

Westminster Larger Catechism

Question 134

Introduction to the Sixth Commandment

Halifax, 17 July 2011

Introduction

Today as we continue our study of the Westminster Larger Catechism,

- I want to begin by reminding you why we are doing a study of this Catechism.
 - Catechisms are very helpful to us because they take the principle doctrines of scripture and put them in a convenient summary form.
 - With the Westminster Larger Catechism,
 - you have a large assembly of ministers and elders who were chosen for their ability, learning, and godliness who spent many hours putting together the Westminster Standards over the course of several years.
 - It was a time when standards for the ministry were so stringent that I doubt that there are any ministers alive today who would be able to pass their ordination exams.
 - What's more, these men took vows that they would not assert anything in doctrine but what they believed to be most agreeable to the Word of God.
 - In other words, they were not there to present their own opinions or ideas, but to set forth as clearly as they possibly could a confession and catechisms that were true to scripture.
 - Moreover, the Larger Catechism as well as the Confession and Shorter Catechism they produced have been received and adopted as the Standards of our church,
 - the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, as well many other Presbyterian and Reformed churches over the past three and half centuries,
 - and they have been found to be so sound in the doctrine they assert, that only a few minor changes have been made,
 - and often it is questionable if these changes were even justified.
 - That means that instead of getting the doctrinal views of one minister, you get the consensus of the entire Westminster Assembly which consensus has been tested and found true over the past 365 years.
 - Of course the Confession and Catechisms are nothing compared to the Word of God itself, which is entirely God-breathed,
 - and we must test everything set forth in them by the scriptures,
 - but we ought to have a great measure of confidence in what is set forth because those who set it forth also tested everything by scripture.

- So it is that in preaching through the Larger Catechisms, my purpose is not to preach from the Catechism itself,
 - but rather to preach the doctrines that are presented in the Catechism to you from the Bible,
 - so that your confidence will not be in the writings of men, but in the Word of God.

Today in our study, we have come to Question 134.

- It is a very straightforward question that few would disagree with, except for those who number the commandments differently...

Q. 134 Which is the sixth commandment?

A. The sixth commandment is, Thou shalt not kill.

Questions 135-136 probe more deeply into the meaning and application of this commandment,

- but today I simply want to introduce it to you, looking,
 - first, at the meaning of the words used in this commandment...
 - secondly, at the fact that God alone has the right to decide who will live and who will die...
 - and finally, I want to show you that every attempt to eliminate a man's life is a diabolical attempt to eliminate God Himself.

Before we begin to look at these three subjects,

- Let's turn to our scripture reading which is the eighth chapter of John—John 8.

READ> John 8

- Please note that this reading is particularly related to our third point about how every attempt to eliminate a man's life is a diabolical attempt to eliminate God Himself.
 - I will explain this later...
 - But first, let's look at the commandment itself:
 - Exodus 20:13, reading from the New King James,
 - **“You shall not murder.”**

As I already said, this is a very straightforward commandment.

- It is very easy to understand what it means.
 - But it will be helpful to for us to take a few minutes to look at...

I. The meaning of the words used in sixth commandment.

- There are actually only two in the Hebrew—

- The word *lo* which makes it negative (no or not)
- And the word *xur ratsach* which means **kill** or **murder**.
 - So we need to examine, in particular, the word *xur ratsach*

A. In many ways, the Hebrew word *xur ratsach* is very much like our word **murder**.

1. Like our word **murder**, this word is only used with reference to taking **human** life.

- It is never used of killing animals or plants.
 - Sometimes people will come along and quote this commandment to argue that we should not kill animals, but that is not the intent.

a. God has, in fact, given us permission to kill both plants and animals.

- In the garden He gave us permission to eat the fruit of the earth
 - **Gen 1:29: And God said, “See, I have given you every herb *that* yields seed which *is* on the face of all the earth, and every tree whose fruit yields seed; to you it shall be for food.**

- After the flood, God gave us permission to eat animals as well (Gen. 9:3)

- **Gen 9:3: “Every moving thing that lives shall be food for you. I have given you all things, even as the green herbs.”**

- Later on, God forbids the eating of certain foods under the ceremonial law,
 - but this was only connected with the regulations that have to do with the temple connected with the Aaronic Priesthood—

- In other words, they are things concerned only with what (as Hebrews says) is:

- **Heb 9:10: *concerned* only with foods and drinks, various washings, and fleshly ordinances imposed until the time of reformation.**

- These regulations are all abolished in Christ and Paul actually tells us that those who impose food restrictions on people are teaching doctrines of demons.

