

THE 6TH COMMANDMENT

# THY SHALT NOT KILL

—by Peter Hammond

If there is one Commandment which the majority of people think they have never transgressed, it is the Sixth Commandment. Murder is considered to be a crime committed by a minority of people. Yet as Christ taught us in the Sermon on the Mount, hatred is also a breach of this Commandment.

In fact as one considers the fullest implications of the Sixth Commandment and the family of offences that it covers, this is a most relevant Commandment for this murderous age. *“Whoever sheds man’s blood, by man his blood shall be shed; for in the image of God He made man.”* Gen 9:6.

**MULTIPLE MURDER METHODS**

There are numerous ways in which the Sixth Commandment is violated:

1. Murder can be committed with the hands. *“There are six things the Lord hates, yes; seven are an abomination to Him:...hands that shed innocent blood...”* Prov 6:16-17
2. Murder can also be committed with the mind. Malice is mental murder. (Matt 5:22) *“Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has*

4. We can also murder with the pen. David condemned Uriah to death by writing to his commander Joab, *“... set Uriah in the forefront of the hottest battle, and retreat from him, that he may be struck down and die.”* 2 Sam 11:15
5. We are guilty of violating the Sixth Commandment when we consent to an innocent person’s death. Saul consented to the stoning to death of the deacon Stephen. He recognised that this made him a murderer (Acts 22:4).
6. We commit murder by not defending another when it is within our power to do so. *“Deliver those who are drawn toward death, and hold back those stumbling to the slaughter. If you say ‘surely we did not know this’, does not He who weighs the heart consider it? He who keeps your soul, does He not know it? And will He not render to each man according to his deeds?”* Prov 24:11-12
7. Those who take part in a conspiracy to destroy the life of another are also guilty of murder. *“My son, if sinners entice you, do not consent. If they say, ‘come with us, let us lie in wait to shed blood; let us lurk secretly for the innocent without*



*the land on which blood has been shed, except by the blood of the one who shed it.”* Num 25:33

*“Anyone who strikes a man and kills him shall surely be put to death...If a man schemes and kills another man deliberately, take him away from My altar and put him to death...”* Exo 21:12-16

The Bible is very clear that God has instituted civil government as *“an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer.”* Rom 13:4. Civil government is called

to be a minister of God’s justice: *“To punish those who do wrong.”* 1 Pet 2:14

The primary duties and responsibilities of civil government are the protection of law-abiding citizens and the punishment of law-breaking criminals. Psalm 101 reminds us that the duty of God-honouring rulers is to destroy the wicked, to root out evil and to protect the law-abiding.

In the Bible the question is asked: *“Why do people commit crimes so read-*

*ily? Because crime is not punished quickly enough”* Ecc 8:11. Every year 20 000 people are murdered in South Africa. And 80 000 babies are killed through abortion. It is not only those directly involved in these crimes of murder that are guilty of violating the Sixth Commandment.

The guilt is shared by all those politicians who abolished the death penalty for murder, while instituting the death penalty for babies through abortion.

Also guilty of being accessories before, during, and after, the fact are the journalists who promoted abortion, and who cover up the facts in order to ensure that the holocaust against the unborn continues. Those pastors who fail to faithfully expound the Scriptures on when life begins, and what a Christian’s responsibility is to speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, are also accessory to murder. And of course, all those voters who continue to vote for pro-abortion parties are also accessories to murder.

*“Open your mouth for the speechless, in the cause of all who are appointed to die. Open your mouth, judge righteously, and plead the cause of the poor and needy.”* Prov 31:8-9

One often is pleasantly surprised to discover some prestigious relative perched on a branch of the family tree. It is most encouraging to find some relative whose life and accomplishments left some positive legacy for generations to follow.

On the other hand, most family trees also include individuals who we would rather forget about – relatives who did not live a good life, even some who were thieves, pirates or murderers. Each one of us can be sure of one thing - no matter who you are, you have at least one relative in your family lineage who was a murderer - in fact that relative was the very first murderer. The very first person to be born on the planet, Cain, murdered his brother Abel. The second person born, Abel, was the first victim of murder.

**THE CONTENTIOUS ISSUE OF CAPITAL PUNISHMENT**

By obeying God’s Law and punishing murderers with capital punishment, a nation can cleanse itself from the guilt of innocent blood. On the other hand, a nation that refuses to avenge the taking of innocent human life, must share the guilt of the murderer (Deuteronomy 21:1-9).

