

You Shall not Murder

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[0 : 00] The family of God, the body of Christ. Some people are the hands, some people are the feet, some people are the nose, some people are the toes.

! That's me. Alright, one quick announcement that I just got this news, so we have a, I was going to say a college graduate, not a college graduate, a high school graduate.

In the house here, Carly, could you raise your hand Carly? Alright, Carly's graduating this year. And so congratulations Carly, and there's going to be an open house for her, it's off into June, June 19th here.

But the whole church is invited, now I don't know if everybody showed up, that might be a problem, I don't know. But the whole church is invited, so we're going to, we'll post this on the bulletin board if you'd like to go.

And say hi, and give Carly a hug, or a handshake, or whatever, on June 19th. You're invited to come and do that. We'll post this so that you can look up the date.

[1 : 11] These are great pictures, by the way. So photogenic, Carly. So, okay, that's it. So we are in, we're in the book of Exodus, and we've been looking at the Ten Commandments.

We are on the Sixth Commandment, you shall not murder. And we spent a few messages when we first started this series, kind of just looking at the law of God in general.

And I want to start every message with just a reminder of what our perspective is as Christian believers today, in what many call the age of grace, what Paul himself called the dispensation of the grace of God.

How we ought to view the Ten Commandments. And there's two main points that I want to make.

The first is that we as Christians, the Bible says, are not under the law.

When we are in Christ, when we put our faith and trust in Jesus Christ, and in his death, burial, and resurrection for our sins, then the Bible says we are under grace and not under the law.

[2 : 20] Well, what does that mean? That means the law, even though it is righteous, it is good, it gives us instructions about right and wrong, it no longer has power over us.

And specifically, it no longer has the power to condemn us. It no longer has the power of sin and death. That law that says that when you sin, you must die.

And specifically, spiritual death. That power to separate us from God. But then on the other side, what do we do with the law?

Do we ignore it? Do we maybe in some way adjust the law to account for our current age? Do we make modifications to the law?

No, the law is still good. Good. It's still righteous, the Bible says. In fact, Paul says the law is holy and righteous and good. It still teaches us instructions.

[3 : 21] It still teaches us instructions about right and wrong, about fundamental morality. Now, not the whole law. We've talked about this, that some portions of the law are ceremonial in nature.

They teach us about future things. They're types and shadows about things to come. But they don't describe fundamental morality. And it's important for us to make that distinction as we look at the law of God.

But it is good for those moral principles that it sets boundaries for our lives, even as Christians.

Boundaries to avoid sin, which leads ultimately to pain and suffering and misery.

That's really the cause of all the misery and pain that's in the world today. So we shouldn't ignore or diminish the law. We should go to it. We should study it. We should understand it.

But we should look at it correctly through the right lens. This morning, we are looking at the sixth commandment. And it's a short one, but I'm just going to read it here.

[4 : 18] This is in Exodus chapter 20, verse 13. Exodus 20, 13. It says this. You shall not murder. That's it.

In fact, this is, there's only one other commandment that is this brief. You shall not steal. But it's just four words. And in fact, if you look at the Hebrew text, it's only two words.

Only two words. Basically, don't murder is what the Hebrew says in a very literal sense. Yet these four words carry a ton of weight and gravity and really provide a foundation for really civil society that is so important.

You know, not just today, but throughout the history of the world. I've got a quick story I want to tell. So, we homeschool our kids and we participate in cooperatives.

Co-ops, we call them. Where we'll join together with other homeschoolers. And moms usually will teach classes. Something that they're good at or interested in. And the kids will go to different classes throughout the morning or the day.

[5 : 33] My wife, Jamie, she's not in the room this morning. Unless she's hiding somewhere. But she was teaching a class for young kids. And she was teaching them scripture songs.

And there's one that we learned from our friends. And it goes like this. The song goes, Do all things without murmuring.

Without murmuring. Without murmuring. Do all things without murmuring and disputing. And then it goes on. Philippians 2.14. Great song. Great song to teach your kids scripture.

