

Ethics of Life

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- [0 : 0 0] Anyway, welcome to week two of our Sunday school class entitled The Ethics of Life.! As we mentioned last week, this course is kind of in many ways an extended meditation on the Sixth Commandment,! where God commands His people saying, you shall not murder.
- And honestly, given all that's happened in our country this last week, preparing for this morning has actually been really sorrowful. So, I'm two seconds into the class and I'm already losing it.
- You know, like you, I think I've been grieved thinking about the people who were killed this week, thinking about their families. Yeah, been grieved thinking about perpetrators.
- I've been very grieved thinking about how widespread violence has become in our culture. So, I think lament's a proper response to this week.
- I also think it's a proper response for us to have a renewed resolve to listen to God's words and by His grace and the power of the Holy Spirit to live as the sort of people He's redeemed us to be.
- [1 : 2 2] People who eschew violence and hatred. People who love not just our friends, but our enemies. And who pray not just for those who bless us, but for those who persecute us.
- How desperately the world needs the church to be the church. And how desperately the church needs the grace of God to live as He's called us to live.
- So, as we begin then, why don't we pray? Father, Son, Spirit, Creator, Sustainer, Redeemer.
- As we consider the violence of this past week, we pray, How long, O Lord, how long? How long until you return to put an end to violence and evil once and for all?
- How long until you put an end to senseless killing and to war?
- [2 : 4 2] We pray, God, for the families of Evergreen High School.
- We pray for the friends and family of Irina Zerutskaya. God, we pray for the friends and the family of Charlie Kirk.
- God, comfort them. In this bitter time, would their hearts not harden towards you, but would they find solace in your everlasting love?
- Jesus, you experienced human hatred and violence and murder. Father, you know every tear that we shed. Be a shepherd to those who are grieving now.
- Father, we admit that the news of this week reminds us of the news that we hear every week. And it saddens us that our hearts grow numb, God. It's too much to bear.
- [3 : 5 7] God, we see how sin has ravaged your good world, ravaged your image bearers. Have mercy on us, O God. And by your spirit, grant us courage.
- Grant us strength. Grant us compassion. To live according to the new way of the gospel. The way of peace. In the midst of a violent world, would your church be a sign of your new creation where hatred and enmity will be no more?

Help us in our reflections this morning, God. May we learn from your word what it means to be your people. To follow the path of Jesus, our Lord, who has delivered us from the kingdom of darkness and transferred us to his glorious kingdom through the forgiveness of our sins by the shedding of his blood.

In his name we pray. Amen. Amen. So I want to pick up our class this morning where we left off last week in the gospel of Matthew chapter 5, verses 21 through 26.

Jesus says this, You have heard 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.

[5 : 16] Whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council, and whoever says you fool will be liable to the hell of fire. So if you're 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.

So first be reconciled to your brother and then come and offer your gift. So we said last week that the sixth commandment is rooted in some of the most fundamental doctrines of creation and redemption.

Let me review a little bit of that. In creation, we confess what? We confess that God is the author of life. And as such, only God has the right to give life and to take it away.

Moreover, in creation, we confess that humans are made in God's image. And as bearers of God's image, all humans, regardless of race, gender, class, regardless of their size or age or ability, have inestimable worth and dignity.

But we also said last week that this commandment springs from the doctrine of redemption, from the doctrines of redemption. In his incarnation, Jesus Christ affirmed the dignity of human beings made in God's image.

[6 : 31] Though we are fallen in sin, we still bear God's image. And our Savior dignified every aspect of being human through his incarnation, from his conception in the womb of Mary, all the way to his death, resurrection, and ascension to God's right hand, where he still is fully human.

Moreover, in redemption, Jesus affirms that he and he alone has the right to give life and take it away. Do you remember what the risen Lord Jesus says to John in Revelation chapter 1?

He says, I have the keys of death and Hades. And what's more, because of Christ's redeeming work, we are now all the more not to view our lives as our own, to dispose of as we choose.

The doctrine of creation should already point us in that direction, but how much more the doctrine of redemption? The Apostle Paul says in 1 Corinthians chapter 6, You're not your own.

