

Sermon 1

Sermon 2

Sermon 3

his parents ; which, though it be evil in the child, yet the parent is accessory to it, as being the occasion of it.

7. If you would have honour from your children, pray much for them. Not only lay up a portion for them, but lay up a stock of prayer for them. Monica prayed much for her son Ansin ; and it was said, It was impossible a son of so many prayers and tears should perish. Pray that your children may be preserved from the contagion of the times : pray, that as your children bear your image in their faces, they may bear God's image in their hearts ; pray they may be instruments and vessels of glory. This may be one fruit of prayer, that the child may honour a praying parent.

8. Encourage that which you see good and commendable in your children. *Virtus laudata crescit.* Commending that which is good in your children, makes them more in love with virtuous actions ; and is like the watering of plants, which makes them grow more. Some parents discourage the good they see in their children, and so nip virtue in the bud, and help to damn their children's souls. They have their children's curses.

9. If you would have honour from your children, set them a good example ; it makes children despise their parents, when the parents live in a contradiction to their own precepts ; when they bid their children be sober, yet they themselves will be drunk : they bid their children fear God, yet are themselves loose in their lives. Oh ! if you would have your children honour you, teach them by an holy example. A father is a looking-glass which the child oft dresseth himself by ; let the glass be clear, and not spotted. Parents should observe a good decorum in their whole carriage, lest they give occasion to their children to say to them, as Plato's servant, " My master hath made a book against rash anger, but he himself is passionate ;" or, as a son once said to his father, " If I have done evil, I have learned it of you."

## OF THE SIXTH COMMANDMENT.

EXOD. xx. 13. *Thou shalt not kill.*

IN this commandment, (1.) Is a sin forbidden, viz. murder ; 'Thou shalt not kill.' (2.) A duty implied, "To preserve our own life, and the life of others."

1. The sin forbidden, murder : 'Thou shalt not kill.' Where two things are to be understood. (1.) The not injuring another. (2.) Ourselves.

I. In this, 'Thou shalt not kill,' is meant the not injuring another. 1. We must not injure him in his name. 2. In his body. 3. In his soul.

(1.) We must not injure another in his name. A good name is a precious balm; it is a great cruelty to murder a man in his name. We injure others in their name, when we calumniate and slander them. It was David's complaint, Ps. xxxv. 11. 'They laid to my charge things which I knew not.' The primitive Christians were traduced for incest, and killing their children, as Tertul. *Dicimur infanticidii, incestus rei*. This is to behead others in their good name; there is an irreparable injury: no physician can heal the wounds of the tongue.

(2.) We must not injure another in his body. The life is the most precious thing: and God hath set this commandment as a fence about it to preserve it, 'Thou shalt not kill.' God made a statute which was never to this day repealed, Gen. ix. 6. 'Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed.' In the old law, had a man killed another unawares, he might take sanctuary: but if he had killed him willingly, tho' he did flee to the sanctuary, the holiness of the place was not to defend him, Exod. xxi. 14. 'If a man come presumptuously upon his neighbour, to slay him with guile; thou shalt take him from my altar, that he may die.' Now in this commandment, 'Thou shalt do no murder,' all those sins are forbidden which lead to it, and are the occasions of it: as,

1. *Unadvised anger*. Anger boils up the blood in the veins, and oft produceth murder, Gen. xlix. 6. 'In their anger they slew a man.'

2. *Envy*. Satan envied our first parents the robe of innocence, and the glory of paradise; therefore never left till he had procured their death. Joseph's brethren envied him, because his father loved him, and gave him a 'coat of many colours;' 'therefore take counsel to slay him,' Gen. xxxvii. 20. Envy and murder are near a kin, therefore the apostle puts them together, Gal. v. 21. 'Envyings, murders.' Envy is a sin breaks both the tables at once: it begins in discontent against God, and ends in injury against man, as we see in Cain, Gen. iv. 6, 8. Envious Cain was first discontented with God, there he broke the first table; and then he fell out with his brother and slew him, there he broke the second table. Anger is sometimes 'soon over,' like fire kindled in straw, which is quickly out; but envy is a radicated thing, and will not quench his thirst without blood, Prov. xxvii. 4. 'Who is able to stand before envy?'

3. *Hatred*. The Pharisees hated Christ, because he excelled them in gifts, and had more honour among the people than they; therefore they never left till they had nailed him to the

cross, and taken away his life. Hatred is a vermin lives upon blood, Ezek. xxxv. 5. 'Because thou hast had a perpetual hatred, and hast shed the blood of the children of Israel.' Haman hated Mordecai, because he did not bow to him; and he presently fought revenge, he got a bloody warrant sealed for the destruction of the whole race and seed of the Jews, Esther iii. 9. Hatred is ever cruel. All these sins are forbidden in this commandment, which lead the van, and are oft the occasions of this sin of murder.

