

**May 13, 2020**

## **Commandment #6**

The sixth commandment you might think is obvious, “Thou shalt not kill.” Furthermore, it is probably a command you think you have never broken and probably never will. But before you write this commandment off as a no-brainer, let’s consider a few thoughts from scripture.

In our study of “Sin, Its Paralyzing Venom,” we have been studying the works of the flesh, listed in Galatians 5:19-21. These works of the flesh represent four areas of sin, moral sins, religious sins, relational sins, and social sins. Murder is listed as the first of three representing the social sins of the flesh.

When we think of murder, we most often think of the taking of a life, physical murder, but in lesson 23 of our study, we learned that man is a triune being, body, soul, and spirit. As such, there are three ways to kill a person, body (physical murder), soul and spirit. Let’s look at these three more closely.

First, there is physical murder. This is the taking of a human life. Physical murder permeates our society, from domestic violence to mass shootings to the abortion of millions of babies. It should be noted, however, that the taking of a life, while always a serious matter, is not always a form of murder. The Bible clearly teaches that there are occasions when the penalty for a crime against society is to be punished by death. We refer to this as capital punishment or the death penalty. Likewise, the taking of a life in warfare is not murder. Warfare is cruel and leads to many deaths, but a life taken in battle is not the same as murder. Taking a life in the defense of one’s own life (self-defense) is not murder. Every life is precious because every life represents a living eternal soul and the taking of a life is serious, even when justified.

Second, there is soul murder. The soul speaks of one’s mental and emotional being. I John 3:15 “Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer...” We can murder someone without taking their physical life when we murder their soul through our tongues, our attitudes, and our actions. We have the power to say and do things that can destroy the emotional and mental well-being of others. Such action is just as cruel and deadly as physical murder.

Third, there is spiritual murder. Spiritual murder is committed when we say or do something that hinders another from coming to Christ. Cults and false teachers deceive many into believing lies that ultimately condemn their followers to hell. As Christians, we can lose our testimony with behavior that causes people to stumble spiritually and perish in their sin. Simply failing to warn others about the penalty of sin and the necessity of salvation can result in spiritual death. **Matthew 23:13,15** – Jesus gave strong warning to those who hinder others from entering into the kingdom of God.

Which of the three forms of murder do you think is the most serious and why? In what ways are you guilty of murder? What steps can you take today to restore a person you may have harmed?