

Walking with Jesus Through Sinai:
 Seeking Moral Clarity in an Age of Chaos with the 10 Commandments
 CPC Adult Sunday Studies Spring 2025
 23 - Sixth Commandment, part 4

From Womb to Tomb, continued

Review: We began our study of the 6th commandment looking at the basics of what “unlawfully kill” means, it’s foundations in God and creation, and then expanded it to our heart and character based on Jesus’ teaching on anger. Last week, we began discussions on “womb” issues in light of the foundation of this commandment, which is life as God’s gift.

Exodus 20:13 - “You shall not murder” - includes unlawful and unintentional killing

Framing Our Approach [from last session] - On Sensitivity, the Extent of Church Power, the important distinction of Law and Gospel.

“From Womb” - On Birth and Fertility

1. **Life is God’s gift** [see last session’s handout]
2. **Implications for IVF**
 1. *Black & White:* Allowed for Christians, but we can’t adopt the whole worldview, since it’s surrounded by an obsession of selfish choice and an unwillingness to accept human limits. IVF could be a way in God’s providence that modern medicine overcomes certain limits incurred upon humanity from the Fall. Yet we can’t allow IVF to “back-door” motivations that would have been condemned around abortion.
 2. *Grey:* What is the status of IVF-created embryos? Should they be afforded the same human rights as a fetus in the womb, or a person born? Is a Christian bound to attempt implantation if scientific consensus is that the embryo has no chance of life?

3. Implications for Contraception

1. **Black & White:** Unless one agrees with a strict view of marital sex (as Roman Catholicism does) being inherently about procreation, then some form of contraception is allowed for Christians. This can be seen as godly stewardship of one's body and life as well as God's providence in modern medicine. We are always called to portray sex as a great gift from God meant to embody the union between husband and wife, which itself points us to the love of Christ for the church.
2. **Grey:** How can we still value life as a gift from God, while using contraception and without buying into the worldview that feels entitled to sex without consequences? How can we pursue godly stewardship void of selfishness?

"Between Womb to Tomb"

See previous weeks' studies. This would include all the ways that we are to pursue life, love our neighbor, exude gentleness, fight unrighteous anger, etc. Let's not minimize the importance of actual life, which can happen when "womb" and "tomb" issues get too loud, and which this handout could imply, but shouldn't!

"To Tomb" - on End-of-Life Issues

For more details, see our "Engaging with Aging Seminar" - <https://cpcnewhaven.org/engaging-with-aging.html>

1. Overall Christian Perspective

1. Natural death, though a result of the Fall, is not the ultimate evil or the ultimate end of life. We should grieve it, but not as those without hope.
2. Jesus' resurrection transformed death into our gateway to eternal life
3. Death, like all of life, is an opportunity to glorify God
4. The gospel frees us up to talk about death
 1. Discern where you are at, and discuss with loved ones:
 1. What do you most fear regarding your own death?
 2. Where do you want to die (if you can choose)?
 3. How would you like your funeral done?

2. **For Caretakers of the Elderly** - you are called to walk with those who suffer, to the glory of God. Your life's goal is not to maximize the ease with which you can accomplish your ambitions! It is to love those in your life to the glory of God by the power of God!
 1. God calls us to care for our family, who is placed in our lives by God's providence, and the church is to supplement that (hence, "orphans and widows" as those without family or worldly power).
 2. Christians should grieve over the prevalence of nursing homes as symbols of selfishness and convenience, where we can just abandon our elderly when they get too burdensome. Of course, sometimes it's the wisest or most necessary option, but is also often inspired by a lack of love.
3. **For those aging themselves**
 1. Don't be ashamed! This is a part of God's plan for your life, and you still have the opportunity to glorify Him, trust Him, consecrate your suffering to him, and allow others to care for you, allowing them to witness the grace of God as you **humbly receive** care. Don't bow down to the Youth Culture!
4. **What about miraculous healing?**
 1. We pray for healing (James 5), knowing that God made us to be fully healed in body and soul, yet also knowing that this reality will only fully be accomplished at Jesus' return.
 2. There's a difference between praying for what we can be *certain* God wants to give (the Holy Spirit, peace, truth, etc.) vs. what God *may* give now, but will certainly give later (healing, prosperity in the heavenly sense, etc.).
 1. This also means we should passionately pursue the certainties more than the uncertainties. For example, if I'm dying, I should pray *most* for an assurance of salvation, ability to witness to the resurrection in the process, opportunity to love those around me, etc., not just for pain-free lives.
5. **What about excessive life-extending medical treatment?**
 1. *Wisdom and stewardship over obligation* - the Bible places a huge amount of value on human life, but it does not require us to seize any way

possible to extend life at all times. Clearly, Christian martyrs serve as a testimony that death is not the worst evil, and that honoring God in life and death should be our first priority.

1. Christians are against euthanasia because we do not have the right to decide when our life shall end (that's God's business!); yet, we recognize that death is part of this fallen world and cannot be escaped at all costs.
2. There may be good, biblical reasons to pursue a treatment or to refuse a treatment—the key is to do so with the goal of glorifying God and witnessing to Him in the process.

2. *Intent is a factor, but not the only one*

1. God will end a life when he wants to, we ought not pursue it with that intention.
 1. Yet we can remove life-saving care without the express intention of death, even if we know that death will be the natural outcome.
 2. Again, stewardship is key. We do not belong to ourselves, we steward even our own lives on behalf of God.

3. *What is "living"?*

1. Very often, people will say that someone in excessive pain, severely disabled, etc. is "not living." Christians should be *very* wary of such a statement. The One who lived most fully died a humiliating death on the cross. Someone's "not living" may be the means to eternal life for them or for those around them.
2. We do not deify suffering, we're not masochists, but we are called to rejoice in it, knowing that it does not win. **If we follow a Crucified King, we can expect suffering;** so trying to avoid it ought to be done with hesitation and a much greater goal. Certainly I can go to the defense of someone in pain with great compassion, but to avoid that pain or end that life all together could be removing an opportunity for God's own compassion in/ thru others.