- Demons can’t stand to see people enjoying God’s good gifts,
 - so if they see religious people and they can’t corrupt them with the lusts of the flesh,
 - they try to make them abstain from foods and marriage and things God has given us to enjoy.

b. God has given us liberty to kill plants and animals for human purposes, however, this in no way gives us liberty to abuse them.

- God has made all of the plants and animals.
 - Therefore, we ought to take delight in the things He has made.

- In Deuteronomy 20:19,
 - The Lord commands that the armies of Israel are not to mindlessly destroy the trees of the field when they besiege a city.
- In Proverbs 12:10, it says:
 - **Pr 12:10 A righteous man regards the life of his animal, But the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel.**
 - The fourth commandment even calls for us to give our animals a Sabbath rest.

TRANS> So you see that the sixth commandment cannot be used to object to the killing of plants and animals.

- God allows this and Hebrew word translated kill or murder in the sixth commandment always refers to the slaying of people.
 - For this reason, some have argued that **murder** is a better word to use in the translation of the sixth commandment...
 - This is further argued because...
2. *xur ratsach* is nearly exclusively used to refer to the taking of someone's life unjustly.
- a. God authorises, and even requires killing in certain cases,
 - for example, murderers are to be executed by appropriate authorities and just wars are to be waged when called for.
 - The word *ratsach* is only used once to refer to a just killing... and that would be in Numbers 35:30 which says:
 - **Num 35:30: Whoever kills a person, the murderer (*xur ratsach*) shall be put to death (*xur ratsach*) on the testimony of witnesses...**
 - Because this is the only time that *xur ratsach* is used in this way, it may be stylistic and could be translated,
 - **Whoever kills a person, the murderer shall be murdered on the testimony of witnesses...**
 - In other words, the word *ratsach* is used in a kind of word play.
 - b. But whatever the case, God does authorise the execution of capital offenders, so such executions are not prohibited by the sixth commandment...
 - We will look at this in more detail later,
 - but as a general rule, the word *ratsach* is reserved for unlawful killing and that is how we ought to understand it in the sixth commandment.

TRANS> So **murder** seems like a perfect translation for *ratsach*...

- But translations are not always quite so cut and dried.

- And upon further examination, we will find that there is a deficiency in the use of the word **murder** for *ratsach* in the sixth commandment.
 - Not to say that is it a bad or even preferred translation—just to say that we need to understand that it is not completely parallel with *ratsach*.
- B. The word **murder** is narrower in scope than the Hebrew word *ratsach*.
1. The word **murder** is not used for what we refer to as *involuntary manslaughter*, but *ratsach* is used for involuntary manslaughter.
 - Involuntary manslaughter refers to the *accidental* killing of your neighbour.
 - *Ratsach* is frequently used for accidental killing and we must not think that accidental killing is not prohibited by the sixth commandment as we might be caused to think when it is translated “you shall not murder.”
 - It is not just murder, but also involuntary manslaughter—through carelessness or neglect—that is forbidden.
 - For example, if you kill someone because of careless driving,
 - or if someone is killed at your house because you let your vicious dog get away
 - or because you left the cover off of an electrical panel.
 2. Of course, the LORD makes a distinction between voluntary and involuntary manslaughter in His law...
 - A distinction is also made in our laws which are, in fact, patterned after God’s law...
 - Hitting someone in a crosswalk is not the same as hunting them down and shooting them.
 - This distinction is spoken of in Numbers 35 and in Deuteronomy 19 where provision is made for the protection of the one who has accidentally killed his neighbour...
 - But he is still called a *ratsach*...and is sentenced to stay within one of the cities of refuge as in prison so that the relatives of the one he killed will not have to see the face of the one who killed their loved one.
 - In Deuteronomy 19:4-6, it says:
 - **Deut 19:4-6: "And this is the case of the manslayer (*ratsach*) who flees there, that he may live: Whoever kills his neighbour unintentionally, not having hated him in time past—as when a man goes to the woods with his neighbor to cut timber, and his hand swings a stroke with the ax to cut down the tree, and the head slips from the handle and strikes his neighbour so that he dies—he shall flee to one of these cities and live; lest the avenger of blood [a relative of the one who was killed], while his anger is hot, pursue the manslayer (*ratsach*) and overtake him, because the way is long, and kill him, though he was not deserving of death, since he had not hated the victim in time past.**

TRANS> So the conclusion is that we don't have a word that perfectly translates *ratsach*.