*Qu. How many ways is murder committed?*

*Ans.* We may be said to murder another, twelve ways, (1.) With the hand; as Joab killed Abner and Amasa, 2 Sam. xx. 10. 'He smote him in the fifth rib, and shed out his bowels.' (2.) Murder is committed with the mind. Malice is mental murder, 1 John iii. 15. 'Whoso hateth his brother is a murderer.' To malign another, and wish evil against him in the heart, is a murdering him. (3.) Murder is committed with the tongue, by speaking to the prejudice of another, and causing him to be put to death. Thus the Jews killed the Lord of life, when they inveighed against him, and accused him falsely to Pilate, John xvii. 30. (4.) Murder is committed with the pen. So David killed Uriah in writing to Joab 'to set Uriah in the forefront of the battle,' 2 Sam. xi. 15. Tho' the Ammonite's sword cut off Uriah, yet David's pen was the cause of his death; therefore the Lord tells David by the prophet Nathan, 2 Sam. xii. 9. 'Thou hast killed Uriah.' (5.) Murder is committed by plotting another's death. Thus Jezebel, tho' she did not lay hands herself upon Naboth; yet because she contrived his death, and caused two false witnesses to swear against him, and bring him within the compass of treason, she was a murderer, 1 Kings xxi. 10. (6.) Murder is committed by instilling poison into potions. Thus the wife of Commodus the emperor killed her husband, by poisoning the wine which he drank. So, many kill the children they go with, by taking such medicines, or strong purges, as proves the death of the child. (7.) By witchcraft and sorcery; a thing forbidden under the law, Deut. xviii. 10. 'There shall not be found among you an enchanter, or a witch, or a consulter with familiar spirits.' (8.) By having an intention to kill another; as Herod would, under a pretence of worshipping Christ, have killed him, Matth. ii. 8, 13. So Saul, when he made David go as captain against the Philistines, designing thereby that the Philistines should have killed him, 1 Sam. xviii. 17. 'Saul said, Let not my hand be upon him, but let the hand of the Philistines be upon him.' Here was intentional murder, and it was in God's account, as bad as actual murder. (9.) By consenting to another's death; so Saul to the death of Stephen, Acts xxii. 20. 'I also was

standing by, and consenting to his death.' He that gives consent is accessary to the murder. (10.) By not hindering the death of another when in our power. Pilate knew Christ was innocent, 'I find no fault in him;' but he did not hinder his death; therefore he was guilty. It was not washing his hands in water, could wash away the guilt of Christ's blood. (11.) By unmercifulness. 1. By taking away that which is necessary for the sustentation of life: as to take away those tools or utensils whereby a man gets his living, Deut. xxiv. 6. 'No man shall take away the upper or the nether millstone to pledge, for he takes a man's life.' 2. By not helping him when he is ready to perish. You may be the death of another, as well by not relieving him, as by offering him violence. *Si non paveris, occidisti*, Amb. If thou dost not feed him that is starving, thou killest him.—And then, how many are guilty of the breach of this commandment. (12.) By not executing the law upon capital offenders. A felon having committed six murders, the judge may be said to be guilty of five of them, because he did not execute the felon for his first offence.

The next thing I shall speak to, is, to shew the aggravations of this sin of murder: As;

1. To shed the blood of another *causeless*; as to kill another in an humour or frolic. A bee will not sting, unless provoked, but many when they are not provoked, will take away the life of another. This makes the sin of blood more bloody. The less provocation to a sin, the greater the sin.

2. To shed the blood of another contrary to *promise*. Thus, after the princes of Israel had sworn to the Gibeonites, that they should live, Josh. ix. 17. Saul slew them, 2 Sam. xxi. 1. Here were two sins twisted together, breach of oath, and murder.

3. To take away the life of any *public person*, enhanceth the murder, and makes it greater; as, (1.) To kill a judge upon the bench, because he represents the king's person. (2.) To murder a person whose office is sacred, and comes on the King of heaven's embassy: the murder of him may be the murdering of many. Herod added this sin above all, that he shut up John Baptist in prison, Luke iii. 20. then much more to behead John in prison. (3.) To stain one's hands with royal blood. David's heart smote him, because he did cut off the lap of king Saul's garment, 1 Sam. xxiv. 5. How would David's heart have smitten him, if he had cut off Saul's head?

4. To shed the blood of a *near relation*, aggravates the murder, and dyes it of a deeper crimson. For a son to kill his father, is horrid. Parricides are monsters in nature. *Qui occidit patrem, plurima committit peccato in uno*, Cicero. He who takes away his father's life, committeth many sins in one; he

is not only guilty of murder, but of disobedience, ingratitude, Ostracism, and diabolical cruelty, Exod. xxi. 15. 'He who striketh his father or mother, shall surely be put to death.' Then how many death's is he worthy of, that destroys his father or mother? Such a monster was Nero, who caused his mother Agrippina to be slain.

5. To shed the blood of any *righteous person*, aggravates the sin. (1.) Hereby justice is perverted. Such a person, being innocent, is unworthy of death. (2.) A saint, being a public blessing, he lies in the breach to turn away wrath: so that to destroy him, is to go to pull down the pillars of a nation. (3.) He is precious to God, Isa. xv. 43, 44. He is a member of Christ's body; therefore what injury is offered to him is done to God himself, Acts ix. 4.

*Caution I.* Though this commandment, 'Thou shalt not kill,' forbids private persons to shed the blood of another (unless in their own defence), yet such as are in office must punish public offenders, yea, with death, else they sin. To kill an offender, is not murder, but justice. A private person sins, if he draws the sword; a public person sins, if he puts up the sword. A magistrate ought not to let the sword of justice rust in the scabbard. As the magistrate should not let the sword be too sharp by severity, so neither should the edge of it be blunted by too much lenity.

