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Sunday School Lesson

JESUS AND THE SACREDNESS OF HUMAN LIFE

Scripture Lesson: Exodus 20:13; Provks 1:10-19; 3:29-33; Matthew 5:21-24; 10:29-31; 18:1-7; 10-14; Luke 9:51-56.
Golden Text: But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. Matthew 5:22.

Life is like an onion—
We taste it with delight;
But when it's gone, we wonder
Whatever made us bite!
So goes a foolish little poem, expressing many persons' ideas about the futility of life. The expression, "Life is cheap," is a common one. When we look back over the ghastly toll of human life in World War II; when we pick up our daily newspapers and read sensational accounts of murders; when we hear the authentic report from J. Edgar Hoover that every 61-2 minutes someone is raped, feloniously assaulted or slain, that in 1944, murders increased 10.1 per cent in urban areas and 13.4 per cent in rural areas, we realize that this is more than an expression, for we have made it a truth in so far as we are concerned, and in so doing, have violated the law of God. "Thou shalt not kill."

Defining the Sixth Commandment
The sixth commandment, enacted through Moses at Sinai, is rendered by some translators as, "Thou shalt do no murder." The common dictionary definition of murder is "the intentional killing of one human being by another, without moral right or legal authority." If this is all that this commandment implies, this lesson has no value for the average ones of us, for most of us never will be known by a prison number, nor will we occupy a cell on Death Row of some penitentiary. The Bible teaching of this commandment, however, goes further and involves us by implying that murder is not limited to the sudden act of striking a man dead. The wise man in Proverbs warned against the temptation to devise "evil against thy neighbor." (Proverbs 3:29-33. This commandment may be expanded to the shortening of life by various means: sheer carelessness, for example, the death of many employees or tenants in a fire trap building, mine, or factory; or the daily emaciation of children by hard labor, as was the case in England in the last century. Or, we could ask ourselves, "What about drunken drivers and reckless speeders who bring about death on the highways? What about contributing to the maintenance of the death-dealing liquor traffic by sale or by vote?"

Jesus Interpreting the Sixth Commandment
Jesus taught that murder is more than an outward deed. It originates in the emotion and will, so that not only he that kills, but he that hates

in his heart is in danger of judgment. The expression, "If looks could kill . . ." is appropriate for this hate within creeping to the outside. Booker T. Washington once said, "I am determined to permit no man to narrow or degrade my soul by making me hate him." But anger can do more than degrade—it can harm. As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he," teaches Jesus. How many of us have heard the plea, "I didn't mean to do it; I guess I did it in a fit of anger."

Finding an Antidote for Murder
The antidote of murder is found only in a love that seeks reconciliation for any difference that might develop into hate and harm. From the Christian point of view, reconciliation should precede any act of worship, for true worship can come only from a heart free from hate and full of love. "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal." (2 Cor. 13:1).

Seeing the Worth of Man.
Someone has said, "Murder, even hate, according to Jesus, is unthinkable when we remember the infinite worth of man." Jesus tells us in the parable of the lost sheep that it is not God's will that any one of His flock should perish. The sparrow is under His care, but even more so are His children who are created "just a little lower than the angel" in the image of the Father. This tender regard of Jesus for man is a revolutionary and radical doctrine today, even as it was in His day when so many individuals were held to be worse than worthless. Jesus enforced the doctrine of love by His own personal attitude, by His being the Son of Man as well as the Son of God, by His consistent teaching, and by His redemptive death of the cross.

Uniting for Action.
This statement has recently been made, "In a world of atom bombs we must come to a new regard for human life or perish." Jesus gave us the remedy nearly 2,000 years ago when He said, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another, as I have loved you, that ye also love one another." (John 13:34)

ELIZABETH SHELTON,
Youth Director, St. John's Baptist Church.

NATIONAL HEALTH PROGRAM IS URGED AFTER 3-YEAR STUDY BY SENATE GROUP

Washington, D. C.—The United States is in grave need of a national health program based on a system of prepaid medical care, a bipartisan Senate Labor subcommittee reported after a three-year's study of national health requirements.

The group told the Senate that the 40 per cent rate of physical disqualifications from war service should prove a "costly lesson." It strongly urged a national program "financed by required contributions to the social security fund and by payments from general tax revenues."

Its findings documented with tables, charts and official statistics, the committee declared that in 1944 the average American family spent \$100 a year for medical care, and that rural families received much less medical aid than those in urban areas.

Foes of a national health program, as urged by the AFL and provided under the Wagner-Murray Dingel Bill, immediately assailed the subcommittee report as "propaganda for national health insurance."

However, the report revealed that families with under \$1,000 annual income averaged 11.6 days of illness yearly, but received an average of only 2.2 doctor and clinic calls. Families with over \$3,000 annual income, however, averaged but 6.7 sick-days and received between 3 and 5.5 doctor visits.

Disabling illnesses lasting a week or more for which no doctor care was received made up 22 per cent of the cases in families under \$1,000 in yearly income, but only 11 per cent in the \$5,000-and-up bracket.

The report said that at present only 2.5 per cent of the American people are covered by comprehensive medical care plans including both doctor's care in home, hospital and office and hospital service.

Another 70 per cent have part of their doctor's fees covered usually in hospitalized illness only, whereas another 12.5 per cent have their hospital fees covered. Thus, only 25 per cent of the nation is given even partial prepaid care.

As for commercial health and accident insurance policies, the report said about eight million persons were covered by group agreements in 1944 and these were principally hospital and surgical. Commercial outfits paid out only 40 per cent of their receipts in 943 to individual sickness and accident policy holders, because of what the report terms "high expense loadings"—administrative and promotional costs.

The people who most need the protection of whatever prepaid systems are now available are not getting it, the report said.

Among rural families, the percentage at all income levels belonging to some form of nonprofit medical care group is well below 5 per cent. Urban dwellers are less than 10 per cent enrolled in the income bracket below \$1,000; 15 per cent at \$1,500-\$2,000, but 30 per cent at \$3,000-\$5,000. Above that, they can probably pay for their own.

The report said America does not stand at the head of the list in any of the major health indexes . . . but even if we did, it would not excuse our health failings. Even before modern medicine had reached its present peak of complexity and specialization the fee-for-service did not meet the nation's health needs." Now, it said, "it inhibits the full use of modern preventive medicine since it forces most people to wait until they are seriously ill before going to a doctor."

The cost of a compulsory prepaid medical care system, the report said, "will not be greater than that of our present inefficient and wasteful fee-for-service system. According to leading experts the charge to the average family under a national health insurance program will actually be less than it pays now, partly because the employer and the Government will both contribute to the fund. It is noteworthy that the labor organizations, all of whose members are wage earners, are among the staunchest supporters of national health insurance."

AFL ALUMINUM UNION VICTORIOUS IN ELECTION

East St. Louis, Ill.—Members of the Aluminum Workers' Union (AFL) defeated the Steel Workers (CIO) in a National Labor Relations Board election by the decisive vote of 692 to 428. President Eddie R. Stahl of the Aluminum Workers' Council received a congratulatory message from AFL President William Green on the splendid showing made in the balloting.

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