



You're Killing Me!
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Series Title: The Perfect Ten
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INTRODUCTION

Read: Exodus 20:13 (KJV & NKJV)

- My implicit commission tonight is to convince you not to kill each other!
- Let me take a poll:
 - How many of you think murder is bad?
 - How many of you think murder is good?
- Well, since we're all in agreement, maybe we should just close in prayer and beat the Baptists to the buffet line!
- Actually, it's not quite so simple.

Are these acts of murder?

- Abortion
 - Assisted Suicide (Dr. Kevorkian)
 - Euthanasia (Terri Schiavo)
 - Suicide
 - Capital Punishment
 - Wartime Killing
- Instead of just telling you what is murder and what isn't, let's consider two important truths from God's Word:
 - Human life, from the womb to the tomb, is precious to God (Ps. 139:13-16, NLT; Jer. 1:5, NLT)
 - The only concessions that God makes for taking a human life is capital punishment and war (Ex. 21:12, NLT; Deut. 20:10-12, MSG)
 - Now, you are probably feeling pretty good about this commandment. Regardless of how we define it, you haven't killed your neighbor and you're not Dr. Kevorkian.
 - You're not like Cain, the first murderer in the Bible. In Genesis 4, Cain was jealous of Abel because God accepted Abel's sacrifice over his own. So, in anger, Cain murdered Able.

Read: I John 3:11-12 (NLT)

- **Illustration:** But wait a second! Some years ago, I was speaking to a group of Jr. High students. In my introduction, I said something like this:
 - Today, I witnessed a murder.
 - The murder occurred at this church.
 - The murderer is in this audience right now!
- What was this murder I witnessed?

Read: I John 3:13-15 (NLT)

- Most of us won't go to prison for committing a literal murder.

Thesis: Yet, we often murder people, even if we don't kill them.

- Today, I want you to see that murder isn't just about killing another person. It is also tearing down a human being with an ungodly attitude – what we'll call "murder from the heart".

I. Murder Begins With the Heart (Matthew 15:19 NLT)

A. Murder Begin With an Evil Heart

“You are trying to kill me because there’s no room in your hearts for my message.” (John 8:37 NLT)

Why can’t you understand what I am saying? It’s because you can’t even hear me! For you are the children of your father the devil, and you love to do the evil things he does. He was a murderer from the beginning. He has always hated the truth, because there is no truth in him. (John 8:43-44 NLT)

B. Murder From the Heart is Revealed In Many Forms

1. Demeaning Words

(Prov. 18:21, NLT; Psa. 57:4, NLT)

Did you know that words do hurt? When you demean another, you risk murdering them at the core – their self-confidence.

2. Gossip

Gossip is basically character assassination. A gossip is murdering another by words – whether true or not.

Illustration: Brother Jethro and Sister Elly Mae may in fact be doing things they shouldn’t. But before you call the prayer chain to spill all their sins, ask yourself if maybe God wants you to pray in private to protect their reputation.

Look at what gossip does:

- a) Betrays confidence (Prov. 11:13)
- b) Separates close friends (Prov. 16:28)
- c) Causes anger (Prov. 25:23)
- d) Ignites quarrels (Prov. 26:20)
- e) Speaks out of turn (I Tim. 5:13)

3. Cruel Jokes (Prov. 26:18-19, NLT)

Illustration: Raymond and the Single’s group.

4. Hatred

“Anyone who hates another brother or sister is really a murderer at heart.” (I John 3:15)

The Bottom Line is that words can kill. Leviticus 19 is a extensive look at the Ten Commandments. Here, all ten commandments are either stated explicitly or implicitly. One commandment not explicitly stated is “You shall not murder.” Yet, this commandment is implicitly stated in these incredible words:

Read directly from your Bible, Lev. 19:16-18.

We murder people, even when we don’t kill them. Our words can tear another down and result in them missing out on what God intended for their lives. What is the penalty for murder?

II. Murder – Even From the Heart – Excludes Us From the Kingdom of God

“Blessed are those who wash their robes. They will be permitted to enter through the gates of the city and eat the fruit from the tree of life. Outside the city are the dogs—the sorcerers, the sexually immoral, the murderers, the idol worshipers, and all who love to live a lie.” (Rev. 22:14-15, NLT)

“Anyone who hates another brother or sister is really a murderer at heart. And you know that murderers don’t have eternal life within them.” (1 John 3:15, NLT)

“But I warn you—unless your righteousness is better than the righteousness of the teachers of religious law and the Pharisees, you will never enter the Kingdom of Heaven!

“You have heard that our ancestors were told, ‘You must not murder. If you commit murder, you are subject to judgment.’ But I say, if you are even angry with someone, you are subject to judgment! If you call someone an idiot, you are in danger of being brought before the court. And if you curse someone, you are in danger of the fires of hell.” (Matt. 5:20-22, NLT)

So, is there any hope for those who murder – whether literally or from the heart?

III. Murder – Even the Literal Form – Is Forgivable By God

A. Some Real Murderers Whom God Forgave

Moses – murdered an Egyptian soldier. Yet God forgave him and made him deliverer of the Jews

David – murdered Uriah the Hittite, the husband of his mistress Bathsheeba. Yet God forgave him and allowed him to continue as king of Israel

Saul – murdered innocent Christians because of their faith. Yet God forgave him and made him Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles

B. If God Can Forgive the Real Murderer, How Much More Will He Forgive the Murderer From the Heart?

1. Maybe you have harbored bitterness toward another
2. You damaged another with cruel words
3. You terminated a pregnancy and now deal with the guilt

Sometimes Paul struggled with this forgiveness:

“For I am the least of all the apostles. In fact, I’m not even worthy to be called an apostle after the way I persecuted God’s church.” (1 Cor. 15:9, NLT)

C. If God Can Forgive a Murderer, Then Shouldn’t We Forgive Those Who Have Murdered Us?

It’s amazing what can happen when Christians forgive those who have sorely hurt us:

“Back in Jerusalem he [Saul] tried to join the disciples, but they were all afraid of him. They didn’t trust him one bit. Then Barnabas took him under his wing. He introduced him to the apostles and stood up for him, told them how Saul had seen and spoken to the Master on the Damascus Road and how in Damascus itself he had laid his life on the line with his bold preaching in Jesus’ name.

“After that he was accepted as one of them, going in and out of Jerusalem with no questions asked, uninhibited as he preached in the Master’s name.” (Acts 9:26-30, MSG)