- The word **kill** is too broad and the word **murder** is too narrow...
 - But as with all of the Ten Commandments, a general statement is given and then exceptions and qualifications are made elsewhere.
 - It is absurd for anyone to take the command “You shall not kill” and argue that God intended to exclude the slaying of animals, executions, self-defence, and just war!
 - A person who argues in this way has obviously not read the Bible.
 - Likewise, there is no biblical warrant for reading “you shall not murder” and supposing that involuntary manslaughter is not included—it is.
 - Those who argue for such interpretations are not listening to God’s Word in an honest or intelligent manner.
 - The bottom line is, the sixth commandment excludes the unjust killing of another human being.
 - That is the scope of the word *ratsach*.
- Now let’s move on to our second subject...namely, that...

II. God alone has the right to decide who will live and who will die...

- Life is God’s prerogative and not anyone else’s!
- A. The Bible shows right from the beginning that God is the one who gave man life and who has the authority to take away man’s life.
1. In Gen 2:7, it says:
 - **Gen 2:7: And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being.**
 - God is the only reason we have life in the first place!
 - We would not even exist apart from His will.
 2. And because He gives life, He alone has the authority to take away life...
 - In Gen 2:17, He threatens man with death if he eats of the forbidden fruit and then in Gen 3:19, He sentences Him with death:
 - **Gen 3:19: In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread Till you return to the ground, For out of it you were taken; For dust you are, And to dust you shall return.**
 - This is His prerogative.
 - Life is His property and only He can give it and destroy it.

TRANS> And from this, we need to something very important that we often miss, namely, that...

B. We do not have the ultimate power of life and death. We only have life as God's gift.

1. From the beginning, God directs man about life and death!

- We saw before that God gave us plants and animals to eat.
 - This was entirely His prerogative.
 - If He had not given them to us, we would have not right to take them.
 - He made them and they are His.
 - The *reason* we are allowed to kill and eat them is because God gave them to us to eat.

a. From the beginning, God shows His displeasure with those who destroy life without His permission...

- In Gen. 4:8-15 we read of the murder that Cain committed.
 - **Gen 4:8-15: Now Cain talked with Abel his brother; and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him. Then the LORD said to Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?" He said, "I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?" And He said, "What have you done? The voice of your brother's blood cries out to Me from the ground. "So now you *are* cursed from the earth, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand.**
 - Note here that Abel's blood cries out from the ground against Cain—
 - This speaks of Cain's guilt.
 - God then determined his punishment and in this case it was that he should live. This is God's prerogative.
- In Gen. 6:11-13 we again see guilt before God, the author of life, associated with murder...
 - **Gen 6:11-13: The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. So God looked upon the earth, and indeed it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted their way on the earth. And God said to Noah, "The end of all flesh has come before Me, for the earth is filled with violence through them; and behold, I will destroy them with the earth."**
 - Because man had taken it upon himself to destroy life by violence (which was not his prerogative),
 - God decides to take man's life (which is His prerogative) by the great flood.

b. Godly Job recognised that God has the prerogative to give and take life when his sons and daughters were all killed.

- Job loved his children, and was deeply grieved when they were taken away, but he confessed...
 - **Job 1:21: Naked I came from my mother's womb, And naked shall I return there. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; Blessed be the name of the LORD.**
- Job humbly recognised that he was not the one who gave life to his children and that it was perfectly in the rights of God to take their life since God was the one who had given them life.
 - He recognised that God is the Lord of both life and death.
 - It is for Him to give life and to take life away.