You were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body. Our life is not our own, but God's. And we saw last week that even in the Old Testament, that command, you shall not murder, entailed more than just a prohibition of what we legally call murder today, right?

[7 : 53] Rather, as it takes shape in the case law of the Old Testament, we see that it really speaks to a respect for life, a care for life, and not just the avoiding of the taking of life, but actively seeking the protection of human life.

So that brings us back to Matthew 5, where Jesus shows us that his commandment also speaks, where this commandment speaks about the condition of our hearts. It's not just about murder, but it's about anger.

It's not just about violence. It's also about contempt. In other words, Jesus says that the sixth commandment demands that we shape not just our actions, but our character, right?

Living in light of the sixth commandment isn't just about avoiding certain actions that are wrong, but it's also about becoming a certain kind of people, becoming a certain kind of community that's good.

Okay, so your homework last week was to find a reflection on the sixth commandment from church history. I photocopied two of those for you this morning.

[9 : 06] Did you get the handout that was distributed, dispersed? The first is from the Heidelberg Catechism of 1563. And I'm going to read these for us.

We're going to read them slowly together. And I want us to listen for ways that the sixth commandment and the many relevant other scripture passages related to the sixth commandment are applied both to our character and to our life together as a church.

Let's learn from some of our forebears in the faith how we might live out the fuller implications of the sixth commandment. So here's the Heidelberg Catechism from 1563.

And the Heidelberg Catechism is arranged according to Sundays. So they arrange it into 52 sections. And if you're not familiar with what a catechism is, that's simply a tool for teaching that uses question and answer format.

And the hope was that people would actually memorize the questions and answers to kind of help these doctrines and these truths get down into their hearts. So Lord's Day 40, question 105.

[10 : 12] What is God's will for you in the sixth commandment? Here's the answer. I am not to belittle, hate, insult, or kill my neighbor.

Not by my thoughts, my words, my look or gesture, and certainly not by actual deeds. And I am not to be party to this in others.

Rather, I am to put away all desire for revenge. I'm not to harm or recklessly endanger myself either. Prevention of murder is also why government is armed with a sword.

Guilty. Question 106. Does this commandment refer only to murder? Answer. By forbidding murder, God teaches us that He hates the root of murder.

Envy, hatred, anger, vindictiveness, and God's sight, all such are disguised forms of murder. Guilty again. Okay, next question.

[11 : 22] Is it enough then that we do not murder our neighbor in any such way? No. By condemning envy, hatred, and anger, God wants us to love our neighbors as ourselves.

To be patient, peace-loving, gentle, merciful, and friendly towards them. To protect them from harm as much as we can. And to do good even to our enemies.

So what are some of the character traits that the Heidelberg Catechism is pulling out for us as we think about living the Sixth Commandment?

What do you see here? Character traits that I don't have yet, that I'm guilty of.

What jumps out to you, Raul? Every one of them. I've belittled people, I've hated people, I've insulted people. And my thoughts, my words, my looks, my gestures, I'm guilty, but I always go to the end.

[12 : 24] Ah, He died for me. I'm forgiven. That's the caper. Right, yeah. But we also believe in the doctrine of sanctification, right?

Yes. That God does make us more and more like His Son. So that's what this reflection is meant to help us with, right? That based on our justification, right, in Christ, we do become, through the Spirit's work, more like Jesus.

We do become sanctified. So what are some of those paths of sanctification this reflection is pointing out for us? Yeah, Tyler. Just the greatest commandment to love God and our neighbor. So that we thank someone else positively.

Yeah, that's right. Yeah, that's good. Yeah. Chris, go ahead. Yeah, to hold back our initial response sometimes, because it's anger.

Hold back so we have time to think about it. Yeah. You know, where's that coming from? And what's a better response? Yeah. Yeah, self-control, right, is maybe one way of talking about that.

[13 : 27] You know? It's sort of encouraging us to, by the Spirit, to exercise that self-control. Yeah. Yeah, Jeff, do you want to add? Do you think what it says, you know, don't let the sun go down on your anger?

Ah, yes. It implies you can be angry, but what you do with it is a big issue. That's right. So I like to think about, take what I'm angry, do something, find something positive for it.