*Caution II.* Neither doth this commandment, 'Thou shalt not kill,' prohibit a just war. When men's sins grow ripe, and long plenty hath bred surfeit, then God saith, 'Sword, go through the land,' Ezek. xiv. 17. God did abet the war between the tribes of Israel and Benjamin; when the iniquity of the Amorites was full, then God sent Israel to commence a war against them, Judges xi. 21.

*Use I. Lamentation,* That this land is so defiled with blood, Numb. xxxv. 33. How common is this sin in this hectoring age! England's sins are written in letters of blood. Some make no more of killing men than sheep, Jer. ii. 34. 'In thy skirts is found the blood of the poor innocents.' Junius reads it, *in alis*; and so in Hebrew, 'in thy wings' is found the blood of innocents. It alludes to the birds of prey, which stain their wings with the blood of other birds. May not the Lord justly take up a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because 'blood toucheth blood?' Hos. iv. 2. There is a concatenation, a plurality of murders. And that which may increase our lamentation, is, that not only man's blood is shed among us, but Christ's blood. Such as are profane flagitious sinners, are said to 'crucify the Son of God afresh,' Heb. vi. 6. (1.) They swear by his blood, and so do, as it were, make his wounds bleed afresh. (2.) Crucify Christ in his members, Acts ix. 5, 'Why

persecutest thou me?' The foot being trodden on, the head crieth out. (3.) If it lay in their power, were Christ alive on earth, they would nail him again to the cross: thus men crucify Christ afresh; and, if man's blood doth so cry, how loud will Christ's blood cry against sinners?

*Use II.* Beware of having your hands imbrued in the blood of others.

*Obj.* But such a man hath wronged me by defamation, or otherways; and if I spill his blood, I do but revenge my own quarrel.

*Ans.* If he hath done you wrong, the law is open; but take heed of shedding blood. What, because he hath wronged you, will you therefore wrong God? Is it not a wrong to God, to take his work out of his hand? He hath said, 'Vengeance is mine, and I will repay,' Rom. xii. 19. But you will take upon you to revenge yourself: you will be both plaintiff, judge, and executioner, yourself. This is an high wrong done to God, and he will not hold you guiltless. Now, to deter all from having their hands defiled with blood, consider what a sin murder is.

1. A God-affronting sin: it is a breach of his commandment, trampling upon God's royal edict: It is a wrong offered to God's image, Gen. ix. 6. 'In the image of God made he man.' It is a tearing God's picture, and breaking in pieces the King of heaven's broad-seal. Man is the temple of God, 1 Cor. vi. 19. 'Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost?' So that the man-slayer destroys God's temple: and will God endure to be thus confronted by proud dust?

2. It is a crying sin. *Clamitat in cælum vox sanguinis*—There are three sins in scripture said to cry. (1.) Oppression, Psal. xii. 5. (2.) Sodomy, Gen. xviii. 23. (3.) Blood-shed. This cries so loud, that it drowns all the other cries, Gen. iv. 10. 'The voice of thy brother's blood cries unto me from the ground.' Abel's blood had as many tongues as drops to cry aloud for vengeance. This sin of blood lay heavy on David's conscience: Though he had sinned by adultery, yet what he cried out of most, was, this crimson sin of blood, Psal. li. 14. 'Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God.' Though the Lord visits for every sin, yet he will in a special manner 'make inquisition for blood,' Psal. ix. 12. If a beast did kill a man, the beast was to be stoned, and 'his flesh must not be eaten,' Exod. xxi. 28. If God would have a beast stoned that killed a man, who had not the use of reason to restrain him, then much more will he be incensed against those, who go both against reason and conscience in spoiling the life of a man.

3. Murder is a diabolical sin: It makes a man the devil's first born: he was a murderer from the beginning, John viii. 44.

By saying to our first parents, 'Ye shall not die,' he brought in death to the world.

4. It is a cursed sin. If there be a curse for him that smites his neighbour secretly, Deut. xxvii. 23. then he is doubly cursed that kills him. The first man that was born was a murderer, Gen. iv. 11. 'And now art thou cursed from the earth.' He was an excommunicated person, banished from the place of God's public worship. God set a mark upon bloody Cain, Gen. iv. 15. Some thought it was horror of mind, which (above all sins) doth accompany the sin of blood. Others think this mark was a continual shaking and trembling in his flesh, which was mark of infamy God set upon him. He carried a curse along with him.

5. It is a wrath-procuring sin, 2 Kings xxiv. 4.

(1.) It procures Temporal judgments. Phocas, to get the empire, put to death all the sons of Mauricius the emperor, and then slew him: but this Phocas was pursued by his son-in-law Priscus, who cut off his ears and feet, and then killed him. Charles IX. who caused the massacre of so many Christians at Paris, blood issued out at several parts of his body, of which he died. Albonia killed a man, and then made a cup of his skull to drink in; afterwards his own wife caused him to be murdered in his bed. Vengeance, as a blood-hound, pursues the murderer; 'bloody men shall not live out half their days.' Psal. lv. 23.

