

#6. Do Not Murder

(Exodus 20:13)

Introduction

[Teacher, bring in a rubber brain from a novelty shop. Make a big batch of vanilla pudding with green food coloring in it. Stick plastic spiders and other bugs into the folds of the rubber brain and bury it in the green slime! Pull it out and talk about how we ruin our brains by the things we immerse them in. *Only the living water (Jesus) can clean our brains thoroughly from the inside out.* Have a bowl of clean water in which to rinse the brain off. Talk about how reading the word and meditating on the goodness of God can transform our minds.]

Have you ever heard of “*Brain Food*”? What do you think that is? How do you think you can feed your brain? If you read books, study and learn things, you can gain wisdom. If you study God’s Word, you can gain spiritual wisdom.

Do you think it matters what shows you watch? Did you know that what you allow your eyes to see and your ears to hear, feeds your brain, too? What kind of “*food*” do you think that violent movies feed your brain? Poison!

How many of you know about the horrible slaughter that happened at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado? The two boys that did that had watched a movie called *Natural Born Killers* repeatedly before they planned that shoot up that killed many of their school mates and teachers.

Today we’re going to learn how it is important to feed our brains good food so that we can learn how to say *no* to violence and *yes* to respecting life.

Opening Prayer

Dear Lord our God, when You commanded, “*Do not murder,*” TV hadn’t even been invented, but violence had. You were so sad about the violent world, that You wiped it out with a flood. Help us to realize

that all of life is precious. We want to stand with You when You say, “*Choose life.*” Help us to say *no* to violence and *yes* to life. In Jesus’ name, I pray. Amen.

Memory Verse

You must not murder. (Exodus 20:13)

Lesson

We have been learning the Ten Commandments. Can anyone say the first five without looking?

1. *Do not have any gods but Me* – God wants us to recognize that He is the *only* true God who created all things. He doesn’t want us to let anything or anyone become more important to us than He is.
2. *Do not worship idols* – God wants us to worship only Him. Don’t let anyone or anything steal God’s place in your life.
3. *Keep God’s Name Holy* – God doesn’t want us to ever think anything, say anything or do anything that would bring dishonor to His name.
4. *Set aside a special day for God* – God wants us to dedicate one day a week to Him. It shows others how important God is to us, plus it refreshes our spirits.
5. *Honor your father and mother* – God promises us that if we respect and obey our parents, we will live a long and happy life.

The first four commandments teach us to love God with all of our hearts. And the other six commandments teach us to love others with that same kind of perfect love. By learning how to honor and love God first, you learn to honor and love others.

Today we’re going to learn the sixth commandment.

Exodus 20:13

You must not murder.

Murder is taking someone's life in an unlawful way. Life is precious. God breathed His life into the first man, Adam. So everyone's life is important — your life, the lives of those you love, the lives of strangers, the lives of unborn babies. Life is God's gift; and we are responsible not only *not* to take another's life, but to protect the lives of others.

Here's what Jesus said...

Matthew 5:21-22

You have heard that our ancestors were told, 'You must not murder. If you commit murder, you are subject to judgment.' (22) But I say, if you are even angry with someone, you are subject to judgment! If you call someone an idiot, you are in danger of being brought before the court. And if you curse someone, you are in danger of the fires of hell."

God gave the sixth commandment loudly and clearly: "*You must not murder.*" But we live in a world that loves violence. Our movies, TV shows, music, and video games are full of people hurting one another. That's what violence is. God begs you to say *no* to violence and *yes* to life. He wants you to hear His voice and make the right choice. God's special people understand that all of life is special to God.

Most kids your age don't even notice that they are watching violent games and movies. How many of you think it's no big deal to see someone being killed on TV or in a movie or a video game?

Well, it matters to God.

[Teacher, tape a piece of butcher paper to the wall. At the top, write, "*You must not murder.*" On the left side write, "*Too violent,*" and on the right side write, "*OK to watch or play or read.*"] Let's make a list of books, TV shows, movies, video games, etc. that are too violent to watch, or play, or read; and another list of those that are OK for us.

- How can these movies or games harm you?
- How can a murder movie harm your mind?

One awful murder can stay in your mind for a very long time. God tells us to say *no* to violence because He wants us to be pure and innocent of evil. How many of you know about the terrible things that happened on September 11, 2001 when terrorists flew airplanes into the twin towers in New York City? For those of us who saw it happen on TV, those images will stay in our minds forever!

God doesn't want us to become a part of people harming other people. God tells us to set our minds on things above.

Colossians 3:2

Think about the things of heaven, not the things of earth.

God also tells us to be changed by having a pure mind:

Romans 12:2

Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.

Sometimes it's hard to say *no* to violence when all your friends want to watch a particular show or play a certain video game. You need to ask your parents to help you. Ask your parents to tell your friends and their parents that you're not allowed to watch shows full of terror and violence. It will be hard to do at times, but God will be pleased with you when you watch shows and play games that respect life.

- How can saying *no* to violence be like saying *yes* to life?

Your whole life as a Christian will be a battle between wanting to join the world and wanting to please God. But, the Ten Commandments are not just good *suggestions*. They aren't just ten things you *may* want to do *sometimes*. They are *commandments*! God says, "*You must not murder.*" If you get used to watching shows that are filled with violence, you begin to think that it's normal acceptable behavior. But life is precious to God, he wants us to respect and protect life.

