We come to the Sixth Commandment. The next four commandments are quite brief. Sometimes people have called these the second table or second tablet. The first 4 focus on God and the second 6 focused on people, but that is wrong. In ANE covenants, each party received a copy of the covenant, so each tablet had all Ten on them.

The Sixth Command is just two words in Hebrew. Murder not. Finally, a commandment I have not broken. At least most of you. And it is important to define murder correctly. Not all killing is wrong, which is why every modern translation has moved away from King Jimmy Version, who said "thou shalt not kill." There are different Hebrew words for murder (*ratsach*) and kill (*harag*).

In Scripture, there are several types of killing that are not prohibited. Such as animals, or in warfare. God is a warrior who sent Israel to battle. So 1 Sam 17 about David and Goliath: "Then David said to the Philistine, "You come to me with a sword and with a spear and with a javelin, but I come to you in the name of the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied." The CSB translates hosts rightly as armies. The Lord of armies.

And capital punishment is biblical. Gen 9:6: "Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed, for God made man in his own image." Life is so valuable that if you take it, yours must be taken. Because humans are made in God's image and therefore every person has value and dignity. And its not just OT, but NT too: Rom 13 says the government is a servant of God instituted by God who bears the sword. Swords have certain, limited uses. / Same with self-defense: **22:2.**

The Sixth command prohibits negligent homicide **Exod 21:28-29.** Deut 22:8: "When you build a new house, you shall make a parapet for your roof, that you may not bring the guilt of blood upon your house, if anyone should fall from it." / So the 6th command prohibits the unlawful or unauthorized or illegal taking of human life. In other words, it prohibits homicide. It prohibits the intentional or premediated killing of a person (Num 35, Deut 20, Exod 22:2-4). God cares about life / The immediate meaning and application is clear enough, but let's consider various ways this command applies today:

Suicide Suicide rates are skyrocketing. In the US in 2025, 49K people took their own life. There is nothing more painful than having a loved one take their own life. It's tragic that someone would get to this state when there is help and resources. But, as painful as it is, it is sin to commit suicide. It is not the unforgivable sin, like some in CH taught. But it is sinful to take life into your own hands. God alone is the "Lord and give of life" as the Nicene Creed puts it. / If you struggle with suicidal thoughts, get help. You can get pulled out of the rut but often not by yourself.

Abortion. Abortion is our current national travesty. Since 1973, there have been some 65 million babies murdered, which is 4x the population of NYC, Chicago, and Los Angeles combined. Lives eliminated and the vast majority of them are for the convenience of the mother, often being pushed by an abdicating father. Only 1% are due to rape, incest, or defects. Of women obtaining abortion: 80% are not married at the time; about 2/3 never married; 1/2 under age 25; 17% are teenagers.

Abortion kills the baby but is also terrible for the mothers. Abortion is the 5th leading cause of maternal death in the US. Post-abortive women have higher rates of drug and alcohol abuse, suicidal thoughts and attempts, and are more likely to seek counseling or hospitalization for depression. Sadly, women who suffer from post-abortion trauma often fail to get help, because abortion is portrayed as normal and good for women. Too many pro-choice psychologists don't want to "admit" to post-abortion trauma.

The Left has gone mad on this issue. One used to could find pro-life Democrats, but those days are over. In recent years we've had Democratic lawmakers pressuring Google to prevent crisis pregnancy centers from showing up in search results and Google Ads and Google Maps.[1] Simply incredible. Utterly evil. They claim that pro-life pregnancy centers are "fake clinics that traffic in misinformation" and don't provide comprehensive health services. They mean they won't kill the baby. They argue that pro-life pregnancy clinics are "dangerous to women's health" and their appearance in search results "undermines the integrity of Google's search results." They don't actually care about women. They are not actually pro-choice, they are no choice but abortion. Pro death.

Democratic Senator Elizabeth Warren criticized pregnancy resource centers, saying "Crisis pregnancy centers that are there to fool people looking for pregnancy termination help outnumber true abortion clinics by 3-1. We need to shut them down here in Massachusetts and we need to shut them down all around the country."[2] They don't want women to have a choice.

The 6th command forbids abortion because life begins at conception. This is no longer debated. It's a scientific fact. And biblical truth. Until very recently, the church has universally opposed abortion. Many passages use the language of she "conceived and gave birth" (Gen 4:1, 21:2, 25:21, Ruth 4:13, 1 Sam 1:20, Isa 7:14, Luke 1:31). Psal. 139:13-16 speaks of nascent life: "For you formed my inward parts; you knitted me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; my soul knows it very well. My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed substance; in your book were written, every one of them, the days that were formed for me, when as yet there was none of them."