And that's an important one for kids, right? Because kids especially. Adults can do this too. But kids especially need to learn to do things without murmuring. So she taught them the song.

And then afterwards she wanted to explain the scripture. And so she asked them a question. She says, Alright kids. Who can tell me what murmuring means? And one of the kids raised his hand very, He was very excited.

[6 : 34] And he says, It means killing people. And so evidently she had been teaching the kids a song about doing all things without murdering.

Which is an important lesson I think in and of itself. Maybe not the one that she was intending. But anyway, I wanted to share that. That's a fun, We have actually several fun stories of kids getting the words and songs confused with other words.

But I thought I'd start with a little bit of levity before we dive into somewhat of a serious commandment. Now we've talked about with, Which one it was?

The keeping of the Sabbath. I mentioned that keeping the Sabbath is probably the most controversial of commandments. Many Christians are in disagreement about what does that mean? Should Christians today keep the Sabbath? What does that look like? What day of the week? And on the face of it, You look at this commandment, You shall not murder. And you think, Well that's pretty uncontroversial.

[7 : 41] I mean especially among Christians. But even among all of the world, If you were to ask somebody, Do you agree with this statement, You shall not murder? You're probably not going to find a single person in the world that will disagree with that.

Right? But, A lot of times when you get into the details, That's where the controversy comes in. And the dispute. And we'll be getting into some of those controversies later.

We're actually going to split this up into two messages on the sixth commandment. You know, This commandment, As brief as it is, And I mentioned this a bit ago, Even though it is such a brief command, And very simple on the face of it, It provides a foundation stone For two things that I think are just fundamental And so critical to civil society, To any society.

And those two things are this. One, Is it provides a foundation for the right to life. For really, In general, Human rights in general.

But the right to life in particular. And a universal right to life. The second thing that it provides a foundation for, Is a criminal justice system.

[9 : 06] And today we're going to focus primarily on the right to life. And then next week we're going to be looking at more detail on, You shall not murder as a foundation for criminal justice in society.

In looking at this right to life, I want to go back. You know, This commandment was not the first time that God mentions this idea that the lives of human beings ought to be honored, protected, and preserved.

If you've got your Bible, Open up your Bible to Genesis chapter 9. Genesis chapter 9. Genesis chapter 9.

Is part of the account of the great flood during the time of Noah. Most people know about the flood of Noah in which God flooded the earth as an act of judgment because of all the evil that was in the world.

After the flood was over, the ark came to arrest, and the people in the ark, all eight people, Noah, his sons, and their wives, his wife, There were some things that happened there right after they got back on good old terra firma.

[10 : 25] And God gave some instruction. And one of the things that God gave instruction to Noah about was this concept of human life and the importance of human life.

And let's go ahead and read this passage. So this is Genesis chapter 9 starting in verse 5. He says this to Noah. 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. Notice that this is a commandment that God gives not just to Noah but to all men.

He's basically laying down a requirement for all of mankind. He's saying listen, men, men and women, mankind, all of mankind, you are responsible to both respect and protect the fundamental right to life of every other man.

[11 : 39] That's what he's saying here. God specifically and deliberately delegated this as a solemn duty to men. What does this mean?

I mean this is the end of what is spoken about here. As we look into the law of Moses we see a lot more detail about what God expects from man.

But here it's just provided as a summary. But the general idea is that man is required, is expected to establish cultures and systems of justice among their people groups, tribes, nations.

Which will honor and respect and legally protect through the use of force, by the way, the lives of every human being.

You know this is really the foundation for all human rights. You know the right to life is just one of the rights that human beings have.

[12 : 45] But some people have observed that this is the most important, the most foundational. Why? Because without the right to life, none of the other ones really matter, right?

You can't enjoy the other rights that you have if your life is taken away. The other thing to keep in mind with this passage is the universality of the right to life.

Notice that there are no exceptions given here. We can't allow bloodshed to Noah when it comes to the right to life. This is not something that is to be enforced just for some people. It's not something that is just for men.