You must make that choice not to watch movies or play video games that are violent. You say yes to life by having something better to play or watch. You need to be ready to tell your friends that you just aren't allowed to watch those kinds of movies.

- If you were to invite Jesus to your home to watch TV, what show would you turn on?
- What would you want God to see you watching?
- What movies or video games do you think He wouldn't be pleased with? Why?
- What can you do to say *no* to violence and *yes* to life?

Tugged in Two

[Tell this story to the children:]

Joey was a happy boy. He loved God and wanted to please Him. He wanted to obey all of God's Commandments, including the Sixth one, "You must not murder." He knew that watching horror movies and playing violent video games made it seem that human life was worth nothing at all. Then he went to his friend, Jeremy's house. He liked Jeremy and he was hoping that Jeremy would like him.

Jeremy had his own TV, VCR, and Nintendo station in his bedroom. "I can watch and play whatever I want," Jeremy bragged. "Come on, let's play Death Squad."

"Death Squad?" asked Joey. "Isn't that the game where a killer goes around shooting anything and anybody that moves?"

"Yeah," replied Jeremy. "So what?"

Joey was in a horrible situation. He kind of wanted to play Death Squad, but he was sure God wouldn't be pleased. He wanted to see the action, but he was bothered by the way people were killed as if they had no value. He didn't want Jeremy to think he was a sissy, but he knew God's laws were for his good. "What should I do?" he thought. "Maybe I can

just watch it and not actually play it," he thought and prayed at the same time.

(How do you think Joey was feeling about this time?)

Joey felt pulled in two different directions. He felt Jeremy and Death Squad pulling him to play the game. What if Jeremy told his other school buddies, "Joey is a sissy. He only likes Toby the Tractor"? If he played this game with Jeremy, they'd be even better friends. Then he felt as if God was pulling his other arm, whispering, "Say no to violence. I love people. They are precious. Say yes to life. Watch something that respects people's lives.

Joey took a deep breath and shot a quick prayer to God for strength. He gathered all his courage. He looked Jeremy straight in the eye and said, "I can't play Death Squad. It's full of violence. It shows people getting killed as if they're nothing more than flies."

Jeremy said, "But nobody would know. I'll lock the door so no one can see."

Joey said, "God can see right through walls. He sees everything. He knows what's good for me."

I guess you're right." Jeremy shrugged his shoulders.

Then Joey had a great idea. He thought of something else they could do. "Hey, Jeremy," Joey said, "Why don't we build a fort in your back yard?"

"Sounds great," Jeremy said. "Let's go!"

Joey smiled up at God and it felt as if God smiled down at him.

- What's the big deal about watching violent movies? How can they affect you?
- Have you ever been in a situation like this?
- How do you think Joey might have felt when Jeremy suggested they play Death Squad?
- What did Joey do to say *no* to violence?

- What did Joey do to say yes to life?
- What can you do the next time you are faced with this problem?
- What's the hardest thing about saying *no* to violence?
- How is saying *no* to violence a way of obeying God's law: "*You must not murder*"?
- How is watching decent movies like saying yes to life?

Violent games and movies are popular today, but we all need to make a choice to guard our minds against the poison that seeps into our minds from the violence we see on TV and in movies, and in video games and music.

When we feel tugged by our friends to do things we know are not pleasing to God, it can be very hard to hear God's voice. Pray before you go to your friend's homes, and tell your friends and their parents as soon as you get there that you are not allowed to watch movies that have killing in them.

Deuteronomy 30:19

Today I have given you the choice between life and death, between blessings and curses. Now I call on heaven and earth to witness the choice you make. Oh, that you would choose life, so that you and your descendants might live!

God wants us to choose to do the right thing. He wants us to choose to live lives that are pleasing to Him.

Philippians 4:8

And now, dear brothers and sisters, one final thing. Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise.

Keep your minds clean and pure. Don't fill them with thoughts that are wicked and evil. Say *no* to violence and *yes* to life!

Closing Prayer

Dear Lord, please help us to be strong when we're faced with tough choices. Please give each one of us the strength to say *no* to violence and *yes* to life. Help us to tell our friends that we're not allowed to watch violent movies. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

Learning Activities

Craft Corner

Game Center

Use the following questions in a game of your choice:

Review questions:

1. What is murder? (Taking someone's life.)
2. Why doesn't God want you to murder people? (Everyone's life is precious in God's eyes; we need to respect human life.)
3. Is it possible to murder someone with our words? How? (If we are angry with someone and call them a name, it's like killing them.)
4. How can you keep your minds clean and pure? (Don't fill them with thoughts that are wicked and evil. Think good thoughts.)
5. What's the big deal about watching violent movies? How can they affect you? (They can make murder seem like no big deal.)
6. What are some shows that you have watched that are too violent?

7. What does God tell us to set our minds on instead of evil? (We're to think about the things of heaven.)
8. Sometimes it's hard to say *no* to violence when all your friends want to watch a particular show... what can you do the next time you are faced with this problem? (Pray before you go to your friend's homes, tell your friends and their parents as soon as you get there that you are not allowed to watch movies that having killing in them.)
9. How is saying no to violence a way of obeying God's law: "*You must not murder*"?
10. How is watching decent movies like saying *yes* to life?

[For more lessons for children, visit
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