

Rethinking Anger

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[0 : 00] Good morning, church. Our scripture lesson today is taken from Psalms chapter 4. Answer me when I call, O God, of my righteousness. You have given me relief when I was in distress. Be gracious to me and hear my prayer.

O men, how long shall my honor be turned into shame? How long will you love vain words and seek after lies?

But know that the Lord has set apart the godly for himself. The Lord hears when I call to him. Be angry and do not sin. Ponder in your own hearts on your beds and be silent. Offer right sacrifices and put your trust in the Lord.

There are many who say, who will show us some good? Lift up the light of your face upon us, O Lord. You have put more joy in my heart than they have when their grain and wine abound. In peace, I will both lie down and sleep. For you alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety. Our second reading is Matthew 5, 21 through 26.

[1 : 20] You have heard that it was said to those of old, you shall not murder, and whoever murders will be liable to judgment. But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment.

Whoever insults his brother will be liable to the counsel. And whoever says you fool will be liable to the hell of fire. So, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift, therefore, before the altar and go.

First, be reconciled to your brother and then come and offer your gift. Come to terms quickly with your accuser while you are going with him to court, lest your accuser hand you over to the judge and the judge to the guard and you be put in prison.

Truly, I say to you, you will never get your get out until you have paid the last penny. Here ends the reading. Thank you very much, Michelle.

Nowadays, hardly a day goes by in our country without us hearing about one or more murders or attempted murders.

[2 : 42] And for the most part, these murders fall into the category of revenge killing or domestic disputes.

And so, for a lot of us, it's pretty easy to dismiss them, to be less concerned about them than we would be about murders and attempted murders that are perhaps connected to armed robbery, which we can all at any point face.

One of the surprising realities about crimes like murder and attempted murder is that you and I have far more in common with the people who commit such crimes than we realize.

Now, I know that that might sound startling to you, and I think that some of you might even disagree with me. But this statement really is not something to be disagreed with because my statement is echoing the words of Jesus in this passage that we have come to this morning in our sermon series, in the Sermon on the Mount.

I know some of us have never had a physical fight. But all of us have experienced what Jesus addresses in these verses in Matthew 5, 21 to 26.

[4 : 15] We have all experienced the emotion of anger. And what Jesus does in these verses is he helps us to see that murder and anger are related.

They're first cousins. Anger is a common emotion that all of us have to one degree or another. And perhaps some of us have experienced it this morning.

Perhaps some of us, even now, are harboring anger in our hearts. Anger towards someone or about something.

And the Lord didn't leave us to ourselves. The Lord has addressed this common issue that we all face from his word.

And brothers and sisters, we would be wise to hear the Lord. We'd be wise to hear the Lord because what he does is he helps us to see the seriousness of anger.

[5 : 22] You know, there's some topics we would say, well, you should not mention those in the same breath. Jesus mentions murder and anger in the same breath.

And properly understood, harboring anger is like playing with fire. Harboring anger is like going to a socket and trying to stick our fingers in it and not be shocked.

Brothers and sisters, Jesus takes anger very seriously. He wants us to as well. And so let's take a moment to pause and pray and ask for the Lord's help as we consider what the Lord says to us about this all too common issue of anger.

Father, we pause in this moment. We thank you for your faithfulness. We thank you that you have the words of life. Lord, would you cause these words of life that have been read and are hearing this morning to penetrate our hearts, to convict us where we need to be convicted.

Father, I pray that you'd anoint me by your spirit, that I would be faithful to proclaim your word to your people. Lord, none of us is exempt from your gaze this morning.

[6 : 59] You know us through and through. And I pray that as you speak to us together, you would speak to us individually. Grant us grace to hear.

Grant us grace to obey. And may you be glorified in all that is said and done. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen. As we seek to understand what the Lord says to us in these verses and we seek to apply them to our lives, I think it's important to remember that these verses are not in isolation.

They are part of the Sermon on the Mount as a whole. And in particular, they are connected to that section that we began a few weeks ago in verse 13.

Where Jesus was calling his disciples to be salt and light in the world. And where he was challenging them to have a righteousness that exceeds that of the Pharisees.

A righteousness that is more than just show righteousness. A righteousness that is more than just something external, but something deep within us. Something that the eyes of man cannot see.

[8 : 18] But the eyes of God does see. He calls us to have a righteousness that exceeds that of the scribes and the Pharisees.

And so in verses 21 to 26, Jesus is not talking about the issue of murder and the issue of anger in a vacuum.