The Word has an emphasis on God's concern for the child in the womb: Job 31.15: "Did not He who made me in the womb make him, and the same one fashion us in the womb?" Ps. 139.13: "Thou didst weave me in my mother's womb." Is. 49.5: "And now says the Lord, who formed me from the womb to be His servant…" Jer 1.5: "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you…"

Turn over to **Ex. 21.22-25.** God cares. Ironically, so do 39 states here in America because they still have fetal homicide laws. Inconsistent to say the least. Commenting on Exodus 21, John Calvin writes, "For the fetus, though enclosed in the womb of its mother, is already a human

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[1] https://www.christianpost.com/news/republican-attorneys-general-warn-google-dont-censor-pro-life-pregnancy-centers.html

[2] https://twitter.com/greg_price11/status/1546957961439969280

being, and it is almost a monstrous crime to rob it of the life which it has not yet begun to enjoy. If it seems more horrible to kill a man in his own house than in a field, because a man's house is his place of most secure refuge, it ought surely to be deemed more atrocious to destroy a fetus in the womb before it has come to light."[3]

The fetus is a human being made in God's image. To end his or life is an offense against God their maker. This is the Christian view from the beginning. There is a document called the Didache, written in the late 1st Century, which explicitly condemns abortion. 2.2: "You shall not procure [an] abortion, nor destroy a newborn child" Ep of Diogn 5:6: "They marry like all other men and they beget children; but they do not cast away their offspring."

All this is why for most of Evangelical history we have been one issue voters when we can. Did you know that Abilene is 54% pro-choice? You say, no way. I said the same thing. The reality is that Abilene is 88% pro-life, but the pro-life people don't get off their tail and go vote. All you former fetuses need to vote if you haven't!

And where you can, oppose abortion and advocate for life. Due to medical technology, the debate has changed. We all now know that life begins at conception. A recent dissertation surveyed almost 6K biologists and 96% affirmed the view that a human life begins at fertilization.[4] Now, the media doesn't want you knowing that sort of thing. [Listen to Baptist pastor Levi Secord: "To vote is to exert governing authority. To vote for a candidate who says, "Elect me and I will use the power of the state to kill unborn babies, teach homosexuality in the schools, limit free speech, encourage genital mutilation, and steal from your neighbors," is to delegate your authority to the advancement of evil. To vote for such evil is to become a wicked ruler. Christian, if, for whatever reason, you've voted for such evil, then you must repent and ask God for forgiveness. Moreover, you must turn and seek to govern righteously through your future actions. Christians cannot in good conscience support the God-hating, creation-rebelling, and evil policies found at the core of modern leftist political philosophy. To do so is to sin against God and neighbor. Christians who vote for such evil policies display either a profound ignorance or a deep rebellion against God."]

Interestingly, back in 2007, British broadcaster Miranda Sawyer, a self-described pro-choice liberal feminist, became pregnant and said "I was calling the life inside me a baby because I wanted it. Yet if I hadn't, I would think of it just as a group of cells that it was OK to kill. . . . That seemed irrational to me. Maybe even immoral."[5] Run against the grain of the universe, you get splinters.

Scott Klusendorf has done some wonderful work on apologetics here.[6] The argument goes like this: Premise #1: It is wrong to intentionally kill innocent human beings. Premise #2: Abortion

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[3] John Calvin, *Calvin's commentary,* vol. 3, *Harmony of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy* (repr. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1993), n.p, quoted in DeYoung, *The Ten Commandments,* 100.

[4] https://quillette.com/2019/10/16/i-asked-thousands-of-biologists-when-life-begins-the-answer-wasnt-popular/

[5] Pearcey, *Love Thy Body,* 18.

[6] https://prolifetraining.com/pro-lifer/how-to-defend-your-pro-life-views-in-5-minutes-or-less/

intentionally kills innocent human beings. Conclusion: Therefore, abortion is morally wrong. That simple. The question is: is the unborn a member of the human family or not?[7] Don't get sidetracked with choice and personal privacy. The question is "what is the unborn?" We can show from science that they are human beings. The unborn are distinct (diff in kind from any cell of parents), living (react, convert food to energy, grow), and whole human beings (they come from humans have a human make up and are fully programmed. You didn't come *from* an embryo; you once *were* an embryo.)