But we can allow bloodshed when it comes to women. This isn't something that, by the way, is just for adults. But we can allow bloodshed of children.

This is not something that is just for the strong. But it's also for the weak. And it's not something that is just for the majority. Those who have political power, let's say.

[13 : 52] It's also a requirement when it comes to the minority. The other thing to keep in mind, we talked about this being a universal human right.

This is also something that is individual in nature. You know, in times past, and even today, there are nations, there are cultures, there are people groups who will elevate the, quote, rights or interests of the group, of the nation, of the tribe, maybe even of the family, above the fundamental right to life of the individual.

We'll be looking a little bit later. We'll be looking a little bit later at where that right is abrogated. But they'll teach that, you know, the right of the family, the convenience of the family is more important than the individual right to life of a child, let's say.

And so they'll teach that sometimes the innocent must be killed for the benefit or the interest or the convenience of the group.

But God here does not provide that kind of exception. He's saying, listen, this is a universal right to life that applies to every single individual.

[15:16] And really, it supersedes the interests of the group. The other thing to point out here, this is interesting, is that this is a human right. This is a right that belongs specifically and uniquely to human beings.

In this passage, notice that he says why the blood of the innocent will be required at the hand of man. In that last part of verse 6, he says, for in the image of God, he created man.

You see, when God created, God created everything. Plants, animals, mountains, trees, everything that you see, God created. But when he created, he created man to be special, to be unique, to be in many, many ways like him.

And because of that, mankind holds a special place of honor, of respect, and of dignity that God expects and demands that everyone regard.

Here, he says, back to verse 5, surely for your lifeblood, I will demand a reckoning from the hand of every beast. So he's saying, hey, if a beast is involved in the death of a human being, I will require the blood of that beast.

[16:39] That beast must be killed. And then he says the same thing about a man. If a human being kills another human being, another innocent human being, then I will require that that man's blood be shed.

The death penalty. But notice he doesn't say the other way around, right? That if a man kills a beast, then that man's blood will be on the line?

No. In fact, even at this same time, what did God have Noah do as part of this discussion with Noah? He had Noah give an animal sacrifice.

And so many people today, they advocate for animal rights, that it's wrong to kill animals. And that's not true. That's not correct.

That's not how God designed the world to be. Now, death was not really, even of animals, I think, was not really part of God's original design.

[17:44] But animals do not have the same inherent dignity that human beings do. And we should not treat them that way. And really, you know what happens when we do that? When you see, like, animal rights activists, and, you know, it is important, I think, to treat animals well.

We don't want to, you know, treat animals without any dignity at all. But what happens when we lift up kind of the life of an animal is we're not really lifting up their lives.

We're actually degrading the lives of human beings when we do that. And we don't want to do that. God wants there to be a clear distinction between the value of a human being and the value of an animal.

We see this, again, just to touch more on that point, in the law of Moses. This is in the book of Leviticus, chapter 24. And part of the law is this, that whoever kills an animal shall restore it.

If you kill an animal, and we're thinking, this is an animal that belongs to someone. Let's say someone's cow. You kill that animal. Then you need to restore it.

[18:59] You need to provide them with another cow. Or maybe the money to replace the cow. But it says this, but whoever kills a man shall be put to death.

Notice the distinction, the contrast there. Now, there's a value to the life of an animal, but it pales in comparison to the way, to the degree, in which God intrinsically values the life of every man and woman.

And, again, God does not value, God does value animal life to a certain degree.

There's a couple of scriptures here. Deuteronomy 25 says, you shall not muzzle an ox when it's shredding the grain. Right? But even Jesus said, hey, when God said that, was he thinking more about animals?

Or was he thinking about people? And then in Proverbs 12, it says, a righteous man regards the life of his animal.

[20:01] So it is important to give some kind of regard for animals, but in no way compares to the value that we should give and grant and respect when it comes to the life of people.