Instead, what he's doing is he's calling his disciples. He's saying to them, show your distinction from the world around you. Just as salt and light are different from what they influence.

And live this way. Live in accordance with what is consistent to be one of my disciples. Not just outward conformity to the law, but also an inward conformity.

Not just trying to ensure that we don't break the law externally, but ensuring that we don't break the law internally. And so what Jesus does in verses 21 to 48 in Matthew 5, is he gives us six examples.

[9 : 32] To show us what it looks like for his disciples to be distinct from the world and for them to obey the commands of God from the heart. And this morning we are considering the first one.

The first one that Jesus explains when he explains what it means to obey the sixth commandment. The commandment that prohibits murder.

And here's how I'd summarize what Jesus says to us in these six verses. He says, do not only refrain from outward violent acts, from the outward violent act of murder.

You must also resist the inward malicious attitude of anger. Brothers and sisters, it is only when we do both of these that we find the same way.

We fulfill the sixth commandment. It is only when we do both of these that we fulfill what God requires of us in this command not to commit murder.

[11 : 07] So how does Jesus teach this two-part command that he gives us in these six verses? He does so by doing two things.

And I'd like to consider those two things in our remaining time. First, Jesus amplifies the law against murder.

Look again at what he says in verse 21. You have heard that it was said to those of old, you shall not murder, and whoever murders will be liable to judgment.

Now, though God himself, with his own finger, with his own hand, wrote the Ten Commandments, he wrote the Ten Commandments, he wrote the Ten Commandments, Jesus begins with the words, you have heard it said, because they were part of an oral culture. They came to understand God's law because it was orally passed on to them. Someone spoke and shared it, and they continue to share it over time.

[12:15] And that's how they came to know God's law. And although the penalty for murder was death, it's not stated in the Sixth Commandment.

It later came to be shared as a part of the fuller body of laws that the nation of Israel was responsible for, and it was told them that the penalty for murder was actually death.

And so when Jesus quoted the commandment against murder, he also gave the part about being liable to judgment, which had become part of the oral teaching at that time.

And so the law was that if you could find two or more witnesses to the killing of a person, then that person who committed that act would be tried, and if that person was found guilty, that person was to be put to death.

Now there's something very important going on in the Sermon on the Mount, and it's important for us to bear it in mind as we work our way through.

[13:34] The Sermon on the Mount, the context for it, Matthew gives it to us in Matthew 5, verse 1. He writes, This setting is a contrast to the setting when Moses received the law from the Lord in Mount Sinai and gave it to the children of Israel.

And what is happening here is we have the new Moses. We have the new lawgiver. We have one who is greater than Moses, who is now saying, You have heard.

In other words, that's what you were told under the old covenant by Moses, the lawgiver, but now I say to you. And Jesus was not contradicting Moses.

What Jesus was doing was he's amplifying Moses. He's essentially saying to the people, One greater than Moses is here. He speaks authoritatively.

And imagine for a moment if you were a good Jew listening to Jesus on that day. Moses was revered in Israel.

[15:03] And here you have this new rabbi who's just come on the scene. And he is saying to you, You have heard it said, But I say to you.

I mean, the natural instinct would be, Who are you to say anything to us compared to Moses? But Jesus spoke authoritatively to them And he amplified the law.

And he said, You've heard it said. Not to murder. But I say to you. Look at what he says in verse 22. How he amplifies or magnifies the law. He says, But I say to you. Everyone who is angry with his brother Will be liable to judgment.

Whoever insults his brother Will be liable to the council. And whoever says, You fool, Will be liable to the hell Of fire. Jesus speaks authoritatively As he addresses this crowd.

[16:11] As he amplifies The requirements of the sixth commandment. And he says to these people, He says, It's not just that you are Subject to judgment If you commit murder.

You are subject to judgment If you show anger Towards your brother. You are liable To eternal damnation And eternal judgment.

Brothers and sisters, As startling as these words Would have been To the original hearers Of Jesus, They should startle us as well. But for a different reason.

They should startle us Because we are people Who experience anger. We are people who have experience And perhaps even now Are experiencing anger Towards others.

And these words of Jesus Apply today Just as they applied On the day When he first uttered them. In the hearing of those Who were before him.

[17:22] Now it's important To recognize That there are some Interpretive difficulties In verse 22. For those of you Who have an English standard Version of the Bible.

You'd probably notice That after this first mention Of brother There's a footnote. A footnote number three. And when you look at the footnote It says that some manuscripts Insert the words Without a cause.

