

Exod. 20:13 The Sixth Commandment (part 2) Jesus is Life

As we saw last week, the sixth commandment is so much more than murder, or killing. The applications begin with murder, but continue all the way to loving our neighbor as we do ourselves. Jesus teaches that murder begins in the heart saying, **“Even if you have thought evil about a brother, you are in danger of judgment”** (Matt. 5). The Apostle John said, **“Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him.”** (1 John 3:15). We also saw that this command has its basis in God Himself, who is the giver and protector of life. God breathed the “breath of life” into Adam. And all who come after him (us) have been given life by God. As Paul said to those in Athens: **“He himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything. And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth. . .”** (Acts 17:25-26). The clear meaning of these words is *“physical life.”* But, then Paul says something very interesting. In v. 27 he implies that mankind has been given physical *“life”* so that they might seek Him.

So, I must ask, *“Why would men need to seek after their creator?”* This *“seeking”* implies that He needs to be found. This is what most of the world doesn’t understand. You see, when God told Adam that if he disobeyed his command not to eat from the tree of knowledge of good and evil, he would surely *“die,”* the meaning went so much deeper than physical death. This sin of disobedience would also lead to *“spiritual”* death, which is ultimately our problem. As members of Adam’s race, we have been separated from our source of life. (Physical Example: Limb) This is where we come to Jesus. God did not leave Adam and Even in their sins. And one of the reasons is that God is the God of life. He is the author of life. He loves life. And, He preserves life, even if this means the death of his only Son.

So, as we take the Lord’s Supper today, as we consider the words *“This is my body broken for you, this is the blood of the new covenant,”* I would like for us to remember that Jesus is the Lord of Life and HE is OUR source of life. Paul wrote to Timothy: **“Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God according to the promise of the life that is in Christ Jesus”** (2 Tim. 1:1). In the same chapter he also wrote, God **“saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began,¹⁰ and which now has been manifested through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, . . .”** (2 Tim. 1:9-10). In my studies this week, I found numerous references to Jesus as being *“life”* or *“living,”* I limit this meditation to 3 pictures as we remember today. (bread, word, author)

1. Jesus is the bread of life. We see this picture in John 6. Jesus had just fed five thousand people from 5 loaves of bread and two fishes. Then, he leaves and goes to the other side of the Sea of Galilee. The crowds get into boats the next and try to find him. When they found him, Jesus rebuked them saying, **“Truly, truly I say to you, you are seeking me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves”** (v. 26). Then he says something very important. He says in v. 27, **“Do not labor for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you. For on him God the Father has set his seal.”** At these words, some of the religious leaders were angry. They heard Jesus say that he is the one who gives eternal life. So here is my paraphrase of what they said. They were

angry and they said, “*You don’t give us eternal life. God does. In fact, when our fathers were in the dessert, God gave them manna from heaven. Who are you to say such things?!*” Listen to Jesus words in v. 32-33: **“Truly, truly, I say to you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but my Father gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.”** Then, in v. 35 Jesus said to them, **“I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst.”** Then, in v. 47-48 he says, **“Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes has eternal life. I am the bread of life.”** At this point Jesus uses the picture of bread to teach that which is spiritual. He said in v. 49-51: **“Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.”** Then he says something very interesting. He says in v. 53: **“Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you.”**

Does Jesus mean to say that we need to physically eat his flesh and physically eat his blood or we will have no physical life in us? NO! Jesus was using a physical picture to teach what is real. Listen to his words from vv. 55-57: **“For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink.⁵⁶ Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him.⁵⁷ As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever feeds on me, he also will live because of me.”** Here is what he is teaching. Do you remember the broken branch from a few moments ago? It was cut from its source of life. All of us have been separated from our source of life. Now, Jesus is saying, **“The living Father sent me. And whoever believes in me will live.”**

I love bread. Kristen makes it in our bread maker. Mrs. Gunther gives me bread. Oh, how I love it! Now, I am thinking on the terms of the effect it has on my taste buds. But, in some cultures, bread is so much more than a symbol of taste. It is a picture of physical life. If you could pick one food that represents all food, it would be bread. To the dying man in prison, bread is life. To the wanderer in the dessert with no food, bread is life. Here, Jesus says, *“I am the bread of life. Eat of me and you will never hunger again.”* So, when we come to the table this morning with this physical bread, it pictures life. And, this life is Christ. *“Take and eat. This is my body which is broken for you.”*

2. Jesus is the word of life. I get this picture mainly from the Apostle John. In 1 John 1:1-2: we read: **“That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we looked upon and have touched with our hands, concerning the word of life--² the life was made manifest, and we have seen it, and testify to it and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was made manifest to us.”** These verses are the introduction to John’s letter and notice quickly the subject matter: *“the word of life.”* He is speaking of Jesus. In the Gospel of John, right at the beginning, we see the same picture. He said: **“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.² He was in the beginning with God.³ All things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made.⁴ In him was life, and the life was the light of men.”**

Now, there is so much we could say about a theology of the Word. But, this morning I am more interested in why Jesus is called the Word of life. So, my question is: *“What is it about the Word*

that brings life?” Think about it. In the beginning how did God create? How did he bring about life? He spoke. Gen. 1:20: **“God said, Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures.”** Gen. 1:24: **“God said, Let the earth bring forth living creatures according to their kinds.”** Jesus himself said, *“God is not the god of the dead, but of the living.”* So, when we think about it this way, ONLY the word of God brings life. And, the reason the word brings life is because it flows from the living God. God is the author of life. Only God can bring life, whether that be physical or spiritual. Some of you did this in home group last week. (Example: Trying to breathe life into a plastic animal.)