But, you know, even though God established this right to life very early on, when God kind of basically restarted the population with just hate people, with Noah and his sons and his daughters-in-law, this commandment was quickly ignored.

And so we see throughout history, if you look throughout history, especially in the ancient world, we see not a respect for the right to life, but a disrespect.

Just to give a little bit of history, going back to certain cultures, we look at Rome. And we think generally positively, I think, many times when you go to college, university, you study Western civilization.

And we look at our country as being built on Western civilization, right? We're a part of Western civilization. And Western civilization kind of is a mixture, I would say, of Roman, Greek, and Christian kind of concepts or virtues or ideas.

[21 : 25] Now, what I would promote is not necessarily Western civilization, but Christian civilization. And these are some of the reasons why.

In Rome, they had both cultural practices and even legal precepts that said that the father, whenever there was a baby born, the father had the right to decide whether that baby would be allowed to live.

If the baby came out deformed in some way or there was some other problem that he didn't like, then he was allowed to take a newborn baby.

And if he lifted it from the ground, then the baby's life was kept. But if he didn't, then that baby could be discarded as trash. Not necessarily killed.

A lot of times they were just kind of put out on the street. And sometimes people would pick the baby up. Sometimes if you had a good person, they would take care. But then sometimes the babies would just die due to exposure.

[22 : 36] This was a custom and a practice and even legally protected in the Roman world. There's a kind of the foundation of Roman law was something called the 12 tables.

This was established back about 450 years before Christ. And it's specifically directed that if a child was born with some kind of physical deformity, that that child should be killed quickly.

In the culture of Sparta, there's a historian, his name is Plutarch, that I forget when he was around, but probably close to around the time of Christ.

And he documented that in the nation of Sparta, that they had the same kind of law, in which the elders, actually, the elders of a tribe or a region or a city, would inspect infants when they were born.

And if they decided that they were not worthy of life, those infants would be cast out, actually, down into a specific chasm of a mountain called Mount Tegedis.

[23 : 48] In Greek, you know, Greek is known, the nation of Greece is known for having some of the best minds of Western civilization.

People like Plato and Aristotle, great thinkers who had some interesting ideas, some of them that we might agree with, and many that I think as Christians we will heartily disagree with.

But both of those guys, Plato and Aristotle, both endorsed in their writings, exposing deformed infants.

Aristotle specifically wrote in his book, Politics, he said, let there be a law that no deformed child shall live. At that time, you also had, in slavery, a practice of slavery, and if you were a slave, your life was in no way protected.

Your owner could do whatever it was that he wanted to do with you. There was no restrictions, no regulation at all. In fact, we see, right, with some slaves, we see the arena of the Colosseum, in which some slaves were turned into gladiators, and their lives were not treated with dignity or respect, but as just something, a plaything for people's entertainment and sport.

[25 : 02] Going back, actually, further, we see with Israel going into the land of Canaan, and God sent the children of Israel into the land of Canaan, but one of the practices that we see there among the Canaanites, it talks about children being passed through the fires of Molech, and really that's a description of the sacrifice of children to their God.

Child sacrifice as a form of worship to their gods, something that was very different in both the Hebrew and Christian religion.

God is never required the sacrifice of anyone to worship him. In fact, quite the opposite. But this whole concept of human sacrifice is not just something that was relegated to the Canaanite lands, or Greece or Rome.

It's something that's been found all over the world. There's evidence for human sacrifice in ancient history in every area around the globe. In South America, you've got the Aztecs and the Incas and the Mayans.

Those are fairly well known. But even in Europe, you have the Celtic Druids, the Germanic and Norse tribes, who are known for sacrifice, human sacrifice, as part of their religion.

[26 : 20] The Carthaginians. We already talked about Greece and Rome. Even with Stonehenge. Many of us are familiar with those big stones in England, right? That people are not really sure how they got there.

It's quite a feat of human ingenuity. But there have been found in that area bones that people who study these things have decided this looks like it was a human sacrifice that was done here at Stonehenge.