Yeah, that's good. Yeah. Anyone else? Yeah? Prudence, not to recklessly endanger myself either. Yeah.

So it's caring for what kind of situation you're going to place yourself in. So it requires some prudence and careful thought about these things.

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah, that's right. Richard? I can infer from especially 107, that we ought to cultivate a humble attitude toward our neighbors.

[14 : 37] As the scripture says, each of us should value the other above himself. But by adopting that stance of humility, we have a platform on which to build peace-loving, gentle, merciful, friendly, and protective.

Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm. That's good. Yeah. Yeah. Well, let's go to the next. It's on the back of that page. You should have the Westminster Larger Catechism.

So the Westminster Assembly was held in the middle 17th century in England, produced a few documents.

One is the Westminster Confession of Faith, but also two catechisms, the Larger Catechism and the Shorter Catechism. You might be familiar with the first question of the Shorter Catechism.

Anyone know what it is? What is the chief end of man? Yeah. Do you know the answer, Raul? Yeah. Yeah, to glorify God and all... Yeah, glorify God and...

[15 : 52] Enjoy Him forever. Enjoy Him forever. Right, yeah. So if you're familiar with that, to glorify God and enjoy Him forever, that's the Westminster Divines, the Westminster Assembly. So here's the Larger Catechism where they talk about the Sixth Commandment.

Which is the Sixth Commandment? The Sixth Commandment is, thou shalt not kill. What are the duties required in the Sixth Commandment? Okay, here we go. We're going to read this slowly, but let's kind of savor this.

The duties required in the Sixth Commandment are all careful studies and lawful endeavors to preserve the life of ourselves and others.

By resisting all thoughts and purposes, subduing all passions and avoiding all occasions, temptations and practices, which tend to the unjust taking away the life of any.

By just defense thereof, against violence, patient bearing of the hand of God, quietness of mind, cheerfulness of spirit.

[16 : 59] A sober use of meat, drink, physic, sleep, labor, and recreation. By charitable thoughts, love, compassion, meekness, gentleness, kindness.

Peaceable, mild, and courteous speeches and behavior. Forbearance, readiness to be reconciled, patient bearing and forgiving of injuries and requiting good for evil.

Comforting and succoring the distressed and protecting and defending the innocent. What a vision of life, right?

Anything in here maybe surprising to you that's included as something implicated in the Sixth Commandment? Maybe someone we haven't heard from yet? Yeah, how's the way? That's what I have to think of the most.

A sober use of meat. Sober use of meat, drink, physic, sleep, labor, and recreation. Yeah. Don't eat too much chicken. Don't eat too little chicken. That's right.

[18 : 11] It's very trendy now to get a lot of protein. You know, one gram per pound of body weight, right? You know, sober use of meat. Yeah. What do you think Westminster's pushing, this church tradition's pushing us to think of here when it's talking about the sober use of meat, drink, physic, sleep?

What are they getting at there? What do you think? It may be just possibly going to just appetite and general. So about living a healthy Christian life is to be able to have self-control and improve our appetite.

Because if we are uncontrolling certain aspects of our life, it will see things that we're angry with. Yeah. I really like that. That's really insightful. Because on the one hand, on the surface, just like, hey, you're supposed to be caring for and protecting life.

So care for and protect your own life, right? Like be a good steward of it. But I think you're right. If we think about sober use of those things, that is developing a certain kind of self-control, a certain kind of prudence, as Tyler said, towards some of those basic things that will then flow out into other areas of our life, right?

Because we're whole people, right? God made us as whole people. So as we practice these things in one area of our life, they will come out in others. Yeah. That's really great. Thanks for sharing that. Yeah.

[19 : 23] Any other things surprise you in question 135 here of the larger catechism? Yeah. Go ahead. I think particularly the sober use of labor. Oh, the sober use of labor.

Uh-oh. Yeah. It's kind of like an inversion of how we think about responsibility and faithfulness. Yeah. Uh-huh. And isn't it interesting, too, you can see how there's an interconnectedness in all of God's commands, right?