If you have a King James version Yours has that. Because King James Was based on All the manuscripts And it has Without a cause. But newer versions Like the ESV The New International Version The New American Standard Bible They don't have those words Without a cause.

And many textual scholars Believe that Some scribe At some point Who was handwriting From the original The autographs Would have added in those words Without a cause To tease out To explain What Jesus must have meant.

And in truth I think that's what Jesus Really did mean Even though The best manuscripts Don't show That those were part of The original words That Jesus uttered.

[18 : 42] He certainly was Meaning Unjustified Anger. Another interpretive question That we have to Consider is What is Jesus Referring to In verse 22 In terms of this court Or the judgment That he refers to In verse 21 He talks about Judgment Being brought to judgment In verse 21 For murder And then in verse 22 He also talks about Being brought into judgment As it relates to anger Is Jesus referring To the same human court That renders the judgment For murder And using that same human court To render the judgment For anger And this is an important thing To consider Because clearly We are able to see That he's not talking About the same judgment In the same court And the reason is that

No court can judge Anger No court would even Entertain a charge Against a person For being angry Because there's no way To know the heart And so clearly When Jesus talks About coming into judgment For having anger Against our brother He cannot mean A human court Instead he's talking About the divine court The divine court Where the divine judge The judge of all the earth Knows every human heart He is the one Before whom No secret is hid Before whom All lives are open And are naked And then also Before the counsel Very same Very same idea It cannot be Some human counsel That one is being brought Before And to make it Absolutely clear That Jesus is talking About divine judgment More than human judgment Is when he says That if we Are Abusive towards our brother Saying you fool He says you will be Condemned to hell's fire That's something Only God can do And however we land On how we work Through these interpretations I think What we need to Be very clear about Is what Jesus Is very clear about What Jesus Is very clear about Is that The words we say And the Attitudes that we Harbour in our hearts Towards others Anger and Contemptuous thoughts And abusive words That they are serious And they have consequences And they are serious And they have consequences Because A perfect judge An all-seeing An all-knowing God Is the one Who will render Judgment Concerning them Not a human court That needs evidence To be presented to it To be able to Make a judgment But the all-seeing And the all-knowing God Who knows our Deepest thoughts Who is aware Of every word That we utter He says that Anger And contemptuous Thoughts And abusive words Are serious sins And we Are liable To judgment When we commit Them Brothers and Sisters Let's not think For a moment That Jesus Is exaggerating He's not Exaggerating And sometimes We think Jesus is exaggerating Because we make A light of What he says And how easy It is for us To do that Now know that Some of you Are wondering Is Jesus Prohibiting Anger In every way Shape or form You're probably

Wondering Is Jesus Prohibiting Anger When we Observe Injustice When we Observe The weak And the Vulnerable Being exploited By the Strong And by the Powerful Just this Past week I'm pretty Sure that Many of you Would have Heard about An incident That took Place Just a Couple of Days ago Where a Man Was at a Convenience Store On Cowpen Road And Faith Avenue With his Wife And children Purchasing Some supplies To take Them to School They're Dressed In Their Uniform And Three Armed Men Snuff His Life Out In The Presence Of His Family And All They Could Do Is Weep Over His Bullet Riddle

[23 : 49] Body Is It Wrong To Be Angry At Criminals Who Commit Such Atrocities Is It Wrong To Be Angry At Politicians Who Play Games With Our Laws And Are Soft On Crime And Will Not Do What Is Required To Carry Out Our Laws Which Provide For Capital Punishment For Those Who Are Convicted Of Murder Is It Wrong To Have Anger Towards Those Kinds Of People The Very Clear Answer Is No The Very Clear Answer Is That It Is Not Wrong To Be Angry Towards Those Things As A Matter Of Fact Brothers And Sisters If We Are Indifferent To It That Is More Sinful Than To Not Feel A Sense Of Moral Rage

And Outrage Against Such Atrocities And So Jesus Is Not Prohibiting Anger In Every Shape And Form And In Every Single Circumstance And How Do I Know That Well One Very Quick Example In Scripture Is In Ephesians Chapter 4 Verse 26 Where We Are Commanded Be Angry But Do Not Sin This Is What They Call Righteous Anger It Is Anger That Is Appropriate In The Face Of Sin In Response To Sin And The Psalms Are Filled With Examples Of God's People Having Outrage And Having Anger And Praying Their Anger To God Concerning Sin And Concerning Wickedness One