You have even in Asia, in China, for thousands of years, human sacrifices were performed. In ancient Korea, the same thing. In Africa, you know, you have ancient Egypt.

It was a common thing. And other kingdoms in West Africa. There's evidence for human sacrifice, really, all over the world. It's part of the history of the ancient world.

You know, many of these ancient practices are really looked down upon today. And not just, you know, among Christians, but really by everyone. And why is that?

[27 : 29] Why is the concept of human sacrifice or exposing infants, why is the concept of just human rights, universal human rights, such a common view today?

Like I said, if you go to just about anybody in the world and you bring up you shall not murder, they'll say, hey, that's a great idea. I think everybody should agree to that. And at the very least, most nations, right, will pay lip service to that idea and to the concept of a basic standard of human rights. Back in 1948, there was established something called the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Where did this come from? Why did things change from ancient history until now?

Well, really, it goes back to this commandment and this book in which God commands and expects and basically demonstrates or provides what we call the Judeo-Christian ethic of human rights. It's found here in this book. And it's really Jews and Christians over all of that history that have changed the world by promoting God's word in the Bible.

[28 : 49] Going back, you know, very early on, you have in biblical history, during the time of Pharaoh, remember Pharaoh ordered that the, all the young boys of the Jews should be killed when they were born, infanticide we call that.

And the Hebrew midwives, they honored the Lord. And what did they do? Well, they kind of did some sneaky things to try to save the lives of these little boys. We find that in Exodus chapter 1. And by the way, the law of Moses specifically, specifically outlaws any kind of killing of even unborn children, but also including infants.

And in the law of Moses and throughout the Bible, we see that God has a specific and a special care and concern for those who are vulnerable and weak.

For the widow, for the orphan, for the stranger, and for the disabled. Those who don't have the same amount of maybe power or rights or privileges as others do.

[30 : 01] But you know, among the Jews, those who, and we know this, right, that the Jews did not always honor God's word. Many times, the Jews themselves were found practicing the same things as the pagan nations.

In fact, God judged them severely for participating in the practice of child sacrifice themselves. But for those Jewish people who promoted and upheld this idea of preserving and honoring and respecting and protecting the right to life of even the weak, even disabled infants, the ancient world found that to be bizarre.

Why would you do such a thing? And by the way, it's highly impractical. You know, there's jobs, you know, family's got to get work done. You have a disabled child that can really get in the way of being productive.

Moving on to early Christianity, we have a little, kind of a, you might think of it as a, like a Christian instruction booklet.

It was called the Didact. This is in the late first and early second century where we find evidence and copies of this. And it specifically says, you shall not murder a child by abortion nor kill it when born.

[31 : 19] Specifically protecting the lives of the vulnerable. And the innocent. Christians were actually very well known during the early part of Christianity. This is the first few centuries after Christianity came on the scene.

That, you know, we mentioned the practice of the Romans and the other cultures around that same time that when there was an unwanted infant, they would just take the infant out onto the road and just leave it there.

And Christians were known, and it was, again, bizarre to the culture at the time, for going and rescuing these little baby boys and girls and taking care of them. Later on, when Christianity gained into political power with Constantine specifically, the laws were changed.

The laws were changed because those in power became Christians. and they changed the law to make it illegal to do such things. And all of this, all of this change happened because of one primary thing.

Because a book called the Bible declared that every single human being is made in the image of God and is worthy of dignity and respect.

[32 : 43] And that their life is valuable. It's not valuable because of its utility, because of the usefulness of your life, because you are strong or useful to your family or to a group or to society.

The pagan ethic was that your life is valued based on your usefulness, your instrumentality, how much you can give to your family or to society.

But the biblical ethic is this, that life is valued in and of itself. Life is valued intrinsically because, simply this, that you were made in the image of God.

regardless of your age or your status or your abilities, every single person bears the image of their maker. And this conviction, this idea, is really what created the seed and the foundation for human rights all across the world.

Even up to, you know, we're about to celebrate the foundation of our country here in July, right? 250 years. Since what? What happened 250 years ago on July 4th?