2. We need to recognise this too.

- a. There is a lot of confusion about this today, even among Christians.
 - Let's look at a couple of examples where this confusion is seen.
 - 1) First, it is seen in the language and the arguments we use in the abortion debate.
 - Of course the abortionists are completely wrong in that they give the authority to decide if a child will live or die to the mother.
 - Only God has the prerogative to decide who will live and who will die!
 - But Christians often err in transferring this authority to the child, arguing that the child has the right to life...
 - The problem is that it is not the child, but God who has the authority to decide whether the child is to live or to die.
 - My concern is that when we argue about abortion in this way, we concede too much to those who reject God's authority.
 - We make it into an issue of competing human rights instead of an issue of what is right before our creator.
 - We are, in a sense, trying to win a battle, but by arguing in terms of human rights, we are losing the war...
 - Life is not about human rights—it is about God's "rights"—it is about His authority.
 - People need to see that they have sinned against God.
 - If we convince them that unborn children have greater rights than the mother we may have won the abortion debate,
 - but we have not done the most important thing and convinced them that we are under God's authority and must answer to Him.
 - We must not draw the battle line in the wrong place when we talk about which person has more rights...

- The question must always be, what has God authorised.
 - Nobody but God has the right to life and death.
- b. You can see how this “right to life” thinking plays itself out when it comes to that matter of suicide as well.
- Suicide is nothing other than self murder—
 - Like all murder, it is fundamentally wrong because God alone is the Lord of life and death and so has the prerogative to decide who lives and who dies.
 - But if we believe in the right to life of the individual, then we will be soft on suicide and look at it as someone exercising their individual rights.
 - Often the person who tries to take his own life is looked upon as someone to feel sorry for instead of someone to rebuke.
 - Of course I don’t mean to say that we should have no compassion for them, just as we would have compassion for someone who has been wronged by another individual and wishes to kill him...
 - But that desire to kill yourself or another is a very sinful desire and it needs to be rebuked!
 - I have had suicide phone calls in which I rebuke the person for supposing that just because they are unhappy with their life, they have the right to take it away!
 - And I have seen them repent.
 - Such a person is worthy of rebuke because he has taken into his own hands something that belongs to God...
 - God has made us stewards of our own life and health,
 - But a steward does not have ownership.
 - Fundamentally, a person who takes his own life has taken something that belongs to God as if he (the suicidal individual) were the Lord.
- c. Of course this mentality will have a huge affect on every area of life...
- As long as I think I am the owner of my life, I will never be able to serve God.
- 1) The Scripture says you are not your own.
- **1 Cor 6:19-20: Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit *who is* in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.**

- The wicked are said to assume that their lips are their own, and of course this applies to everything about them.
 - **Psalm 12:4: With our tongue we will prevail; Our lips *are* our own; Who is lord over us?"**
 - When the Lord redeems you, it is that you might know that you are not your own, but belong to the Lord and ought to live for Him.
 - **2 Cor 5:15: and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again.**
 - In essence, the fall was about man choosing to live according to His own way instead of in God's way.
- 2) When you know that you belong to God, you give yourself to serve Him in both body and Spirit.
- You are ready and willing to sacrifice your own will to do His will.

TRANS> You need to change your thinking about rights. You need to start thinking like Job. The LORD gives and the Lord takes away.

- Not one of you has the right to life or death.
 - That belongs to the Lord your God.

C. However, I should point out that God can appoint agents to be His executioners.

- I told you that I would get back to this later...
- 1. In Gen 9 and Romans 13, we see that God has authorised the civil magistrate to take away life in certain cases.
 - We looked at this when we studied the fifth commandment, so I will only briefly mention it now...
 - In Gen 9:5, the Lord says:
 - **Gen 9:5-6: "Surely for your lifeblood I will demand *a reckoning*; from the hand of every beast I will require it, and from the hand of man. From the hand of every man's brother I will require the life of man. 6 "Whoever sheds man's blood, By man his blood shall be shed;**
 - Notice that the execution in this case is by man, but as God's agent.
 - Man executes the murderer under God's orders, not under his own wrath.
 - We see the same thing in Romans 13.
 - In Romans 13, we are told that God has given the civil magistrate the sword to bear and he is said to be God's minister of justice to execute His wrath.