Because you would think that a sober use of labor would be which commandment, right? The Sabbath command, right? Work six, rest one. Don't let work rule your life. Remember that you're a creature, right?

But even here, right, that sober use of labor is also connected to how we care for and protect life. Yeah. So maybe there's a little bit of chastisement here to our workaholicism.

Yeah. Anyone else? Maybe one more? Skunle. Yeah. Yeah. I think in line with our culture today, I think the point about mild and courteous speech, where our language tends to get very, especially in online.

[20 : 35] Yes. Yes. It's not as, yeah, I guess it's clear then because in some way, like how we use our words. Yeah. Yeah. Peaceable, mild, and courteous speeches and behavior.

Yeah. How we use our words, definitely. All right, let's read the next paragraph and then we'll keep moving. What are the sins forbidden in the Sixth Commandment? The sins forbidden in the Sixth Commandment are all taking away the life of ourselves or of others, except in the case of public justice, lawful war, or necessary defense.

Now here you can see that the Westminster Confession is already anticipating some of our future classes, right, where we get into some case studies of, well, what about war? What about defense?

What about justice, capital punishment, right? So the Westminster Assembly would have seen that there are areas where God has delegated that to proper and lawful human authorities, but we'll explore those in coming classes.

Okay. So all taking away the life of ourselves or others, except in these cases, the neglecting or withdrawing the lawful and necessary means of preservation of life, sinful anger, hatred, envy, desire of revenge, all excessive passions, distracting cares, immoderate use of meat, drink, labor and recreations, provoking words, oppression, quarreling, striking, wounding, and whatsoever else tends to the destruction of the life of any.

[22 : 11] So you can see how a lot of that's just the mirror of the first question, right? So following the words of Jesus then in Matthew chapter 5, I think these examples from church history show us, right, that really living out the sixth commandment means, what, getting to the root causes of murder and hatred.

It's not just enough for Christians to be sort of against murder in whatever form we're thinking of. We have to be people who actually live in ways that counter the seeds of murder in our hearts, right?

In Matthew 5, Jesus mentions not just anger, but contempt as one of those seeds, one of those root causes, right? Whoever insults his brother, whoever says, you fool.

And we pointed out that the Heidelberg Catechism picks up on this right away. I'm not to belittle, hate, insult, or kill my neighbor. Not by my thoughts, words, my look, or gesture, and certainly not by my actual deeds.

And I'm not to be party to this in others. Right? So I'm going to talk about three ways which I think the church, the kind of church communities we need to be building in light of the sixth commandment.

[23 : 22] And the first one in light of this is this. I think in a world of much contempt and contemptuousness, I think the church has to be a community of honor and dignity toward God's image bearers.

Right? The Westminster Catechism speaks of charitable thoughts, love, compassion, meekness, gentleness, kindness, peaceable, mild, and courteous speeches and behavior. I mean, as Kuhnly pointed out, there is so much contempt in our culture towards those with whom we disagree.

Like there's so much. I wonder if we even notice it anymore. I wonder if we even notice it happening. It's like the water we swim in. And I wonder, do we filter the media that we consume through this lens?

Right? Are we aware of it in the different things that we imbibe? Do we think, you know, I'm not to be belittling, hating, or insulting, nor to be party to this in others?

Right? I mean, not to pick on, you know, this person, but the entire Super Bowl show last year was an exercise in belittling and insulting, wasn't it?

[24 : 29] Yeah, right? I mean, okay, maybe if you're old like me, you're like, what is going on right now? I don't get it. Then you have young people explain it to you, and you're like, oh, that's what's happening.

Right? But do we even notice? Does it even register in our mind as like, wow, this kind of culture of contempt actually isn't what's going to cause us to flourish as a people? Right?

And do we reproduce this contemptuousness in our own thinking and speaking when we listen to the news? Are we aware of how disagreeing parties speak about each other? Right?

The church should be a place where the truth is spoken. Yes, I think in the course of this class, we're going to be speaking some truths that are very countercultural, but this should never be done in a way that insults or belittles an image bearer of God.

Now, being a community of honor and dignity means more than just the words we use. Doesn't mean less than that, but it does mean more, right? It means that we value people of all ages and stages. Right?

