



LET'S DO IT GOD'S WAY "The Sanctity of Human Life" Exodus 20:13

No. 5524

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"Thou shalt not kill" appears, on the surface, to be an easy to understand Commandment, but careful study will show how far reaching it really is.

I. The Significance of This Law.

A. Its meaning.

1. Not a blanket prohibition against taking human life.
e.g. Exodus 21:12-17; Numbers 35:6-21; Deuteronomy 20:10-15
2. Prohibition of acts of premeditation, vengeance and malice.

B. Its rationale.

1. Man is made in image of God. Genesis 9:6
 - a. Part of animal kingdom.
 - b. Capable of conceptual thought.
 - c. Participates in divine creative purpose.
 - d. Possesses moral sensitivity.
 - e. Able to communicate with God and be communicated to by God.
 - f. Has eternal, immortal dimension.
2. To destroy man is to challenge divine intent.
3. To murder is to abrogate divine authority.
4. To end human life is to despise divine evaluation.

II. The Relevance of This Law.

A. The "abortion" issue.

1. Recent "liberalization." (e.g., USSR 1920; UK 1967; USA 1973)
2. What is the status of the fetus?
 - a. Biblical information. Exodus 20:22-25; Jeremiah 1:4-5; Psalm 139:13-15; Luke 1:31-32, 41-44
 - b. Medical information—development, viability, etc.
 - c. Person? Fully human? Subhuman? Potentially human?
3. What about the "mother"?
 - a. Her physical, emotional, spiritual well-being.
 - b. "Rights" of the unborn vs. "Rights" of the living.
4. What is the answer?
 - a. Can we countenance abortion on demand?
 - b. Can we ban abortion, period?
 - c. Can we uphold sanctity of life of both living and unborn?

B. The "suicide" issue.

1. Heroic, romantic, pessimistic suicide.
2. Unacceptable because:
 - a. Usurps divine prerogatives.
 - b. Destroys immeasurably valuable entity.
 - c. Insults humanity at large.

C. The "capital punishment" issue.

1. Capital punishment is Biblically acceptable. Genesis 9:6; Romans 13:1-5
2. Element of punishment (fitting the crime), deterrence, restoration.
3. But open to abuse.

D. The "war" issue.

1. The "just war" doctrine.
2. The nuclear buildup.
3. The destruction by man of his own stewardship.

III. The Importance of This Law. Matthew 5:20-26

- A. Christ's commitment to divine law.
- B. His rejection of human accretions.
- C. His exposure of motive.
- D. His eternal perspective.