[33 : 57] The signing of the Declaration of Independence. That's a document that, you know, it's not really a legal document per se for our country. You know, we look to the Constitution and the amendments that came after it that are part of the Constitution as the legal documents.

But it really did provide a framework for who we were as a nation. One of the things that Jefferson wrote into that document was that we are endowed by our Creator with certain inalienable rights, rights that cannot be taken away by anyone.

And among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. Every single person, because they are endowed by their Creator, by the God who made them, who made them in their image, God created them with the dignity to have the right to life.

You know, even secular historians have observed that as you look throughout history, you see among all these pagan, non-Christian nations, no respect for human rights.

The respect for life was based on what can you do back to me if I do something to you. It was based on power. But secular historians, there's some books.

[35 : 19] There's a book by a guy named Tom Holland, not a Christian, but actually somebody who was very positive and respectful towards Christianity. He wrote a book called Dominion, in which he looks at the history of the world and what the world was like before Christianity came into really power and privilege and how Christianity really brought so many things that really today we take for granted.

And there are many people today who are not Christians and they don't really give a lot of credence to Christianity but they don't really realize that the society that they have inherited today in many, many respects is because of this book, the Bible, and Christianity.

But so many take it for granted because they don't understand history and why we are where we are today. Another book, actually two, by a guy named Rodney Stark.

he wrote The Rise of Christianity and another one called, what's it called? I can't remember.

But he's written a couple of books on this topic in which he really looks to Christianity as the progenitor, providing the foundation for the human rights that most people across the world enjoy to some degree, right?

[36 : 41] It's definitely imperfect but it's so much better today than it used to be. All that comes from Christianity and the Bible. But I do want to talk about kind of where we are today because there has been somewhat of a reversal.

We see a trend over history of a respect for human rights getting better and better over time. It's not a perfect line straight up. It's got its ups and downs.

You have sometimes Christian groups even undermining human rights and even the right to life. But I think especially in our day we're seeing a real battle. And that book that I shared, *Whatever Happened to the Human Race*, talks a little bit about that subject matter.

But because we really live in a post-Christian society here in America and even across Europe, we're basically post-Christian. Christianity does not have the privilege, the respect that it once did. Even though there are still many Christians especially in this country. But really we are reverting back to a pagan baseline. To the kind of view of the world that the pagans had.

[37 : 56] Where we have abortion on demand. Where we have, hey, you got old people that, or maybe just somebody who's, you know, not a fan of life and so they want some help with suicides.

We have assisted suicide and euthanasia. In some countries, I think about Canada especially, you know, taking care of old people is expensive. Right? And so, hey, we've got this government healthcare system and, well, it's a lot of tax dollars and, hey, it's these people's tax dollars and so we want to try to do the best we can to be, you know, good stewards of the money that we have. And so, hey, what we can do is we can incentivize old people. We'll just kill them. We'll just euthanize them and that will save the taxpayers a bunch of money. Those are the kind of pagan ideas that are making their way back into our societies.

You know, it's that same instinct that really the sixth commandment was trying to overthrow. To dispose of the lives that we find useless or inconvenient and it's finding its way back into the modern mind.

We as Christians need to do what we can to try to put our cultures back on the right track. I think about even, you know, in more modern history and a little bit about how Christianity has impacted other cultures.

[39 : 25] You know, I work a lot with folks from India and just kind of two thoughts about that nation. You know, in the past it was actually a common practice, I don't know how common but somewhat common enough, a practice called sati in which a widow at her husband's death would be in many times expected to be burned along with her husband in his funeral pyre.

that practice, that custom was eventually outlawed because India was colonized, became a colony of the British Empire which had a Christian foundation.

The British Empire was not in any way perfect. There was lots of problems with the British Empire but when they came on the scene they said, no, this is not happening in this country.

We're not allowing this kind of thing. But even today, this is just one example but I was talking to a colleague of mine who lives in India and he was saying, you know, we actually started talking about the topic of abortion and he said, you know, in India it's against the law for you to find out whether you're having a boy or a girl.