[25 : 30] Jesus shocked even his own disciples when he did what? When he welcomed little children into his midst and blessed them. Now, look, children in the first century had no social standing.

They had little ability to be productive or profitable, just like today. They were simple in their understanding. They were messy and noisy and inconvenient.

And despite all of those things that were true about children, Jesus welcomed them and blessed them. And he even saw in them a model, a parable for what saving faith really looks like, for what entrance into the kingdom looks like in these inconvenient, unproductive nothings.

Right? Just like us. Yes. And if that's the kind of dignity that Jesus afforded to children, should we not follow in his steps and likewise show respect and honor to humans regardless of their social standing, regardless of their ability, regardless of their understanding, even if they are messy or noisy or inconvenient.

Right? Right? We honor them as human beings. And isn't all of that an outworking of the gospel, right? Think about it. As sinners, we deserved God's rejection.

[26 : 54] We deserved God's condemnation. But instead, God accepted us. He even justified us in his son. Not because we deserved it, but because of what Jesus the Son had done for us.

So we see in ourselves people who have received undeserved dignity and kindness, and we see in others image bearers for whom Christ died. That is fundamental.

And that ought to be making us a community of honor and dignity, no matter how contemptuous the world around us becomes. Right? Right? Okay, but contempt isn't the only seed of murder that lurks in our hearts.

I would also suggest that fear also looms very large. I think underneath a lot of our contempt, even, is fear. We are afraid of the future.

We're afraid of what might happen. So we lash out in anger and contempt. And isn't there a lot of fear in our culture, right? Fear of change. Fear of AI.

[28 : 00] Fear about our economic future. Fear about keeping an unexpected pregnancy, right? Fear about safety and security. But again and again, what does God say to his people? What does Jesus say to his disciples as the waves are crashing against the boat?

Don't be afraid. Don't be afraid. Don't be afraid. So I think in a fear-stricken culture, the church has to be a community, not just of dignity, but a community of hope.

That's where the Sixth Commandment is leading us, to be a community of hope. When people lose hope, they live in fear. And when people live in fear, they will easily turn to violence as a means to stop or avoid what they fear.

But at the heart of the church is good news of hope. Hope that the world's not a lost cause, right?

But the world is God's cause. He's made it his cause. Hope that God's kingdom is a kingdom of healing and redemption. Hope that God brings good out of evil and blessing out of cursing.

[29 : 05] Hope that the future's in the hands of a loving God. A God of resurrection. Now, of course, there are countless ways that we could embody this hope as a church.

But to take one example, think about the act of childbearing. Now, next week, we're going to specifically look at how the Sixth Commandment applies to the beginning of life.

So we're kind of anticipating a little bit of that. So by way of anticipating, let's consider the beginning of life just generally for a moment. In this context of being a community of hope. Now, when we step back and we look at the world we live in, sometimes we wonder who in their right mind would bring a child into this messed up and broken world, right?

What are we thinking? But for Christians, you see, we see the brokenness of the world. But we believe and we know that God has not abandoned the world.

We believe that God's future kingdom has broken into the present in Jesus Christ. It's continuing to grow by the Spirit. And we know that in Christ, God will bring his promises to fulfillment.

[30 : 16] So the very act of having children is a sign of our hope. It's a defiant act in a fallen world that says everything is not lost.

God will be faithful to his promises to heal his creation and redeem his world. But at the same time, the act of childbearing is not ultimate either.

Now think about it. In traditional cultures, in many traditional cultures, your worth and your value as a human comes from your ability to have a family, right? But that's not true for Christians.

For the single Christian, for the Christian married couple who's maybe unable to have children, we know that our hope and our identity is not ultimately in our children.

After all, how does the kingdom of God advance? It does not advance, friends, through natural birth, but through new birth.

[31 : 26] The family of God is not biological, but eschatological. In other words, we're bound together by the new creation in Christ.

And that means the single Christian or the Christian couple without children are both living testimonies to that reality and that hope. That their future hope is not guaranteed by family or by childbearing, but by God and God's kingdom.