Example Of This Is In Psalm 58

Where The Psalmist Prays To God And He Prays That God Would Break The Teeth Of The Wicked In Their Mouths That He Would Let Them Vanish Like Water That Runs Away That He Would Let Them Be Like A Snail That Dissolves Into Slime Like A Stillborn Child Who Never Sees The Sun And So Righteous Anger Is Appropriate But We Have A Problem Our Problem Is That We Are Sinners And Our Problem Is That We Do Not Do A Good Job Of Exercising Righteous Anger And This Is Why We Are Warned We Are Warned Not To Sin In Our Anger So The Specific Anger That Jesus Prohibits

Is Unbridled Personal Anger Anger That Temps Us To Want To Take Matters Into Our Own Hands To Bring The Outcome That We Want Rather Than Wait On The Lord Anger That Causes Us To Want The Outcome That We Want Without Any Regard To Justice And Due Process Jesus Prohibits The Kind Of Anger That Makes Us Careless With Our Speech And Abusive With Our Words And This Prohibition That Jesus Gives Is Especially Relevant For People Who Are Legalists Those Who Will Try To Ensure That They Obey The Letter Of The Law Without Any Regard To The Spirit Of It Legalists Are People Who Will Govern Their Hands So That They Don't Lift Their Hands Against Someone In Murder But They Will Not Guard Their Heart Against Anger They Will Allow! B B!

[28 : 07] ! B While Jesus is upholding the commandment against murder, he is not at the same time prohibiting capital punishment, as some people try to suggest from this passage.

They say that Jesus was prohibiting all forms of taking of life, but he wasn't doing that. Murder is the unlawful taking of a human life.

That's what Jesus was prohibiting. Capital punishment is the lawful taking of the life of a person who has been convicted of murder, and the state does that.

When the state carries out a law against a person who has been tried and found guilty for the crime of murder, the state is doing that lawfully.

The state is not unlawfully taking the life of that person. And Paul makes this point. This is the point that Paul is addressing in Romans 13, 4, when he says that the governing authorities don't bear the sword in vain.

[29 : 43] The sword was the means of execution in that day. And if Paul thought Jesus was against capital punishment, he would not say that.

But he was upholding it and saying, listen, the governing authorities bear the sword, and it's not for decoration. It's to take the heads off of those who violate the law.

The most important thing to say about verse 21 is that it would be putting words into Jesus' mouth to say that he was prohibiting capital punishment. He wasn't addressing capital punishment.

He was not prohibiting capital punishment. Jesus was addressing the issue of murder. So Jesus says to us in this sixth commandment that it goes deeper than outward physical violence that results in a person's death.

Jesus is saying to us that it deals with inward malicious anger towards another person. And that's important for us to hear this morning.

[30 : 57] Brothers and sisters, I wonder, to what extent do we take the words of Jesus? To what extent have we taken these words of Jesus seriously?

And as a result, by his grace, are we laboring to avoid anger? Again, anger and contemptuous thoughts and abusive words, they are first cousins to murder.

Are we taking this to heart? Are we hearing Jesus as he magnifies the sixth commandment? And what does the evidence in our lives say?

Is the evidence in your life and my life that I fly off the handle? That I am short-tempered?

That I am rash and impatient and careless with my words? Brothers, what do our lives say?

[32 : 14] Brothers and sisters, let us repent.

We need to repent. Concerning anger. Listen to what John says. The Apostle John in 1 John 3.15 as he is teaching on the implications of what Jesus taught.

The Apostle John writes, Everyone, everyone who hates his brother is a murderer. And you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.

Brothers and sisters, these words could not be clearer and they could not be broader. John writes under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, everyone who hates his brother is a murderer.

And you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him. Now, what is John saying? Is John saying that if you have committed murder, there's no hope for you?

[33 : 41] He's not saying that at all. Someone who's committed murder and who has repented will be in the company of the saints. He is in the company of the saints now and will be in the company of the saints for all eternity.

Instead, what John is addressing is the person who professes to know Christ but is actively hating his or her brother in their heart.

Now, Jesus doesn't just end with amplifying the law against murder. He goes further. What he does is he illustrates what it looks like.

He illustrates what he means. And this brings me to my second and final point, illustrating the law against murder. How does Jesus do this? But he gives us two illustrations.

And the first illustration, the setting is the temple. Look again at what he says in verses 23-24. So, he's illustrating now what he has just taught.

[34 : 54] So, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go.

First be reconciled to your brother and then come and offer your gift. Now, to make this contemporary, this would be the church setting.