(2.) It brings eternal judgments. It binds men over to hell. The papists make nothing of massacres; theirs is a bloody religion: they dispense with men for murder, so it be to propagate the catholic cause. If a cardinal put his red hat upon the head of a murderer going to execution, he is saved from death. But let all impenitent murderers read their doom, Rev. xxi. 8. 'Murderers shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone,' this 'is the second death:' we read of 'fire mingled with blood,' Rev. viii. 7. Such as have their hands full of blood must undergo the wrath of God. Here is fire mingled with blood, and this fire is inextinguishable, Mark ix. 44. Time will not finish it, tears will not quench it.

.....GOD.....

Exod. xx. 13. *Thou shalt not kill.*

(3.) WE must not injure another's soul. This is the greatest murder of all, because there is more of God's image in the soul than in the body. The soul, though it cannot be annihilated, is said to be murdered, because it misseth of happi-



ness, and is for ever in torment. Now, how many are foul-murderers?

1. Such as corrupt others by bad example. The world is led by example; especially the examples of great ones are very pernicious—We are apt to do as we see others before us, especially above us. Such as are placed in high power, are like the pillar of cloud; when that went, Israel went: when great ones move in their sphere, others will follow them, though it be to hell. Evil magistrates, like the tail of the dragon, draw the ‘third part of the stars after them.’

2. Such as entice others to sin. The harlot, by curling her hair, rolling her eyes, laying open her breasts, doth what in her lies to be both a tempter and a murderer: such an one was Messalina, wife to Claudius the emperor, Prov. vii. 7, 10. ‘I discerned a young man, and there met him a woman with the attire of an harlot; so she caught him and kissed him.’ Better are the reproaches of a friend, than the kisses of an harlot.

3. Ministers are murderers, who either starve, or poison, or infect souls.

(1.) That starve souls, 1 Pet. i. v. ‘Feed the flock of God which is among you.’ These feed themselves, and starve the flock; either through non-residing, they do not preach, or through insufficiency they cannot. There are many in the ministry (a shame to speak it) so ignorant, that they had need to be taught the ‘first principles of the oracles of God,’ Heb. v. 12. Was not he fit to be a preacher in Israel (think ye) who being asked something concerning the decalogue, answered he never saw any such book?

(2.) That poison souls. Such are heterodox ministers, who poison people with error: the basilisk poisons herbs and flowers, by breathing on them: the breath of heretical ministers, like the basilisk’s breath, poisons souls. The Socinian, that would rob Christ of his Godhead, the Arminian, that by advancing the power of the will, would take off the crown from the head of free-grace; the Antinomian, who denies the use of the moral law to a believer, as if it were antiquated and out of date; these poison men’s souls. Error is as damnable as vice, 1 Pet. ii. 1. ‘There shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, denying the Lord that bought them.’

(3.) That infect souls, viz. by their scandalous lives, Exod. xix. 22. ‘Let the priests which come near to the Lord, sanctify themselves.’ Ministers, who by their places are nearer to God, should be holier than others. The elements, the higher they are, the purer: the air is purer than the water; the fire is purer than the air. The higher men are by office, the holier they should be; John Baptist was a shining lamp. But there

are many who infect their people with their bad life; they preach one thing, and live another.

*Qui curios simulant et bacchanalia vivant*

They, like Eli's sons, are in white linen, but they have scarlet sins. Some say, that Prester John, the lord of Africa, caused to be carried before him a golden cup full of dirt: a fit emblem of such ministers as have a golden office, but are dirty and polluted in their lives. They are murderers, and the blood of souls will cry against them at the last day.

(4.) Such as destroy others, by getting them into bad company, and so making them profelytes to the devil. *Vitia in proximum quemque transfiliunt*, Sen. A man cannot live in the Ethiopian climate but he will be discoloured with the sun, nor he cannot be in bad company, but he will partake of their evil. One drunkard makes another; as the prophet speaks in another sense, Jer. xxxv. 5. 'I set before them pots full of wine and cups, and said unto them, drink ye wine;' so the wicked set pots of wine before others, and make them drink till reason be stupified, and lust inflamed. These are guilty of the breach of this commandment, they are murderers of souls. How sad will it be with these, who have not only their own sins, but the blood of others, to answer for? So much for the first thing forbidden in the commandment, the injuring of others.

II. The second thing forbidden in it is, the injuring one's self. 'Thou shalt not kill:' thou shalt not do hurt to thyself.

(1.) Thou shalt not hurt thy own body. One may be guilty of self-murder, either 1. indirectly and occasionally. Or, 2. Directly and absolutely.

1. Indirectly and occasionally; as,

*First*, When a man thrusts himself into danger which he might prevent: as if a company of archers were shooting, and one should go and stand in the place where the arrows fly; if the arrow did kill him, he is accessary to his own death. In the law, God would have the leper shut up, to keep others from being infected, Lev. xiii. 4. Now, if any would be so presumptuous as to go in to the leper, and get the plague of leprosy, he might thank himself, he occasioned his own death.

*Secondly*, A person may be in some sense guilty of his own death, by neglecting the use of means. If sick, and use no physic; if he hath received a wound and will not apply balsam, he hastens his own death. God appointed Hezekiah to lay a 'lump of figs to the boil, Isa. xxxviii. 21. If he had not used the lump of figs, he had been the cause of his own death.

*Thirdly*, By immoderate grief, 2 Cor. vii. 10. 'the sorrow of the world worketh death;' when God takes away a dear relation, and one is swallowed up with sorrow. How many weep

themselves into their graves! queen Mary grieved so excessively for the loss of Calais, that it broke her heart.