That's where all of our hope and identity lies. So these are testimonies that God is enough and that God is more than sufficient to secure and ensure our ultimate good in the future that he has in store.

Okay, so you see then, that in light of the gospel, in light of our hope, both bearing children and not bearing children are made possible because the church is a community of hope, of hope that flows from the gospel.

On the one hand, we can bear children even when the circumstances seem to scream against it. Why? Because God has not abandoned his creation, nor has he abandoned us.

[32 : 36] Think about it, friends. The hope for the whole world came through a pregnant mother and an unexpected pregnancy.

That means every pregnancy from Eve to the end of time will stand as a sign knowingly or unknowingly, intentionally or unintentionally, of what God did to rescue us.

It will stand as a sign of the promise he made in Christ to bring healing and redemption even out of the most unlikely and difficult circumstances. But at the same time, as Christians, we can not bear children and live fully dignified and complete lives in God's kingdom because our ultimate hope is not in procreation but in God's new creation.

And the new creation advances through resurrection power and the proclamation of the gospel. So this is just one example of how the church is a community of hope in the sea of fear that we live in.

When we fear what will become of us if we have children, when we fear what will become of us if we don't have children, the gospel meets us with hope. Hope in God who rescues, redeems, and makes all things new.

[34 : 05] And as a community, we live that hope in love and support of one another in both of those circumstances. So we're a community of honor and we're a community of hope.

And lastly, Jesus says we have to be a community of reconciliation. It's not just fear that lives beneath our anger and hatred and murder, right? It's also hurt and offense.

And isn't our culture a culture of outrage and offense. We don't know how to respond when we're hurt or offended so we just get more easily offended and we get more angry and we get more full of hatred.

But Jesus enables us to live a different way. Jesus says, go to the one who offended you and be reconciled. If your brother or sister owes you anything, go.

Address the issue. Don't let it fester. Don't let it grow. Go bring it into the light and forgive. Instead of returning hurt for hurt or wound for wound or violence for violence, instead forgive just as you've been forgiven.

[35 : 11] At the heart of the gospel, friends, is the wonderful good news of forgiveness. We were dead in our trespasses and sins. We were children of wrath and deserve nothing from God but judgment.

And that judgment would have been perfectly just and good and right. But instead, God forgave us all of our sins, covered them all with his own blood, absorbed the debt that we owed on the cross, and released us from any debt that we owed.

And now, forgiven by sheer grace, we turn and we forgive others as well. So how do we uproot the seeds of hatred and murder in our hearts?

Well, we're the community that prays, Father, forgive us our trespasses even as we forgive those who trespass against us. And then we make every effort to forgive and to reconcile.

Okay, so this is the sort of community, the sort of character the Sixth Commandment calls us to become, a community of honor, a community of hope, a community of reconciliation. Let me stop there. We're at time.

[36 : 17] We've got a few minutes just for conversation, for questions. We're going to break it at 10 of for service. So any thoughts, any questions? Yeah, Beth. Highlighting the sort of hope we have in the birth of children in a broken world, but then also that that is not where our true identity and satisfaction lies.

I think even more so whether, like even for the parent who has a biological child, I think if you would ask that Christian parent like what's most paramount, it would be the planting seeds of faith and then praying that God would make them grow.

And I think that all of Christians have that role of like that type of gestation, that type of seed planting and new spiritual birth and walking with those and discipling those that like that call is the call of the kingdom.

Right? Yeah, that's right. And so it's not simply just like equal satisfaction in life and fullness of life. It's also equal calling. Yeah, that's really good, Beth. Yeah, that's very good.

Yeah, all of us in the family of the church are called to become and to be spiritual fathers and mothers of the next generation. Regardless of whether they are biological children or not.

[37 : 41] Regardless of whether we've had many children or no children. We all have that same calling and that is even as biological parents I hear you saying that's kind of our primary desire and hope, right?

Is to be not just but to be spiritual fathers and mothers of the next generation. Yeah. Yeah. Any other thoughts or questions?

Comments? Yeah, Kudle. Oh, Richard. Go ahead. Ever since last week my thoughts have been after I heard your lesson my thoughts have been occupied with the question of is there any place in the Christian life in the ethical Christian life for the sober use of contempt?