Now isn't that odd? You know, that's such an exciting thing and something, you know, we have the technology today to do that. It hasn't always been the case but what an exciting thing you go to the doctor and you get that ultrasound and they can look and see and say, oh, it's a boy or oh, it's a girl and sometimes we have these practices, right, where you'll have the reveal and some people have done epic things and there's cool videos on the internet about the kind of gender reveal fails.

[41 : 03] Those are fun. But it's just such a, you know, a fun, exciting part of our culture. That is completely outlawed in the country of India and why would that be?

Well, the primary and really only reason is because in India, you know, they do have abortion and allow it to some degree. I don't think it's actually to the degree here in the U.S.

but it's actually was very common for them to have sex-selective abortions. Hey, you know, boys, they're kind of more useful than girls. They can kind of do more.

They can get, you know, better jobs and they can help out more around the house. And so, you know, we maybe only want to have one or two kids and so we prefer boys.

And so, they had a real problem years ago and I'm not sure when this law was established but where the population of boys began to really outgrow the girls and why?

[42 : 01] Because many times when they found out they were going to have a girl, they decided we're not going to allow her to live. And so today, in order to try to avoid that, if you're a doctor and you tell a parent that they're having a boy or a girl, you will be hit with a severe fine.

If you're a parent and you do something to try to figure out whether you're having a boy or a girl, you will be fined or punished in some kind of way. Of course, maybe even more famous is China and their one-child policy.

And their one-child policy is many times enforced. Now today, because they're having a demographic issue, they don't have enough babies. And they're looking at here in the next couple of generations is their society, their culture, really struggling because they're not having enough kids.

But, especially when they had their one-child policy, if you did not honor that law, that law that outlawed brothers and sisters, sometimes that abortion was forced upon you.

In fact, I have met and somewhat, not close friends, but acquaintances with a family in which a woman, she fled, really for her life, but trying to protect the life of her baby and fleeing China, got on a shipping boat to come here to America, actually was taken off the boat, discovered, found with a bunch of other Chinese who were fleeing that nation and ended up going into a federal prison at the time.

[43 : 34] and she was eventually released and allowed to stay here because of the persecution that she endured. But she was forced to take pills in order to kill her own child.

Unfortunately, that child didn't make it even though she tried to protect the life of that little baby. And eventually, she got married to an American here and has a beautiful family today. There was a documentary that I saw a few years ago put out by Netflix, of all things.

It was shocking to me that Netflix isn't exactly known for being a bastion of morality. But they put out this documentary about the one-child policy and about the practice of abortion in China.

And it was quite, I mean, way beyond what you might even imagine. And they're doing, you know, and I'm sure this is still the same today, but, you know, leaving children out on the street.

And then there are certain Chinese people, a lot of times they're Christians who are collecting these babies and trying to take care of them. But lots of things like that going on in China even today.

[44 : 51] And then the United States. You know, it was another one of our, I forget, it was one of the, he didn't become a chief justice, but I think he was selected.

I'm trying to remember his name, but he wrote a book, I think, called Slouching Towards Gomorrah. And because he was talking about how our nation, we are reverting. We're going back to paganism. And he specifically talks about these issues. We have a group called Planned Parenthood. We just talked about that this morning. Praise the Lord. That clinic here in Springfield, even though they didn't do surgical abortions, they would definitely send moms out to other places to get them. But today we have a crisis pregnancy center or a pregnancy resource center there in its place. Praise the Lord. But the founder of Planned Parenthood, Margaret Sanger, she's famous for these words.

She said, the most merciful thing that a large family does to one of its infant members is to kill it. And she was really trying to, you know, be compassionate towards families that were poor, that, you know, already had a bunch of children.

[45 : 58] But this was her view of things. That when a family is struggling, the best thing that you can do, not only for your family, but even for that baby, is to do the compassionate thing and just kill it.