**If there is one Commandment which the majority of people think they have never transgressed, it is the Sixth Commandment.**

**The Bible declares that God hates ‘the hands that shed innocent blood.’ Prov 6:17 . We have a responsibility to stand up for the innocent and to spread God’s love.**

- eternal life abiding in him.”* 1 John 3:15
3. We can also murder with the tongue. *“Even so the tongue is a little member and boasts great things. See how great a forest a little fire kindles! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity. The tongue...defiles the whole body.”* James 3:5

- cause’...My son, do not walk in the way with them, keep your foot from their path.”* Prov 1:10-15
8. Failure to execute punishment upon murderers is also a breach of the Sixth Commandment *“Bloodshed pollutes the land and atonement cannot be made for*

**WE’RE RELATED TO A MURDERER**  
Tracing one’s ancestry is very popular, many people spend days, weeks and months tracking down sources on the Internet and pouring over records in archives to search for their family history.

However, for those who stand for the right to life and for capital punishment they are accused by pro-abortionists of not being consistent. I am often asked, how can I support capital punishment if I claim to be ‘Pro-Life’? The answer to »

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this is one of consistency. If a pro-abortionist raises the issue of capital punishment, the issue would play out as follows (if you as a Christian stand for pro-life and capital punishment): "Do you believe in abortion?" "Oh yes, of course, we are pro-choice!"

To which we must then ask: "Do you believe in capital punishment for murderers?"

"No! Absolutely not!" Then we can respond: "It would appear that the difference between our positions is quite simple: We believe in protecting the right to life of the innocent and judiciously taking the life of guilty murderers. Whereas you believe in killing the innocent babies, but sparing the guilty. The Bible declares that God hates 'the hands that shed innocent blood.' Prov 6:17 and 'Woe unto him that calls evil good and good evil' Isa 5:20".

Abortion is a modern equivalent



tial article of the Christian faith. The Bible makes it clear that life begins at conception (Psalm 139:13-16; Isaiah 44:2; Jeremiah 1:5; Luke 1:41). At about three weeks after conception, the baby's heartbeat can be detected. Six weeks after conception the baby has its own lifelong brainwave.

If the absence of a brainwave is considered a sign of death, why then is the pres-

the blood of innocent babies will be upon our heads (Ezek 33:1-6). As Christians we must love our neighbour – and this includes our pre-born neighbours. As Christians we must avoid the sins forbidden in the Sixth Commandment by having nothing to do with suicide, euthanasia, abortion and murder. But we must also endeavour to fulfil the positive side of the Sixth Commandment: We need to be channels of spiritual life by proclaiming the Word of God, being His witnesses and leading people to the foot of the Cross. The opposite of murder is to love our neighbours, to love strangers, to even love our enemies, and to minister to their needs, both physical and spiritual.

THE WORST MURDER EVER

We also need to consider the most heinous murder ever committed in history. At Calvary's Cross, mankind's sin resulted in the murder of the most innocent victim of all time: God's own Son, Jesus Christ. He submitted willingly and became a victim of this gross violation of justice so that we – the very people responsible for His suffering and death – might in turn find life and joy forever.

If you are a born-again Christian, you have life because He died, and you have the privilege of leading others to The Saviour. What a privilege. ■

DR PETER HAMMOND is a missionary and conference speaker. He is the author of *The Ten Commandments – God's Perfect Law of Liberty*. Contact: them on 021 689 4480 or see [www.frontline.org.za](http://www.frontline.org.za)

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of child sacrifice. Just as God's people opposed Pharaoh's decree to murder newborn boys in Egypt (Exodus 1:15-22) so we need to protect pre-born babies from abortion today. Just as King Herod sought to kill babies in Bethlehem (Matthew 2:16), so abortionists are attempting the same, even though it is packaged differently as a 'human rights' issue.

The sanctity of human life is an essen-

ence of this brainwave not accepted as confirmation of life? Birth is not a magical act that turns a non-human into a person. Birth is only a change in environment for a life that began many months before.

LOVING OUR NEIGHBOUR

Every abortion stops a beating heart. Every abortion ends a brainwave. If we do not stand up and oppose abortion,

NOTE FROM JOY! MAGAZINE REGARDING CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

The Death Penalty is a highly contentious topic, and has become a divisive issue in the Body of Christ. For valid reasons, many Christians feel that the execution of the death penalty is plagued with trouble, as often innocent people have been put to death, and have also not been given adequate opportunity to repent and come to Christ. JOY! recognises this and encourages our readers to spend time seeking God on the matter. We also encourage believers, regardless of what they feel about capital punishment, to not refrain from Biblical advocacy (that is, standing up for issues of justice and against injustice like abortion, prostitution and euthanasia).

UNWANTED PREGNANCY?



SCARED, CONFUSED?  
DON'T HAVE AN ABORTION

ADOPTION IS THE LOVING OPTION

CONTACT ACA - FOR PRO LIFE SPEAKERS, BOOKS, DVD'S AND LEAFLETS



AFRICAN CHRISTIAN ACTION

P.O. BOX 23632 • Claremont, 7735 • Cape Town • Tel: 021 689 4480

Fax: 021 685 5884 • E-mail: [info@christianaction.org.za](mailto:info@christianaction.org.za)

[www.christianaction.org.za](http://www.christianaction.org.za)