This week you called contempt a seed of murder. And as I thought about it I thought about the life of Jesus. Hmm.

So in the life of Jesus he called Herod King Herod King Herod a fox Mm-hmm.

[38 : 54] Mm-hmm. Was that's something in the modern year that we can Yeah. pretty much pass over without much thought. Yeah. Yeah.

Without much without any ripples. Yeah. Yeah. But when we think that in the Song of Songs it is the little foxes that ruin the vineyard.

Yeah, sure. For Jesus to call Herod a fox Yeah. is is a contemptuous saying. Yeah. Well look at the imprecatory psalms Psalm 109 Mm-hmm.

Mm-hmm. May what you've done come right back on your head. Mm-hmm. Yeah, I think I think to your point Richard yeah, I think I think some of this challenges us to be able to interrogate our hearts right?

You know I don't think in the right context there's anything wrong with salty provocative speech right? However I think that there is a line that gets crossed from loving provocation or loving truth telling to contemptuousness towards an image bearer right?

[40 : 08] And I think we can sense that when we're listening to someone when that line gets crossed. Sometimes it's hard to tell but I think for ourselves we need to be honest with our own hearts. Yeah.

It's a good observation. Yeah. Kunle, do you have something you want to add? Yeah, I thought it was interesting that in the concept of on this topic of childbearing we were talking about that in that we see in some way the partnership between almost that same thing around God's work and our work.

The kingdom of God is going to be made up of human beings and human beings are created through birth.

Yeah, that's right. In some way like our actions of having children populates the kingdom of God and God does want but it's going to be by newly created humans and so it's not just our birth but God transformed the work and ultimately does and those two things in some way that echo of like seeing how God through our work also does even more and we like how God would.

So you could argue that there is a spiritual vision of I want more people to be kingdom. Sure, yeah, sure. Yeah, yeah. Yeah, sure, sure. But actually it is really true.

[41 : 24] If there were no kids there would be an upper limit to the number I mean there is an upper theoretical limit and so I just thought it was a I have lots of people who lots of young people and colleagues who are choosing to not have children and I think it's like a way to remind ourselves that beyond the whole I think it's like an extension of the hope in our hope that these children will also be members of God's commandment it's also like that.

Yeah, yeah, there's also a sense well, maybe that's a longer rabbit trail when we do a class on the seventh commandment about marriage and sex and the purposes of those things you know but certainly procreation is part of how God designed marriage and sexuality, right?

That there is kind of a fittingness and a naturalness to that and that still maintains in the kingdom of God, right? The kingdom of God doesn't just obliterate creation it fulfills it, right? But what we do see there is a kind of transcending or a transposition of the command to be fruitful and multiply in the Great Commission, right?

So, but again that doesn't mean that that be fruitful and multiply directionality to marriage in human life is just obliterated, right? But yeah so I think for couples who are choosing not to have children I don't think that's necessarily wrong or a sin for them to choose not to have children but I do think again kind of like Richard mentioned with contemptuousness like I think we have to investigate our own hearts like what are the motivations we're doing towards that end, right?

Why are we making those choices? Are we able to invite others into that discernment process to help discern? Yeah Okay friends it's 10 of we need to break let me pray for us and next week we will continue with our class and next week we're going to start getting into some applied topics we've kind of hopefully laid some groundwork these first two weeks so next week we're going to begin with some applied topics we're going to you know the trajectory of our class is we're going to start at the beginning of life and we're going to end with the end of life and we're going to just talk about the things that come up along the way so let me pray oh Father as we just reflect on your word this morning Jesus as we reflect on your words sometimes we think about these things and we think who is sufficient for these things and yet we are so grateful that you have filled us with your spirit you've given us new hearts new motivations new desires and new abilities and new communities whereby we can begin to live in this way so help us to do so Lord help us to do so with all the cheerfulness of spirit and confidence of hope that being in relationship with you inevitably brings and help us to be salt and light in our world we pray in Jesus name amen alright friends see you upstairs miracle

[44 : 22] Thank you.