*Fourthly*, By intemperance, excess in diet. Surfeiting shortens life : *plures periere crapula, quam gladio* ; many dig their grave with their teeth. Too much oil chokes the lamp : the cup kills more than the cannon. Excessive drinking causeth untimely death.

2. One may be guilty of self-murder, directly and absolutely.

1. By envy. Envy is *tristitia de bonis alienis*, a secret repining at the welfare of another.

*Invidus alterius rebus macrescit opimis.*

An envious man is more sorry at another's prosperity than at another's adversity ; he never laughs, but when another weeps. Envy is a self-murder, a fretting canker. Cyprian calls it *vulnus occultum*, a secret wound ; it hurts a man's self most. Envy corrodes the heart, dries up the blood, rots the bones, Prov. xiv. 30. ' Envy is the rottenness of the bones.' It is to the body, as the moth to the cloth, it eats it, and makes its beauty consume : envy drinks its own venom. The viper, which leaped on Paul's hand, thought to have hurt Paul, but fell herself into the fire, Acts xviii. 3. So, while the envious man thinks to hurt another, he destroys himself.

(2.) By laying violent hands on himself, and thus he is *felo de se* ; as Saul fell upon his own sword and killed himself.

And because I see so many in the bills of mortality, who make away themselves, let me a little expatiate. It is the most unnatural and barbarous kind of murder for a man to butcher himself and imbrue his hands in his own blood. A man's self is most dear to him, therefore this sin of self-murder breaks both the law of God, and the bonds of nature. The Lord hath placed the soul in the body, as in a prison ; now it is a great sin to break prison, till God by death open the door. Self-murderers are worse than the brute creatures : they will tear and gore one another, but no beast will go to destroy itself. Self-murder is occasioned usually from discontent : discontent is joined with a fullen melancholy. The bird that beats herself in the cage, and is ready to kill herself, is the true emblem of a discontented spirit.

And this discontent ariseth, (1.) From pride. A man that is swelled with an high opinion of himself, thinks he deserves better than others ; and if any cross befall him, he is discontented, and now in a sudden passion will make away himself. Ahithophel had high thoughts of himself, his words were esteemed oracles ; and to have his wife counsel rejected, he was not able to bear it, 2 Sam. xvii. 23. ' He put his house in order, and hanged himself.' (2.) From Poverty. Poverty is a sore temptation, Prov. xxx. 19. ' Give me not poverty.' Many by their sin

have brought themselves to poverty ; and when a great estate is boiled away to nothing, then they are discontented, and think better to die quickly, than languish in misery : hereupon the devil helps them to dispatch themselves. (3.) From covetousness. Avarice is a dry drunkenness, an horse-leech that is never satisfied. The covetous man is like Behemoth, Job xl. 23. ‘ Behold, he drinketh up rivers, and yet his thirst is not allayed.’ The covetous miser hoards up corn ; and if he hears the price of corn begins to fall, then he is troubled, and there is no cure for his discontent but an halter. (4.) From horror of mind. A man hath sinned a great sin, he hath swallowed down some pills of temptation the devil hath given him, and these pills begin to work in his conscience ; and the horror is so great, that he chooseth strangling. Judas having betrayed innocent blood, he was in that agony, that he hanged himself to quiet his conscience ; as if one should, to avoid the stinging of a gnat, endure the biting of a serpent. Thus self-murder is an high breach of this commandment, it is an execrable sin. I can see no ground of hope for such as make away themselves ; for they die in the very act of sin, and cannot have time to repent.

(2.) Here is forbidden hurting one’s own soul, ‘ thou shalt not kill.’ Many who are free from other murders, yet are guilty here ; they go about to murder their own souls ; they are wilfully set to damn themselves, and throw themselves into hell.

*Qu. Who are they that go about desperately to murder their own souls ?*

*Ans.* 1. Such wilfully go about to murder their souls, who have no sense of God, or the other world ; they are past feeling, Eph. iv. 19. Tell them of God’s holiness and justice, they are not at all affected, Zech. vii. 12. ‘ They made their hearts like an adamant.’ The adamant faith Pliny is insuperable, the hammer cannot conquer it. Sinners have adamantine hearts. The altar of stone, when the prophet spake to it, ‘ rent asunder,’ 1 Kings xiii. 2. But sinners’ hearts are so hardened in sin, that nothing will work upon them, neither ordinances nor judgments : they do not believe a Deity, they laugh at hell ; these go about to murder their own souls, they are throwing themselves as fast as they can into hell.

2. Such as are set wilfully to murder their own souls, are they who are resolved upon their lusts, let what will come of it. The soul may cry out, I am killing, I am murdering, Eph. iv. 19. ‘ They have given themselves over to work all uncleanness with greediness.’ Let ministers speak to them about their sins, let conscience speak, let affliction speak, yet they will have their lusts, though they go to hell for them. Are not these resolved to murder their souls ? As Agrippina, mother to Nero,

said, *Occidat modo imperet*, let my son kill me, so he may reign; so many say in their hearts, let our sins damn us, so they may but please us. Herod will have his incestuous lust, though it cost him his soul: men will, for a drop of pleasure, drink a sea of wrath. Are not these about to massacre and damn their souls?