Of course, you know, and we've done messages on the practice of abortion and also the practice of in vitro fertilization, which also does not respect human life because many times in, you know, in vitro fertilization, women are looking to have children, but most of the time through that process, children are created and then ultimately destroyed or maybe frozen into perpetuity.

We have things like mercy killings today where you have doctors or medical boards who will approve of sometimes it's the starvation of disabled people.

Does anybody remember the Terry Schiavo case back, what was that, 20 years ago? In which there was a disabled woman, her parents wanted to take care of her and just feed her.

That's all they wanted to do. And ultimately, the courts decided, well, her husband gets to decide whether she gets fed or not. And he wanted to move on with his life.

[47 : 13] And so ultimately, there was a huge battle, but ultimately, she was starved to death because she was disabled. And then there was another infant, a little baby boy, his name was Dylan Walborn, who, you know, he was just disabled and in a severe way.

But a doctor, a board of doctors at a hospital decided that, hey, it's okay in this case that we're just going to let Dylan starve. We're not going to feed him. That kind of thing is unconscionable.

You know, I want to end with this. You know, a lot of times, God gets a bad rap. You know, there's a lot of death and misery in the world. People get sick. They get cancer. People die. There's tragedies

that happen, car accidents, whatever it might be.

A lot of people point to God and say, God, why did you let this happen? As if God really doesn't care about the lives of people. You know, and I get it.

You know, it's an emotional thing when that kind of thing happens. But really, death is not God's idea. You know, death is something that was brought into the world through the sin of man. And, you know, a lot of times we expect, well, God, he should supernaturally just protect everybody's life.

[48 : 24] You know what? God has decided through his wisdom that that's not how he's going to interact with the world. There's times in which he has done that, but it's not often.

In general, God has chosen to leave the duty of protecting and preserving life to who? To us. And that is what he commanded Noah.

But I'm going to say this, that command that God gave to Noah and the command and many commands that he gave to Moses and to the children of Israel shows something about God's love and his concern and his care, not just for our souls, but even the mortal, material, physical life of every single human being, man, woman, and child.

God. And while, you know, the Bible does indicate that death as a consequence of sin does have some value to our eternal life, to our eternity, God really does value even our mortal, physical life. He does not want our lives taken from us criminally by others. In fact, he was so, it's something that's so important to him that you see when nations disrespect, take the lives, especially of the innocent, he judges those nations severely.

[50 : 00] You know, and I'll finish with this, as Christians, we ought to demonstrate the same kind of care and concern and love for every single human person, regardless of how useful or inconvenient or convenient they are to our lives.

We ought to respect and protect the lives of every single human being. That's hard when your culture is going the other way. That can be very difficult.

Many times, it's unpopular. But let's not allow the pagan culture, because it is going back towards paganism, to keep us from honoring the Lord by always doing what's right and protecting the right to life of every innocent person.

I'm going to finish up there before I close in a word of prayer. Next week, we're going to be looking at this subject matter again, but we're going to be really looking at the criminal justice side of things. What's the difference between killing and murder? Is there a difference? Is there a time when killing is justified? Because you've got the death penalty. Is that something that God allows? Self-defense and war.

[51 : 21] There's other forms of murder that might not really be obvious to us. We're going to be looking at the death penalty in particular. Is that something that Christians should support, especially in the age of grace? Does the criminal justice kind of code that we see in the Bible, does that change because we're in the age of grace?

And then we'll also look, is this a command that Christians really need to be concerned about, even in their own personal lives? Is it possible for a Christian to break this command? So we'll look at that next week.

But let's close in a word of prayer. Father, help us. The world is, it seems, slouching towards Gomorrah. God, and we really need your help, you to work in us, to continue to do what we can, whether it's through our votes or through our advocacy, to uphold the right to life in whatever places that we can.

We want to honor you. You have care and love and respect and concern for every single innocent human life, and we want to have the same in our lives.

Work in us to have that same view, and we ask you to do this in Jesus' name. All right, thanks everybody. Just a few kind of reminders.