This would be like right now. And Jesus says, if you remember, and the whole implication is that this should not be something that we were conscious of, that we were harboring in our minds, that we were thinking about, we're aware of this rift with this other person and we have come to church. That's out of the question. He's saying, if it wasn't in front of your mind and something sparked it, something spurred it to your memory while you are worshiping, he said, in that moment, what you need to do is cease your worship, cease your worship to God and go seek to make it right with your brother.

And the idea is the person is right there. Now, if you're thinking, well, that would be a bit too disruptive, I'm not sure. We're not thinking about the seriousness of this and the priority that it needs to have that Jesus clearly shows us.

[36 : 26] Jesus is saying to us that we must make right with others, with brothers and sisters. We must be in relational harmony with others as a greater priority than seeking to worship him.

It's quite interesting when we consider what Jesus says. He doesn't say, if you've done something to the other person, he says, if you, if it comes to mind that your brother has something against you. In other words, he's offended towards you. He says, you go. It's the burden on the one who's being accused of the offense, not the one who has been offended.

Of course, we know that elsewhere, Matthew 18, 15, that Jesus also puts the burden on the person who's been offended as well to go.

And when we put the two of those together, we both have a duty to be moving towards the other person. But here, in this passage that we're considering this morning, he places the burden on the person who's being accused, or who's aware of the offense that the other person is holding them responsible for.

[37 : 48] brothers and sisters, the Lord calls us to give priority to strained and broken relationships and to seek to reconcile them.

And one of the verses we've been memorizing over the past few months, we are called to live at peace with everyone as much as lies within us.

And again, what that reminds us of is it's not always possible. But what we're responsible for is to make the effort to bring reconciliation. That's what we're responsible for.

We're not responsible for the result of that, the outcome of that, but we're responsible to go. This must be a priority for us.

The second illustration that Jesus gives, the setting is the court. First one's the temple, this one is the court. It's some kind of a legal dispute.

[38 : 52] Look at what he says in verses 25 and 26. Come to terms quickly with your accuser while you're going with him to court, lest your accuser hand you over to the judge and the judge to the guard and you be put in prison.

Truly I say to you, you will never get out until you have paid the last penny. Jesus is saying to us that we need to embrace an attitude of humility that seeks to settle legal disputes early before they escalate.

It must be our attitude. And so, for example, if there's a person, a creditor, or an institution that you've borrowed money from, for example, and they may send you a letter demanding that you pay what is owed, the response is not to get a lawyer.

The response is not, as they say, to lawyer up and to push back against it. No, the proper response is to humble yourself and to seek to come to some form of agreement with that person or with that institution.

And Jesus is saying to us, even up to the last minute, we must be open to this kind of mediation, this kind of trying to make things right.

[40 : 17] But imagine, most people, if they're on their way to court and they see the other party through that, they don't even want to talk to them. They don't even want to make eye contact with them. But Jesus said, humble yourself and make peace.

And here's the bottom line issue behind all of this. These disputes, behind them would be anger and disappointment and disaffection and these are the fertile soil for murder.

People don't just pick up and just murder in a vacuum. It's some underlying issue that brings them to that point. And what Jesus is saying to us is when we address these particular issues, we are being proactive towards not allowing anger to harbor in our hearts and then certainly not to escalate to the point of murder.

And so when we go to that other person seeking to make it right, we can actually even prevent them from doing something outrageous. I think many of you would remember a number of years ago when the JFK corridor was being widened and they were paving it.

There was an employee who had not been paid. I think we all remember that. That was rage. rage. That was rage.

[41 : 55] He took the tractor and ripped up the entire highway overnight. All because of perhaps even just a promise.

Look, I'm going to pay you on Friday. I'm going to pay you. And oftentimes when we are proactive to address these things, we can prevent these issues from escalating.

I'm going to close by just offering us some questions for reflection.

As we consider these words of Jesus, how have you sought to obey the Lord as he commands us to prioritize reconciliation?

What's your attitude? Are you minded to be indifferent or to be obedient? In situations where there is currently relational breakdown or strain, what efforts have you made to pursue reconciliation?

[43 : 13] And if you've done all that you know to do, have you sought the help of others? And as honestly as you can be with yourself, what's your heart's disposition to that other person?

Do you even desire reconciliation? And if not, brothers and sisters, we need to repent.

repentance because our heart should be aligned with what Jesus teaches us in this section of the Sermon on the Mount.