3. They murder their souls, who avoid all means of saving their souls. They will go to plays, to drunken meetings: but will not set their foot within God's house, or come near the sound of the gospel-trumpet: as if one that is diseased should shun the bath, for fear of being healed; these do wilfully damn their souls, and are as great murderers of themselves, as he, who having means of cure offered him, chooseth death rather than physic.

4. They do voluntarily murder their souls, who suck in false prejudices against religion; as if religion were so strict and severe: they that espouse holiness, must live a melancholy life, like Hermits and Anchorites, and drown all their joy in tears. This is a slander which the devil hath cast upon religion: for there is no true joy but in believing, Rom. xv. 13. No honey so sweet as that which drops from a promise. Some men have foolishly taken up a prejudice against religion; they are resolved rather never to go to heaven, than to go thither through the strait gate. I may say of prejudice, as Paul to Elymas, Acts xiii. 10. 'O prejudice, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness,' How many souls hast thou damned?

5. They are wilfully set to murder their own souls, who will neither be good themselves, nor suffer others to be so, Mat. xxii. 23. 'Ye neither go into the kingdom of heaven yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering, to go in.' Such are those that persecute others for their religion. Drunken meetings shall escape punishments: but, if men meet to serve God, then let all severity be used. These are resolved to shipwreck others, though they themselves are cast away in the storm. Oh! take heed of this, of murdering your own souls; no creature but man doth willingly kill itself. So I have done with the first, the sin forbidden in this commandment, 'thou shalt not kill.'



EXOD. xx. 13. *Thou shalt not kill.*

II. THE second duty implied is, that we should do *all the good we can to ourselves and others.*

1. In reference to others. We should endeavour to preserve the lives and souls of others. 2. In reference to ourselves. To preserve our own life and soul. [1.] In reference to others.

(1.) To preserve the life of others. Comfort them in their sorrows, relieve them in their wants; be as the good Samaritan, pour wine and oil into their wounds, Job xxix. 16. 'I was a father to the poor.—13. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me.' This is a great means of preserving the life of another, by relieving him when he is ready to perish. Pompey, when there was a great dearth in Rome, provided corn for their relief; and when the mariners were backward to sail thither in a tempest, said he, "It is not necessary that we should live, but it is necessary that Rome be relieved." Grace makes the heart tender, it causeth sympathy and charity: as it melts the heart in contrition towards God, so in compassion towards others, Pl. cxii. 9. 'He hath dispersed, and given to the poor.' This the commandment implies, that we should be so far from ruining others, that we should do all we can to preserve the lives of others. When we see the picture of death drawn in their faces, administer to their necessities; be temporal favours to them; draw them out of the waters of affliction with a silver cord of charity. That I may persuade you to this, let me lay before you arguments;

*First*, Works of charity evidence grace.

1. *Faith*, James ii. 18. 'I will shew thee my faith by my works.' Works are faith's letters of credence to shew. We judge of the health of the body by the pulse, where the blood stirs and operates: Christian, judge of the health of thy faith by the pulse of charity: the word of God is the rule of faith, and good works are the witnesses of faith.

*Love*. Love loves mercy: it is a noble bountiful grace. Mary loved Christ, and how liberal was her love! she bestowed on Christ her tears, kisses, costly ointments. Love, like a full vessel, will have vent; it vents itself in acts of liberality.

*Secondly*, To communicate to the necessities of others, is not arbitrary (is it not left to our choice whether we will or no) but it is a duty incumbent, 1 Tim. vi. 16. 'Charge them that are rich in this world that they do good,—that they be rich in good works.' This is not only a counsel, but a charge. If God should lay a charge upon the inanimate creatures, they would obey; if he would charge the rocks, they would send forth water, if he should charge the clouds, they would melt into showers: if he should charge the stones, they would become bread.—And shall we be harder than the stones, not to obey God, when he chargeth us to 'be rich in good works?'

*Thirdly*, God supplies our wants, and shall not we supply the wants of others? "We could not live without mercy." God makes every creature helpful to us: the sun doth enrich us with its golden beams: the earth yields us its increase, veins of gold, crops of corn, store of flowers, God opens the treasury of his

mercy ; he feeds us every day out of the alms-basket of his providence : ‘ thou openest thy hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing,’ Ps. cxlv. 16. Now, doth God supply our wants, and shall not we minister to the wants of others? shall we be only as a sponge to suck in mercy, and not as breasts to milk it out to others?

*Fourthly*, Herein we resemble God, to be doing good to others. It is our excellency to be like God : “ godliness is Godlikeness.” And wherein are we more like him, than in acts of bounty and munificence? Ps. cxix. 68. ‘ Thou art good, and doest good.’ ‘ Thou art good,’ there is God’s essential goodness ; and ‘ doest good,’ there is his communicative goodness. The more helpful we are to others, the more like we are to God : we cannot be like to God in omniscience, or in working miracles ; but we may be like him in doing works of mercy.

*Fifthly*, God remembers all our deeds of charity, and takes them kindly at our hands, Heb. vi. 10. ‘ God is not unrighteous to forget your labour of love which you have shewed towards his name, in that you have ministered unto the faints.’ The chief butler may forget Joseph’s kindness, but the Lord will not forget any kindness we shew to his people, Matth. xxv. 35. ‘ I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat ; thirsty, and ye gave me drink.’ Christ takes the kindness done to his faints, as done to himself ; God, that hath a bottle for your tears, hath a book to write down your alms, Mal. iii. 16. ‘ A book of remembrance was written before him.’ Tamerlane had a register to write down all the names and good services of his soldiers ; so, God hath a book of remembrance to write down all your charitable works ; and at the day of judgment there shall be an open and honourable mention made of them in presence of the angels.