We argue from philosophy that there is no relevant difference between *you the embryo* and *you the adult* that justifies killing you at that earlier stage of development. Think of SLED: Differences of size, level of development, environment, and degree of dependency are not good reasons for saying you could be killed then but not now.[8]

So, life begins at conception. Abortion is wicked, and all life must be protected and treated with dignity and sanctity. Especially the weakest and most vulnerable. Prov 6:16-17: there are six things the Lord hates and one of them is "hands that shed innocent blood." The weak and innocent baby is targeted for destruction because they are unwanted, unloved, or abnormal.

But listen, if you are here and have had an abortion or maybe you persuaded or funded an abortion, there is grace. Our God is the God of second chances. He can wipe your slate clean by the blood of his son. This is why Christians have sung for generation: "Sin had left a crimson stain, He washed it white as snow." The call is to repent and believe.

So, no murder, no suicide, no abortion. And be informed and careful when it comes to family planning. Don't use the pill because most if not all of them have an abortifacient element – read the fine print. IUD's are not a Christian option. With IVF, discarded or unused embryos are babies. / I think there are implications for the types of media you watch or video games you play. We value life as the people of God. The Sixth Command has lots of implications and applications.

The Sixth commandment prohibits taking life at the beginning, but also the end. Euthanasia is sin. Assisted suicide laws, aka mercy killing, continues to make headway. That's not our call. The Lord gives and the Lord takes. / The people of God are those who honor life, from beginning to end.

Heart Okay, let's move from cultural analysis to heart analysis. Murder, of course doesn't come out of nowhere. In Gen 4, envy leads Cain to murder Abel. In 2 Sam 11, lust leads David to end a life. In 1 Sam 25, it is rage. In Prov 1:10-19, it is greed. People murder externally because of something that is going on internally.

Jesus deepens and transforms the 6th commandment in the SOTM and pinpoints anger. If anger is squelched, there is no need for the 6th commandment. Matt 5:21-22: "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder; and whoever murders will be liable to

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[7] John Ensor and Scott Klusendorf, *Stand for Life* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2012), 7.

[8] Ensor and Klusendorf, *Stand for Life,* 9-10.

judgment.' But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, 'You fool!' will be liable to the hell of fire." Jesus deepens God's desire. He is not so much worried about external murder with the hands, but internal murder with the heart. Start there and the external will be taken care of and it is not just murder that will lead to judgment, but anger. Ouch.

And watch how you use your words. The word here for "fool" is raca, an Aramaic swear word which was equivalent to our most defamatory language. / Anger is a negative emotional response to perceived injustice. It is a light on your dashboard. Something is wrong. Sinful anger happens when I don't get what I want. I feel wronged, whether it be traffic, property taxes, a tyrant boss, a disrespectful spouse, obstinate children, or a bad call from an amateur ref in youth sports just trying to make $7 an hour – why you gotta give the kid a hard time – it aint that big a deal man. Or someone offends you on social media. A) you don't have to doom scroll. You chose to waster your afternoon in that way B) If you do, you can just keep scrolling – you aint gotta troll. Just feel free to disagree and move on rather than rage type. Then there is the current political landscape where civility no longer exists, just outrage.

All of us struggle with anger in some way. Some blow up some clam up. We may sanitize it by calling it frustration or irritability or annoyance, but those things are anger, just in adolescent form. Not yet in full bloom. Jesus says we should take our anger very seriously. John agrees with his Lord: 1 John 3:15: "Everyone who *hates* his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him".

Jesus says that those who are angry will be subject to judgment. He says the hell of fire. Jesus taught about hell frequently. Final judgment is real. And Jesus warns us here. Listen friends, live in light of eternity. This life is just a mist, just a blip on the radar.

This word for "who is angry" is a present participle. Of course, Jesus is not saying anyone who has ever been angry or who has ever insulted a person is going to hell. But he is talking about types of people. Are you staying angry, carrying anger, nursing hatred? The difference between saved people and unsaved people is not the presence and absence of sin, but our posture toward it. We hate it. Christians are not comfortable with their sin. We fight it all our life.

And anger is not always sinful. Eph 4 says "Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and give no opportunity to the devil" (26-27). There is an old English proverb that says "He is a fool who cannot be angry; but he is wise who will not remain so." There is such a thing as "holy hatred" or "righteous anger," but that is not what Jesus is talking about here.

