

The Sword of Life and Death

Series: The Watchman On The Wall

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December 13, 2020

We live in a violent world. It is difficult for me to understand how and why people can be so calloused. How did human life become so cheap? What happens in the hearts of people who take innocent human life? How much hurt has been caused by those who kill others and even themselves!

Gen.6:11 Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight and was full of violence.

Unfortunately violence and death that follows is not new. We see it in:

Abortion

Terrorism

War

Suicide

Murder

Murder stats:

- 1) There were a total of 524 murders in Chicago in 2020 through September 6th.
- 2) There were a total of 305 murders in New York City in 2020 through September 6th.
- 3) There were a total of 306 murders in Philadelphia in 2020 through September 13th.
- 4) There were a total of 223 murders in Baltimore in 2020 through September 8th.
- 5) There were a total of 188 murders in Houston in 2020 through July 31st.
- 6) There were a total of 208 murders in Los Angeles in 2020 through September 5th.
- 7) There were a total of 185 murders in St Louis in 2020 through August 31st.
- 8) There were a total of 152 murders in Dallas in 2020 through September 10th.
- 9) There were a total of 139 murders in Kansas City in 2020 through September 11th.
- 10) There were a total of 129 murders in Indianapolis in 2020 through September 1st.

We are on track for over 3000 murders in just ten US cities in 2020. About 8 murders per day.

I really do not need to prove that issues of life and death are a sword (literally and spiritually) that comes against our nation, our neighborhoods, our families and our churches.

Paul sums this up in Rom.1:29, "They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice." Murder is surrounded with its buddies. This is a gang of sins that often travel together. Jesus says these come from a person's heart. (Mark 7:20-23) He calls these defilements. "All these evils come from inside and defile a person." So what is the nature of the defilement of those who can so lightly esteem human life, no matter the race or age of the person? When we understand this defilement we will begin to understand how serious this sword is and why the watchmen must warn the city!

Eph.4:19 defines the condition of the heart that is the defilement that leads to the taking of human life: Here is the context: "So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking. They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts. Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, and they are full of greed." (Eph.4:17-19) But notice specifically the words "having lost all sensitivity." It is one single word in Greek: APALGEO. Two words APO and ALGEO. ALGEO means to be in pain or in grief. APO is a preposition signifying "away from." When a person loses all sensitivity they simply don't care. They don't feel the hurt of wrong. They are calloused. They are hardened. They have lost empathy and sympathy.

Most of us want to live so badly that we fight for life. The Bible describes death as an enemy. (1 Cor.15:26) It will be the last enemy to be destroyed. This is one reason why death at the hands of a policeman is hard to understand since the police are about protection of life. We usually can understand the taking of a life to save a life, but when we doubt whether it was necessary to take a life to save a life we are repelled. We often use the phrase: Calloused disregard for human life.

The opposite of callousness is tenderness and compassion. Paul says, "Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from His love, if any common sharing of the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind." (Phil.2:1-2)

In nature life must be nurtured for it to survive. Plants have to be watered, babies have to be fed and even held, and relationships demand time and attention or they die. Death is easy. Through neglect or deliberately ending a life, a person's responsibility ends. I don't have to water a dead plant. I do something else I want to do.

What is my point?

The road to death begins when I stop valuing and caring for myself or for others. The erosion of tenderness and compassion in society, in families, and in the church leads to a loss of sensitivity-APALGEO which opens the door for the death of relationships, the death of benevolent causes, the death of the vulnerable, and ultimately the death of the world. Man cannot survive within a culture of death. This is why Jesus said, "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full." (John 10:10)

This is why I am pro-life. This is why I am for law and order that preserves life. This is why I am for the fewest wars possible. This is why I am for a system that makes health care affordable for as many as possible. This is why I am for the life-giving Gospel of Jesus being preached.

This watchman is on the wall to tell the city that a sword of death seen in murder, abortion, war, terrorism, and suicide must be opposed, and that every life is worth fighting for.

The most important LIFE is that which is found in Jesus. Everyone is destined to die once but we don't have to die twice. Jesus offers us the most precious gift of eternal life. Will you take hold of life that is really life today, and offer this wonderful gift to others?