*Sixthly*, Hard heartedness to them in misery reproacheth the gospel. When men’s hearts are like pieces of rocks, or as ‘ the scales of the Leviathan, shut up as with a close seal,’ Job xli. 15. You may as well extract oil out of a flint stone, as the golden oil of charity out of their hearts. “ These unchristian themselves. Unmercifulness is the sin of the heathen,” Rom. i. 31. ‘ Without mercy.’ It eclipseth the glory of the gospel ; doth the gospel teach uncharitableness? Doth it not bid us draw ‘ out our soul to the hungry?’ Isa. l. 10. Tit. iii. 8. ‘ These things I will that ye affirm, that they which have believed in God, might be careful to maintain good works.’ While you relieve not such as are in want, you walk antipodes to the gospel ; you cause it to be evil spoken of, and lay it open to the lash and censure of others.

*Seventhly*, There is nothing lost by relieving the necessitous.

The Shunamite woman was kind to the prophet, she welcomed him to her house, and she received kindness from him another way ; he restored her dead child to life, 2 Kings iv. 35. Such as are helpful to others, shall ' find mercy to help in time of need.' Such as pour out the golden oil of compassion to others, God will pour out the golden oil of salvation to them : for a ' cup of cold water,' they shall have ' rivers of pleasure.' Nay, God will make it up some way or other in this life, Prov. xi. 25. ' The liberal soul shall be made fat ;' as the loaves in breaking multiplied ; or, as the widow's oil increased in pouring out, 1 Kings xvii. 10. An estate may be imparted, yet not impaired.

*Eighthly,* To do good to others in necessity, keeps up the credit of religion. Works of mercy adorn the gospel, as the fruit adorns the tree : when ' our light so shines that others see our good works,' this glorifies God, crowns religion, silenceth the lips of gain-sayers. Basil saith, nothing rendered the true religion more famous in the primitive times, and made more profelytes to it, than the bounty and charity of the Christians.

*Ninthly, and lastly,* The evil that doth accrue by not preserving the lives of others, and helping them in their necessities. God sends oft a secret moth into their estate, Prov. xi. 24. ' There is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty,' Prov. xxi. 13. ' Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, but shall not be heard.' James ii. 13. ' He shall have judgment without mercy, that shewed no mercy.' Dives denied Lazarus a crumb of bread, and Dives was denied a drop of water, Matth. xxv. 41. ' Depart from me, ye cursed ; for I was an hungred, and ye gave me no meat.' Christ saith not ye took away my meat ; but ' ye gave me no meat ;' ye did not feed my members, therefore, ' depart from me.' By all this, be ready to distribute to the necessities of others. This is included in the commandment, ' thou shalt not kill.' Not only thou shalt not destroy his life, but thou shalt preserve it by giving to his necessities.

(2.) It is implied, that we should endeavour to preserve the souls of others ; counsel them about their souls, set life and death before them, help them to heaven. In the law, if one met his neighbour's ox or ass going astray, he must bring him again, Exod. xxxiii. 4. Much more, if we see our neighbour's soul going astray, we should use all means to bring him back to God by repentance.

[2.] In reference to ourselves. The commandment, ' Thou shalt not kill,' requires that we should preserve our own life and soul ; it is engraven upon every creature, that we should preserve our own natural life. We must be so far from self-murder, that we must do all we can to preserve our natural life ; we



must use all means of diet, exercise and lawful recreation, which is like oil to preserve the lamp of life from going out. Some have been under temptation; Satan has suggested they are such sinners as do not deserve a bit of bread, and so they have been ready to starve themselves; this is contrary to the sixth commandment, 'thou shalt do no murder;' it is implied, we are to use all means for the preservation of our own life, 1 Tim. v. 23. 'Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake.' Timothy was not by drinking too much water to overcool his stomach, and weaken nature, but we must use means for self-preservation, 'drink a little wine,' &c.

*Secondly,* This commandment requires, that we should endeavour (as to preserve our own, life so especially) to preserve our own souls.

*Omnia perdas animam servare memento.*

It is engraven upon every creature, as with the point of a diamond, that it should look to its own preservation. If the life of the body must be preserved, then much more the life of the soul. If he who doth not provide for his own house is worse than an infidel, 1 Tim. v. 8. then much more he who doth not provide for his own soul. This is a main thing implied in the commandment, a special care for the preserving our souls: the soul is the jewel; the soul is a diamond set in a ring of clay: Christ puts the soul in balance with the world, and it outweighs, Mat. xvi. 26. The soul is a glass, in which some rays of divine glory shine; it hath in it some faint idea and resemblance of a Deity; it is a celestial spark lighted by the breath of God. The body was made of the dust, but the soul is of a more noble extract and original, Gen. ii. 7. 'God breathed into man a living soul.'