So, when Jesus is called the “Word of Life,” the meaning is clear. He is God in the flesh. And, in him is life. This means that He is our source of life, both physically and spiritually. This also means that his words are the very words of God. Look with me back into John 6. Remember the context. After Jesus had just revealed to them that HE was the bread of life, clearly making himself equal to God, many left him, including what may have been some who had walked with closely for a while. In v. 61 the disciples said, **“This is a hard saying; who can listen to it.”** Then, Jesus asked the close disciples, **“Do you want to go away as well?”** Now, notice the words of Peter in v. 68-69. **“Lord to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life, and we have believed, and have come to know, that you are the Holy One of God.”**

So when we come to the Lord’s Supper today, we believe He is the Word of Life.

3. Jesus is the author of life. I get this picture directly from one of Peter’s sermons in Acts 3:14-15. Speaking directly to the Jewish leaders Peter said, **“But you denied the Holy and Righteous One, and asked for a murderer to be granted to you, and you killed the Author of life, whom God raised from the dead.”** Now this word “*author*” has different meanings. In fact, you may have the word “*Prince*,” or “*Captain*” in your translation. In the OT this word in the Hebrew is translated into Greek as “*leader*” or “*chief*.” In Acts 5:31 we read: **“God exalted him at his right hand as Leader (KJV Prince) and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.”** “In other places we see this word translated as “*author*” or “*originator*.” For example, Heb. 12:2 says, **“looking to Jesus, the founder (KJV author) and perfecter of our faith. . .”** So, does Peter mean “*author*,” or “*captain*.”

What do you think of when you picture a captain? You may think of the captain of a ship, the one who is responsible for everyone. Recently, when a cruise ship ran aground off the coast of Italy, the captain was blamed. He was responsible for all decisions and the all the people on the ship. Very similar to a captain is the prince. I watched Prince Caspian this week. He was the heir to the throne. And his position was one of authority. Now, what do you picture when you hear the word “*author*” or “*founder*.” There is considerable difference in meaning. An author is not simply the captain or prince of his work. He is the creator, or the founder. When an author writes a book we see him/her as the originator or founder of the ideas and the words written.

With this in mind, does Peter mean: “*Prince*,” or “*Author*.” I believe it must be both because an author is the captain of his work. A founder is a prince of what he begins. But, I believe the best translation is certainly “*author*” or “*originator*.” I believe this because of all the Scriptures that speak of Jesus as being “*life*.” Listen as I read some of these verses. Heb. 2:12: **“For it was fitting that he, for whom and by whom all things exist, in bringing many sons to glory,**

should make the **founder** of their salvation perfect through suffering.” “**I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me**” (John 14:6). “**In him was life, and the life was the light of men**” (John 1:4). “**And we know that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true; and we are in him who is true, in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life**” (1 John 5:20). “**When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory**” (Col. 3:4). “**He is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them**” (Heb. 7:25). “**For as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whom he will**” (John 5:21). “**I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life**” (John 8:12). “**Everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die**” (John 11:26). “**Because I live, you also will live**” (John 14:19). “**Death came through Adam. Life comes through Christ**” (Rom. 5:17).

I could go on and on today with verses that speak of the fact that Jesus is the author of life. And because He is the author of life, He is also the Prince or Captain of Life. But, let me just say a few words about those who reject the author of life. I will reference Peter’s sermon in Acts 3 again. Notice Peter’s comparison. He was saying to the Jewish Leaders, “*You let Barabbas go. He was a murderer. He broke the 6th command. And, you killed the Lord of life, the very One who came to bring life.*” Today, if you reject or deny Jesus, you do exactly the same as the Jewish leaders did by putting him to death. Don’t do it! Also today, as we come to the Lord’s Table, we remember him as the author of life. He not only gives us physical life, but also gives us spiritual life.

As we consider the words of Jesus this morning, we hear him say, “*This is my body which is broken for you. As often as you eat it remember me.*” Practically, for us, it is this fact that his body was “broken” that effectually accomplishes or secures “life” for us. Is. 53:8 says that this author of life was “**cut off out of the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people.**” You see, Jesus gave his life that we might live. In the giving of his life, he did what we could not do. He fulfilled the law (including the 6th commandment or the law of love) and God accepted his sacrifice. How could he not? It was perfect! And, after three days in the grave, He rose from the dead as the firstborn from the dead, the only ONE to conquer death and the grave.

This is why Paul calls him both the Lord of death and the Lord of Life (Rom. 14:9). And, from a sinful, human, perspective, the death of Christ was the gravest murder in the history of the world. But, from God’s perspective, it wasn’t murder. It was just (really, beyond our comprehension), punishment for our sins that life might be preserved. And, in order to show that He is the author of life, Jesus rose from the dead! Death could not hold him. The sanctity of life is preserved. And, today, He sits at the right hand of the Father, making intercession for us, until He comes again.

So today, as we take the Lord’s Supper, we remember He is our spiritual food that gives life. He is the very Word of God. He is the author of life.