

I. Introduction: The Sacredness of Life

- The Weight of the Command: Introduce the Sixth Commandment: "*You shall not murder*" (*Exodus 20:13*).
- The Foundation of Value: Life is sacred because every human being is uniquely created in the [image of God](#). To destroy human life is to assault God's reflection. Of course this applies to an embryo, just as it does to an eagle's egg which is protected by law, which are the same thing. God will judge us for our trying to use language to fool people.
- The Surprise Connection: Most people assume they pass this test because they have never committed a physical homicide. However, the core of this commandment reveals our deepest, everyday struggle for peace with one another.

II. The "Conflict Train": Understanding Jesus' Definition

- The Heart Level: Jesus expands this law in Matthew 5:21–22. He exposes that murder is merely the final destination on a very long train track called "conflict."
- Station #1: Internal Anger:
- Unresolved bitterness, harboring grudges, and internal rage.
- Anger acts as the emotional currency that feeds eventual destruction.
- Station #2: Verbal Abuse:
- Jesus targets cutting words and insults (calling someone "Raca" or a fool).
- We murder reputations, break spirits, and tear down fellow image-bearers with our speech.

III. The Ultimate Problem: The Heart Condition

- The Illusion of Innocence: We justify our coldness or harsh text messages because we haven't broken civil law.
- A Mirror, Not a Checklist: The law acts as a barometer of our true love for God and others.
- The Root Issue: Real peace is stolen not by outside forces, but by our internal instinct to protect our pride at the expense of our neighbor.

IV. The Way Forward: Cultivating True Peace

- Stop the Train: Actively monitor your heart before anger escalates into toxic words or fractured relationships.
- Urgent Reconciliation: Reference Matthew 5:23–24. Jesus says to leave your gift at the altar and go make peace first. Worship is hindered by persistent conflict.
- God's Provision: We cannot create this peace through sheer willpower. We need the [Holy Spirit to empower us](#) step-by-step to choose forgiveness over malice.

V. Conclusion: The Grace that Covers Our Failures

- The Safety Rope: If your past is full of broken relationships, harsh words, or deep regrets, God's mercy is your rope holding you fast.
- The Ultimate Peacemaker: Jesus took the ultimate violence of the cross to purchase our peace with God and each other.



August 9, 2026

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

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PHONE: 815-562-7053 WEB: PLACEFORGRACE.COM

WELCOME

August 9, 2026 – 9:00am

Welcome and Announcements -

Time of Preparation for Worship

Call to Worship

Call to worship

Leader: Hear us, Shepherd of Israel!

All: Listen to us, leader of this flock!

Leader: You who are seated above the winged angels of heaven: come and save us!

All: Bring us back, O God! Show us your mercy, and we will be saved!

Leader: Nations fight over our land. Our enemies insult us.

All: Bring us back, O God! Show us your mercy, and we will be saved!

Leader: You brought a grapevine out of Egypt and cleared a place for it to grow.

All: Why did you break down the fences around it? Our enemies set it on fire and cut it down.

Leader: Preserve and protect the people you have chosen, the nation you made so strong.

All: Bring us back, O God! Show us your mercy, and we will be saved! Amen.

Song

Prayer of Confession and Assurance of Pardon

Prayer of Confession

O God, Creator of All, we humbly come before you today. There is so much for which we seek your forgiveness. Where we have caused hurt, dear Lord, help us to make reparation. When prejudice overtakes us, help us to see our error, and begin to view our fellow human beings through your eyes. Forgive us. Tap us on the shoulder the next time, so we might remember that we are called to love them just as we love ourselves. In the name of Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.

Prayer of Illumination

Song

Scripture: Exodus 20:13 & Matthew 5:21–24 —Linda Chunko

Sermon: The Struggle with Peace (The Sixth Commandment: Not murdering

Song

Prayers of the People

Offering and Doxology

Prayer of Dedication

All praise to you, O Lord our God. May your people proclaim your glory in unending praise. Today we give you our thanks, as well as our gifts and our hearts. Through your Son Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your Holy Church, we lift up your name. Amen.

Song

Blessing

Go out in the strength of God, having the courage to stand for truth and justice. Go out in the power of God, heeding the call to be filled with His' Holy Spirit. Go out in the love of God, reaching out to the stranger, sharing the joy of unity with God and all people. Amen.