1. The soul is excellent in its nature. It is a spiritual being, 'it is a kind of angelical thing;' the mind sparkles with knowledge, the will is crowned with liberty, and all the affections are as stars shining in their orbs. The soul being spiritual, (1.) It is of quick operation. How quick are the motions of a spark! how swift the wing of a cherubim! so quick and agile is the motion of the soul! what is quicker than a thought? How many miles can the soul travel in an instant! (2.) The soul, being spiritual, moves upward, it contemplates God and glory, Ps. lxxiii. 25. 'Whom have I in heaven but thee?' The motion of the soul is upward; only sin hath put a wrong bias upon the soul, and made it move too much downward. (3.) The soul, being spiritual, hath a self-moving power; it can subsist and move when the body is dead, as the mariner can subsist when the ship is broken. (4.) The soul, being spiritual, is immortal, (Scaliger) *Aeternitatis gemma*, a bud of eternity.

2. As the soul is excellent in its nature, so in its capacities.

It is capable of grace, it is fit to be an associate and companion of angels : It is capable of communion with God, of being Christ's spouse, 2 Cor. xi. 12. ' That I might espouse your virgin souls to Christ.' It is capable of being crowned with glory for ever. O then, carrying such precious souls about you, created with the breath of God, redeemed with the blood of God ; what endeavours should you use for the saving of these souls ! let not the devil have your souls. Heliogabalus fed his lions with pheasant : the devil is called a roaring lion, feed him not with your souls. Besides the excellency of the soul, which may make you labour to get it saved, consider how sad it will be not to have the soul saved. It is such a loss as there is none like it ; because, in losing the soul you lose a great many things with it. A merchant in losing his ship, loseth many things with it ; he loseth money, jewels, spices, &c. so, he that loseth his soul, loseth Christ, the company of angels in heaven : it is an infinite loss, and it is an irreparable loss ; it can never be made up again. Two eyes but one soul, Chrysostom. O what care should be taken of the immortal soul ! I would request but this of you, that you would but take as much care for the saving of your souls, as you do for the getting of an estate : nay, I will say this, do but take as much care for the saving your souls, as the devil doth for destroying them. O how industrious is Satan to damn souls ? how doth he play the serpent in his subtil laying of snares to catch souls ! how doth he shoot fiery darts ! the devil is never idle ; the devil is a busy bishop in his diocese ; he ' walks up and down seeking whom he may devour,' 2 Pet. v. 8. Now, is not this a reasonable request, to take but as much care for the saving of your souls, as the devil doth for destroying of them ?

*Qu. How shall we do to get our souls saved ?*

*Ans.* By having them sanctified. Only the ' pure in heart shall see God.' Get your souls inlayed and enamelled with holiness, 1 Pet. i. 16. It is not enough that ' we cease to do evil,' which is all the evidence some have to shew) this is to lose heaven by short-shooting ; but we must be inwardly sanctified : not only the ' unclean spirit' must go out, but we must be filled with the ' Holy Ghost,' Eph. v. 18. This holiness must needs be, if you consider God is to dwell with you here, and you are to dwell with him hereafter.

*First,* God is to dwell with you here. God takes up the soul for his own lodging, Eph. iii. 17. ' That Christ may dwell in your hearts.' Therefore the soul must be consecrated. A king's palace must be kept clean, especially his presence-chamber. The body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, 1 Cor. vi. 19. then the soul is the *sanctum sanctorum* : how holy ought that to be.

*Secondly,* You are to dwell with God. Heaven is an holy

place, 1 Pet. i. 4. 'An inheritance undefiled.' And how can you dwell with God till you are sanctified? We do not put wine into a musty vessel: God will not put the new wine of glory into a sinful heart. O then, as you love your souls, and would have them saved eternally, endeavour after holiness; by this means you will have an idoneity and fitness for the kingdom of heaven, and your souls will be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

---

## OF THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT.

EXOD. xx. 14. *Thou shalt not commit adultery.*

GOD is a pure, holy Spirit, and hath an infinite antipathy against all uncleanness. In this commandment he hath entered his caution against it, *non mæchaberis*, 'Thou shalt not commit adultery.' The sum of this commandment is, *The preservation of corporal purity*. We must take heed of running on the rock of uncleanness, and so making shipwreck of our chastity. In this commandment there is something tacitly implied, and something expressly forbidden.

1. Something tacitly implied, viz. That the ordinance of marriage should be observed.

2. Something expressly forbidden, viz. The infecting ourselves with bodily pollutions, 'Thou shalt not commit adultery.'

(1.) Something implied, that *the ordinance of marriage should be observed*, 1 Cor. vii. 2. 'Let every man have his own wife, and every woman have her own husband.' Marriage is honourable and the bed undefiled, Heb. xiii. 4. God did institute marriage in paradise: he 'brought the woman to the man,' Gen. ii. 22. He did as it were give them in marriage. And Jesus Christ did honour marriage with his presence, John ii. 2. The first miracle he wrought was at a marriage, when he turned the 'water into wine.'—Marriage is a type and resemblance of the mystical union between Christ and his church, Eph. v. 32. Concerning marriage,

[1.] There are general duties. 1. The general duty of the husband is to rule, Eph. v. 23. 'The husband is the head of the wife.' The head is the seat of rule and government; but he must rule with discretion. He is head, therefore must not rule without reason. 2. The general duty on the wife's part is submission, Eph. iii. 22. 'Wives submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.' It is observable, the Holy Ghost passed by Sarah's failings, he doth not mention her un-