- That means that the rulers of the land can wage just war and carry out executions against those who commit crimes for which God has authorised execution—such as murder.
 - In such a case, the ruler or governor is not carrying out his own vengeance or even that of the state,
 - but the vengeance of God, bringing God’s wrath against the offender in conformity to God’s directives in His Word.
2. Great abuse occurs when kings and governors begin to use the sword—not as an avenger for God, but for their own purposes!
- For example, when they go to war to increase the public treasury with spoils or go to war to make themselves more popular—
 - or even worse when they take it upon themselves to use the sword for their own private advantage...
 - The way David did when he used his authority to have Uriah put in the place of danger and die in battle, all for the purpose of covering up his adultery!
 - God sentenced David with death, telling him that the sword would not depart from his household!
 - The civil magistrate is never to use the sword however he wishes—
 - He is God’s minister of justice to represent God in executing those whom God has said are worthy of execution.
 - It should be further understood that rulers who refuse to use the sword for justice are also guilty of taking matters into their own hands.
 - There are numerous incidents where those in authority are punished because they did not execute transgressors...
 - Saul was removed as king, as we saw a couple of weeks ago, for refusing to kill the king of the Amalekites when God had ordered it.
 - Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, on the other hand, was rewarded with the priesthood for killing one whom God had sentenced to be killed.

TRANS> So you see that such killings are authorised of God and approved by Him.

3. And I might add that the Lord also does not hold a man guilty if he kills a thief who breaks into his house at night.
- Exodus 22:2-3: If the thief is found breaking in, and he is struck so that he dies, *there shall be* no guilt for his bloodshed. If the sun has risen on him, *there shall be* guilt for his bloodshed.
 - The principle here is that killing him is not chargeable if it is done as an act of self-defence... but in broad daylight, it is not justifiable.

TRANS> So you see that life is God's prerogative and that He calls for the punishment of those who without warrant or justification take another's life.

- And now I want to move on to our third point in which we consider how:

III. Every attempt to eliminate another person's life is a diabolical attempt to eliminate God Himself.

- Let me show you how this is so.
 - When something is diabolical, it means that it is the devil's work, and obviously, trying to eliminate God is the devil's work.

A. Jesus made it clear that murder is of the devil.

1. In John 8:44, Jesus said to the Pharisees:

- **John 8:44: You are of *your* father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and *does not* stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own *resources*, for he is a liar and the father of it.**
- The murder that Jesus mentions here was the murder that brought man into spiritual ruin and destruction...
 - God had told man that if he ate the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil he would surely die.
 - Satan went about immediately to lead Adam into this death...
 - He desired nothing more than that man should be separated from God.

2. Murder is the Devil's work, but man is often his agent.

a. Note the issue here—the Pharisees were trying to kill Jesus.

- In John 8:37-43 Jesus says to them:
 - **John 8:37-43: "I know that you are Abraham's descendants, but you seek to kill Me, because My word has no place in you. I speak what I have seen with My Father, and you do what you have seen with your father." They answered and said to Him, "Abraham is our father." Jesus said to them, "If you were Abraham's children, you would do the works of Abraham. But now you seek to kill Me, a Man who has told you the truth which I heard from God. Abraham did not do this. You do the deeds of your father." Then they said to Him, "We were not born of fornication; we have one Father—God." Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love Me, for I proceeded forth and came from God; nor have I come of Myself, but He sent Me. Why do you not understand My speech? Because you are not able to listen to My word."**
- b. They were seeking to destroy Jesus for the same reason that Satan sought to destroy Adam...
 - Because Jesus was the perfect image of God and they hated God and could not bear to see His image.

- 1) The Bible shows that Jesus is the Son of God, and the perfect revelation of Him to us in human flesh:
 - **John 1:4: “In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.”**
 - **John 1:14: “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.”**
 - **Col 2:9: For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily;**
 - **Heb 1:3: calls Him: “the brightness of *His* glory and the express image of His person...”**
 - He reveals to us the life of God, He is the Word of life.
 - Thus to have murderous intent toward Him is to desire to extinguish the life of God!

- 2) Moreover, Jesus came to give the life of God to man in man’s capacity as God’s image (John 6:51, John 10:10)
 - **John 6:51: “I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world.”**
 - **John 10:10: “The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.”**
 - The life He gives to us is life restored as God’s image
 - For instance, Colossians 3:10 says:
 - **Col 3:10: and have put on the new *man* who is renewed in knowledge according to the image of Him who created him,**

- c. So those who oppose Christ and His church oppose the life of God.
 - They cannot bear to see the image of God revealed in man.
 - That is why John’s words are so strong in I John 3:10-15.
 - **1 Jn 3:10-15: In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: Whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is he who does not love his brother. For this is the message that you heard from the beginning, that we should love one another, not as Cain *who* was of the wicked one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his works were evil and his brother’s righteous. Do not marvel, my brethren, if the world hates you. We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love *his* brother abides in death. Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.**

- It only makes sense that those who love God would love His image and those who hate God would hate His image.
 - Those who most represent God are those who are the most attacked.
 - Where God is most clearly seen, the opposition is greater.
- This is why Jesus calls us to rejoice in persecution
 - It is a sign that we are like those who are most like God.
 - **Matthew 5:11-12:**“**Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great is your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.**
 - It is a sign that we are like Him.
 - Jesus says, “If they have persecuted me, they will persecute you...”

