. 1 John 4:17-21 *By this, love is perfected with us, so that we may have confidence in the day of judgment; because as He is, so also are we in this world. 18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love. 19 We love, **because** He first loved us. 20 If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for the one who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen. 21 And this commandment we have from Him, that the one who loves God should love his brother also*

- b. Would we ever wish someone evil, misfortune or harm because of the harm they did to you?
 - i. You might say, “Well pastor, you don’t know what they did to me!”
 - ii. No, but I know what I did to Jesus. I know what you did too.
 - iii. Jesus didn’t deserve what he got. I put Him there. It was my sin. I murdered him. And so did you.
 - c. The positive side is love.
 - i. To give someone what they do not deserve. To cherish the uncherishable.
 - ii. To care for the one who rejects and abuses your care. To honor when they don’t deserve it.
 - iii. And you say, “I can’t do it!” duh...your right! You cannot do it!
 - iv. Unless Jesus abides in and works through you and your brokenness and surrender. That is the only way you can ever love someone who has hurt you so badly!
5. Justin Martyr in the 2nd century wrote, *"We used to value above all else money and possessions. Now we bring together all that we have and share it with those who are in need. Formerly we hated and killed one another because of a difference in nationality or custom. Now since the coming of Christ, we all live in peace. We pray for our enemies and seek to convert those who hate us."*

iv. What does love look like?

- 1. When someone asked Jesus, "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?" How did Jesus respond? *"You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets"* (Matthew 22:35-40)
- 2. Let me give you an illustration of brotherly love: *"After the U.S.S. Pueblo was captured by the North Koreans, the eight-two surviving crew members were thrown into a brutal captivity. In one particular instance thirteen of the men were required to sit in a rigid manner around a table for hours. After several hours the door was violently flung open and a North Korean guard brutally beat the man in the first chair with the butt of his rifle. The next day, as each man sat at his assigned place, again the door was thrown open and man in the first chair was brutally beaten. On the third day it happened again to the same man. Knowing the man could not survive another beating, another sailor took his place. When the door was flung open the guard automatically beat the new victim senseless. For weeks, each day a new man stepped forward to sit in that horrible chair, knowing full well what would happen. At last the guards gave up in exasperation. They knew that they were unable to beat that kind of sacrificial love."*
 - a. Could you, would you have done that?
- 3. 2 Corinthians 5:14-15: *"For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died; and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again."*
- 4. How great is that love? So great that, while I was still a sinner — rebellious, unrighteous, unrepentant — Christ died for me (Romans 5:8). What powerful words these are — Christ died for me! The world wouldn't cross the street to give me the time of day, but Christ died for me! The world wouldn't give me ten dollars if I needed food or gas, but Christ died for me! The world would bend me

to its purpose, chew me up, and spit me out into everlasting condemnation, but Christ died for me! – It is what we celebrated today in the Lord's supper.

- a. **Have you ever received or experienced that kind of love before?**
 - b. **Jesus is offering it to you today. Won't you receive it? You can, by simply asking and surrendering your life to Him. Give Him your failures, your sin, your pain, your hopelessness and he will give you success, holiness, healing and hope. I know it's not a fair trade, but it is what God's love looks like!**
5. What is love?. It's death.
- a. If lovers don't know this, they are headed for trouble.
 - b. Never will you have your way again.
 - c. You can't be happy if this other person isn't.
 - d. No matter who wins the argument, you lose. Always.
 - e. The sooner you learn this the better off you will be.
 - f. Love is an exercise in frustration.
 - i. You leave the window up when you want it down.
 - ii. You watch someone else's favorite TV program.
 - iii. You kiss when you have a headache.
 - iv. You turn the music down when you like it loud.
 - v. You learn to be patient without sighing or sulking.
6. To love...is to die
- a. To no longer call your life your own.
 - b. To no longer call your time your own.
 - c. To love is to put aside your wants to meet someone else's needs.
 - d. It is the key characteristic of a Christian and it is motivated y what Jesus has done for you.
 - i. If you are missing this kind of love, then you have not surrendered.
 - ii. You are refusing to die with Christ.
 - iii. Becoming a Christian isn't just about getting some fire insurance, but it is about coming and receiving His love and dying to your own self-oriented, self directed life.
 - iv. You become born again to love when you experience His love.
 - e. Many people thank me for visiting them in the hospital. But the truth is, I because that is my calling. It is even possible for me to do it without love.
 - i. But when one of your brothers or sisters in church, who has a family, who works and has very little time does so...when they sit with you for hours so you won't be alone...THAT'S LOVE!
 - ii. Or when someone who you had a falling out with takes the time to care for you...THAT'S LOVE!
 1. *Stephen Olford tells of a Baptist pastor during the American Revolution, Peter Miller, who lived in Ephrata, Pennsylvania, and enjoyed the friendship of George Washington. In Ephrata also lived Michael Wittman, an evil-minded sort who did all he could to oppose and humiliate the pastor. One day Michael Wittman was arrested for treason and sentenced to die. Peter Miller traveled seventy miles on foot to Philadelphia to plead for the life of the traitor.*

- a. *“No, Peter,” General Washington said. “I cannot grant you the life of your friend.”*
 - b. *“My friend!” exclaimed the old preacher. “He’s the bitterest enemy I have.”*
 - c. *“What?” cried Washington. “You’ve walked seventy miles to save the life of an enemy? That puts the matter in different light. I’ll grant your pardon.” And he did. They two were reconciled after that as well.*

- v. Folks, this is a lot to think about today.
 - 1. Today, I believe God has spoken to someone here today.
 - a. I believe that God is dealing with you on something in your life.
 - b. I believe that God has brought you to a place where you can see that you haven’t been living for Him but for yourself.
 - c. If that is you, we are about to have a ministry time. Don’t remain in your seat, come forward for prayer or to the altar.
 - 2. Someone else in this room may have anger toward someone else, maybe toward a brother or sister, or even toward me! Some of us would be surprised to hear it.
 - a. But today you have heard what the bible says about such anger, unforgiveness or bitterness.
 - b. You cannot remain in it. It will be like acid, destroying both you, the one who contains it and all you come in contact with.
 - c. You cannot remain in anger and be a Christian. You have a choice.
 - d. Will you choose to let go, ask forgiveness, offer forgiveness?
 - e. Will you make a choice to forgive, to drop your anger, your words of spite, and your dislike of a brother or sister?
 - f. Come and spend some time at the altar, go to a brother or sister if they are here, make a decision to call them if they are not.
 - i. Come and pray with me and Jennifer – for anything. This time is your time to receive ministry and to make it right with God while we stand and sing...