Ok, how can we make some progress? Let's consider together a battle plan against anger. When you begin to feel it coming on, when you feel the BP rising, what should you do? It's an irrational and brief madness you must get a handle on. Let me suggest a 7-step strategy for fighting anger:[9]

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[9] See Scott, *Anger, Anxiety, and Fear.*

1. Realize that if you are in Christ you are a fully forgiven, Spirit-indwelt Christian, you can overcome it. You can. You are not a victim. You are to exercise self-control over this sin. You can make progress. You must!

2. Stop and pray. Take a deep breath. Orient yourself. Zoom out. Take a moment. Push pause. Take a chill pill. Slow your roll. James 1:19-20: “Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger; for the anger of man does not produce the righteousness of God.” This is most crucial. Be slow to speak. Prov 29:20: “Do you see a man who is hasty in his words? There is more hope for a fool than for him.” Acknowledge the sin: I am angry. Then pray and ask, “Holy Spirit, help. Where is my thinking off? What does God want?

So for example, if I get angry because one of my 5 children sins against another sibling or against my wife or against me, how should I be thinking? I should remind myself that this child is a gift of God. God has graciously given me this little human to care for him and raise him in the fear and admonition of the Lord. And God has called me in particular - Eph 6:4 – not provoke them but bring them up in the disciple and instruction of the Lord. So their sin is nothing to be angry about. It is a God-given opportunity for me. I shouldn’t be offended by their sin. I should be saddened by their sin. Oh man, sin has him in its snare. I have been there. All too often. He needs the Lord just like I need the Lord. My Father is fathering me as I am seeking to father this littler person. Now, after orienting myself, getting perspective, I am going to get my anger under control. Stop and pray.

3. Interrogate your sin so that you might overcome it. Ask, when do you tend to get angry? Is there a certain place? A certain day? A certain time of day? A certain thing that tends to provoke you. What wrong am I perceiving? HALT.

4. Identify the idol. Idolatry is the sin behind every sin. You see, anger is a tip-off. There has been some wrong thought process, some wrong value, some wrong evaluation, something elevated too much, something worshipped. Psychiatrists call anger a secondary emotion. What is it that you want? You are angry because you did not get something. You are responding sinfully because your lower-case g god didn’t come through. Or was taken away. Or disappointed you. Maybe you wanted a clean house, or sinless children, or that job promotion, maybe you wanted car seats that install with ease, or the road all to yourself, or a clean bill of health, or impeccable amateur youth sports refs. Maybe you wanted to be loved, to be respected, to have no interruptions in your daily schedule, to be pain-free, to have more money, to be married, to be successful, to be in love, to own a weed-eater whose string never needs refilling, or any number of things.

You desire something and it doesn’t happen, so you respond in anger. Anger is the smoke that rises from the idol on the altar of your heart. Ja 4:1-2 says this, “What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you? You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have, because you do not ask.”

What causes fights. We could ask, what causes anger? *Your* desires. *Your* wants. You want but don't get and respond in anger. Paul Tripp says, "Desire lies at the base of every angry feeling, word and action." So identify the idol, what it is you are wanting and deal with the sin at that level. The primary issue, not anger the secondary emotion. Pull the weed by the root lest it return the next day.

5. Put off and put on. Eph 4:22-24 says "to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness." Put off sin, put on righteousness. Put off anger, put on love and humility, and patience and gentleness. Eph. 4:30-32: "And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you."

6. Preach to yourself. Memorize Scripture. Find verses on anger and put them in your heart. Or as I just read in Eph 4: put off, renew your mind, and put on. We renew the mind through the Word of God. Memorize this passage: Matt 5. Or Col 3:8: "But now you must put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth." Prov 16:32: "Whoever is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city." Prov 29:11: a fool gives full vent to his anger but a wise person has self-control. Prov 14 a fool is hotheaded and reckless. Gal 5:19 says the works of the flesh are fits of anger.

7. Repent when you fail. Because you will fail. Flee to Christ. Run from sin to the cross. Be quick to repent. Take care of your sin soon. Before the sun goes down. Confess and ask for forgiveness from the person you sinned against and from God. Our God has open arms not pointed fingers. If you don't know him, that's your first step. We are all sinners, angry people, covetous people, we have all lied, cheated, we are idolatrous people, gossips, slanderers, rebellious. The good news is that Jesus came to save sinners. 1 Tim 1:15: "The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."

We the people of God do not take life. We do not let our anger run rampant. No, we kill it. And we honor life, advocate for life . ..