If repentance is not our priority and we're indifferent to what the Lord has said to us, that calls, brothers and sisters, for repentance.

And sometimes this person with whom we are at odds, maybe it's the person we work with, perhaps it's even someone we live with. And the Lord calls us to go and seek to make things right.

[44 : 26] And the wonderful thing is that He doesn't just send us all on our own. God gives us grace to do it. And I think those of us who have ever had to broach a difficult conversation, going to someone, seeking reconciliation, I think one of the common experiences that we have all had at one time or another is that God made it far less difficult than we thought it would have been.

Yes, all didn't work out. Some were shockingly disappointing. But I think all of us, if we've endeavored to pursue reconciliation, I think we've all been surprised, amazed, that the kindness of the Lord to prepare that other person's heart or to make that conversation not as difficult as we thought it would have been.

And then last, are you praying about it? Is it a matter of prayer for you? In Psalm 4, which is the first scripture we read this morning, if we're going to refrain from anger, we need the posture of the psalmist in Psalm 4.

The psalmist lives a Godward life and cried out to God in his distress. And in verses 4 and 5, he offers this counsel to the people of God.

He says, be angry and do not sin. Ponder in your own hearts on your bed. Be silent. Offer right sacrifices. Put your trust in the Lord.

[46 : 05] Brothers and sisters, we are never dealing with people. The person who is on the other side of that conflict that we may be involved in, that's not who we're dealing with ultimately.

Ultimately, we're dealing with the Lord. And so he is the one that we need to cry out to. He is the one who we need to trust in.

And we can have sleep and we can have rest because we know before the Lord that we are doing what he has called us to do to try to be reconciled with those with whom we are at odds.

This is how we avoid unrighteous anger as a psalmist counsels us in Psalm 4. 4. Brothers and sisters, our best efforts to refrain from anger in our hearts will fall short of the perfect standard that God requires of all of us.

with all of our might and every fiber of our being and every bit of conviction and compulsion that we can have as we seek to obey these words of Jesus, every one of us will fall short.

[47 : 33] God's will be but here's the good news. The good news for those of us who have trusted in Jesus Christ is that Jesus has perfectly fulfilled the Sixth Commandment and God in His mercy, for those who have put their trust in Jesus, credits that to our account.

But not just the Sixth Commandment, all the Commandments. And it doesn't mean that we don't seek to obey what the Lord has called us to do, even though we know we will not do it perfectly. We are still in good faith to do that. But when we do it, our trust must not be in our ability to do it. Our trust must not be in what our results are.

Our trust must be in the Lord Jesus Christ, who has perfectly obeyed the Sixth Commandment. on our behalf. And our trust must also be in the Lord Jesus, who paid the punishment for our failures around the Sixth Commandment.

When He went to the cross, Jesus paid for all of our sins. He bore the penalty for all of our sins. And He bore the penalty for every single time you and I will fail to love our brother and our sister from our hearts and not hate them and not be abusive in our words.

[49 : 03] And as we sincerely seek to obey the Lord, we must rest in and trust in that Christ has paid for all of our failings and Christ has fully satisfied God's righteous requirements in keeping the law.

Brothers and sisters, this must be our hope. It is our only hope. And so while these words of Jesus are certainly placed upon us that we may obey them, these words of Jesus are also placed upon us that we might realize how hopeless we are in and of ourselves and that we run to Jesus as a refuge.

We run to Jesus as our only hope to fulfill this commandment that the Lord has laid upon us. And brothers and sisters, when we realize that, Christ is a true refuge for all those who fall short of what the Lord requires of us this morning.

And so we're called to do two things. We're called to, in earnest, good faith, seek to obey what the Lord has called us to, but we're also called to trust in Jesus and rest in Jesus, who has already perfectly fulfilled the righteous requirements of God in this commandment.

I pray that all of us are seeking to do these two things, and we're finding our rest and our refuge in the Savior. Let's pray. Oh, Father, we come as those, O Lord, who recognize all too well how we fall short of what you have called us to do in the Sixth Commandment, not to murder.

[51 : 10] Would you help us, O Lord, to resolve by your grace, to grow in loving our brothers and sisters, from our hearts, in seeking reconciliation where our relationships are broken.

And, Lord, would you help us to ultimately find our rest and our refuge in the Lord Jesus Christ, who has perfectly fulfilled the Sixth Commandment.

Would you speak to our hearts, Lord, in ways that we need to hear from you this morning? We ask that you would do this in Jesus' name. Amen. Let's stand for our closing song.

Let's stand for song.