

RULES TO LIVE BY!

7. Do Not Murder



Introduction

Today we are going to look at the 6th commandment, which is the first of four commands that deal with our relationships with one another.

Scripture Reading: **Deuteronomy 5:17**

- ❶ Why is murder such a wicked thing in God's sight? Genesis 4:10-12, 9:5-6

*(1. When blood is shed it affects the land it falls on and brings a curse on that land.
2. The life is in the blood, and it cries out for justice
3. When someone kills another person, they are killing someone who has been made in the image of God.)*

- ❷ What was the punishment for murder under the law, and what was God's provision for those who killed someone accidentally? See Leviticus 24:17, Deuteronomy 19:4-7, 10

(The punishment for murder was death, however if a person unintentionally killed someone there were cities set aside in different parts of the land, where he/she could flee to and be safe from those who would want to take revenge.)

Jesus spoke about this law, 'Do not murder' in Matthew 5:21-26 and helps us understand the 'spirit of the law' that God had given.

- ❸ What fresh understanding does Jesus give on this law in these verses?

(Not only is God concerned about the outward action of destroying another person, but the attitudes in our hearts. When we allow anger to control us it quickly leads to words that can harm another person. Although we may not murder outwardly it is wrong to allow these vengeful and hateful thoughts to stay in our hearts.)

Jesus goes on to say that if anyone said 'raca' to his brother he could be taken to the Sanhedrin, which is like a religious court. This was a word people used in those days to show they despised another. However Jesus adds to that, and says that even if you called someone a 'fool' it would bring God's judgment. To call someone a fool criticized a person's character and reputation.

- ❹ Why do you think people despise or look down on others, and why does Jesus include this in the 6th commandment?

(People despise others because they feel superior to them, either because of race, education, intellect or position. Our words can destroy another person, not in their bodies, but in their souls.)

- 5 How can we put things right if we know someone has been offended by something we have done or said that was wrong?

(We are to go to that person we have sinned against and put it right. Only then can we come and worship the Lord in a way that is acceptable to Him.)

- 6 Have you ever been in a situation where you have had to put something right with another person? Share your experience.

Conclusion

The law that God gave to Moses was written on tablets of stone, and mostly dealt with a person's actions. God knew that the law could never change our hearts, and so He promised that He would send His Spirit, so that the law could be in our hearts and He could empower us to obey it.

God doesn't only see the outward actions of a person, but He sees the heart, and so Jesus explained the true meaning of the 6th commandment. It is not only murder that is wrong, but it is wrong to allow anger to grow in your heart and use words and insults to destroy another person.

Is there anyone we have spoken to wrongly that we need to settle things with? Let's respond to God's Word today, so that our worship is acceptable to Him.