

Go Deeper . . .

Use these questions for further study individually or in a small group

The 6th Word: “You Shall Not Murder.” Ex 20:13

Consider the world around us. In what ways does our culture devalue human life? Where/how are people treated as disposable? Where is violence glorified? What forms of killing are seen as acceptable? How do people justify it?

From a biblical perspective, why is taking a human life wrong?

The Hebrew word used for murder in Ex. 20 includes the idea of negligent homicide (killing someone through carelessness or irresponsibility).

- How might this expand your concept of what this command teaches?
- Should intentional homicide and negligent homicide necessarily be seen the same way? (Explore Numbers 35:9-34 to learn more).
- What steps can you practically take to avoid unnecessarily putting other people’s lives at risk?

In the context of the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament) holy wars conducted by Israel when ordained by God were not considered prohibited by the 6th word.

- Why would God-commanded killing be acceptable?
- Does this still apply today? Why or why not. And if so, how?

Read Leviticus 19:17-18 and Matthew 5:21-26. How do these two passages expand upon the command not to kill?

- What is the connection between anger, hatred, and killing?
- Why are we not permitted to seek vengeance? (see also Rm 12:14-21)
- In what ways are these commands counter-cultural?
- What would it look like to take them seriously by loving others?

Read Matthew 5:43-48. How are we called to go beyond just not killing?

- Using this passage as a launching point, what would a holistic and comprehensive culture of life look like?
(see also Isaiah 2:1-4; 11:1-9; 58:6-12)
- How can you take active steps to help foster a culture of life?

Learn More: If you are unfamiliar with the story of Moses and the Exodus you can check out these two short videos at the Bible Project (bibleproject.com/explore/video/exodus-1-18 bibleproject.com/explore/video/exodus-19-40). You could also have a family movie night and watch *The Prince of Egypt*.

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