TRANS> Understand that this diabolical hatred of God is at the root of all murder.

3. You will say, but wait a minute!

- a. It is not just Christians who are murdered—lots of other people are too.
 - That is true, but every person is still made in the image of God!
 - Even though God’s image is corrupted in every person and needs to be restored through the redemptive working of Christ,
 - We are still His image and our life is to be highly esteemed because of this.
- b. You will say,
 - Yes, but in most cases, people who murder their neighbour aren’t even think about *God*...
 - They are not killing someone because they are motivated to try to destroy them as the image of God...
 - They are killing them because they are angry with them or because they got in their way or something...
 - Of course!!
 - I am not suggesting that the motive of every murder is to destroy God’s image!
 - But I am saying that the very fact that a murderer destroys one who is made in the image of God shows how little regard he has for God!
 - The very fact that a persons bitterness can be so strong that He doesn’t even care that He is destroying one who is made in God’s image shows diabolical contempt for God!
 - What ought to be uppermost in His mind is disregarded!

- Here is a silly illustration...
 - It is like someone who blows up a house, not because he hates houses, but because he enjoys seeing explosions.
 - The problem in that case is that he has so little regard for houses that his yearning to see a good explosion causes him to destroy the house without even thinking about it!
 - Whenever a murder is committed, the murderer has so little regard for God's image that he has no problem killing a person who is made in His image!
 - Murder and even hatred of your neighbour always involves hatred of God.

B. And this is precisely why murder is treated as a capital offence:

1. This Lord makes this clear in Genesis 9:5-7 where it says:

- **Gen. 9:5-7: Surely for your lifeblood I will demand a reckoning; from the hand of every beast I will require it, and from the hand of man. From the hand of every man's brother I will require the life of man. Whoever sheds man's blood, By man his blood shall be shed; For in the image of God He made man. And as for you, be fruitful and multiply; Bring forth abundantly in the earth And multiply in it.**
- Every murder is an attack on the image of God, and so on God himself.
 - It is an attempted deicide because you are striking out at the image of God.
 - And it is for this reason that the penalty for murder sanctioned by God is death... "for in the image of God He made man."

2. Now let's relate this to Adam and Eve in the fall.

- Why did their disobedience bring the sentence of death?
 - Because they attacked the image of God in man (defaced it) by eating the forbidden fruit.
 - They corrupted God's image and that is why they were sentenced to die.
 - The life that Jesus came to restore is life as the image of God.

C. So, what does this mean for us?

1. It means that we ought to delight in the restoration of the image of God in man!

- We should long to see the life of God in ourselves and others.
 - If we don't, we are of our father the devil—murderers who desire to extinguish the life of God from the world as it is seen in man.

2. It means you should be zealous for the advance of the kingdom of God.

- You should be zealous for your own personal sanctification and growth in grace...

- You should be zealous to see your children restored to God's image through Jesus Christ...
 - You should be zealous to see all men restored...
3. Rather than despising life, you should promote life!
- You are to be fruitful and multiply, reproducing the life of God all around you and filling the world with the life of God by filling it with man as the image of God.
 - This includes both spiritually fruitful and physically.
 - The anti-child sentiment of our day is not a biblical sentiment.
 - God has commanded us to be fruitful, and it is part of delighting in His image to desire more image bearers.
 - We are told in Malachi that God desires a godly offspring—so should we.
 - And because the image of God is in man, even though it is defaced,
 - you ought to desire to preserve the physical life of others—
 - Do all you can to preserve the life of yourself and others.
 - It is not your prerogative to destroy life, but rather to rejoice in it.
 - Leave it to God to decide who will live and who will die.

Conclusion: With this as our foundation, we will probe more deeply into how we can faithfully keep the sixth commandment.