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OLD TRUTHS FOR A NEW AGE.*

I.

Heb. 13, 8: "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever."

IN CHRIST, OUR ETERNAL HIGH PRIEST, DEARLY BELOVED FRIENDS:—

A deluge of wrath and terror has swept over the earth these last four years and has left in its wake a terrible mass of wreckage and ruin. Thrones and dynasties have been toppled over, and the very foundations of society shattered. Confusion, anguish, and despair have taken possession of vast numbers of souls. We now see fulfilled the prophecy of Christ regarding the latter days: "Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth." As a result, the cry for reconstruction is heard all over the world, reconstruction of all the things and institutions that determine man's relations to his fellow-men and the relations of nations towards nations. More significant still, reconstruction is called for in the relation of man towards his Maker. The religions of the past, Christianity included, we are told, have utterly failed to achieve their purpose and their promise, and are now things of the past. A new religion is needed.

Thus is the gauntlet thrown down to all who are determined to cling to the old Christ and His Gospel. The charge and the challenge must be met. Are we prepared to do so? We are. And our answer to both, the charge and the challenge, is made in the words of our text:—

"JESUS CHRIST THE SAME YESTERDAY, AND TO-DAY, AND FOREVER."

Calmly and boldly we declare the old Christ and the old Gospel of Christ efficient and sufficient for the true purposes of religion and the high and glorious purpose of God's Church on earth until the end of time.

* A series of addresses delivered during the first week in Lent at the Lutheran Noonday Services at the American Theater, St. Louis, Mo.

MATERIALS FOR THE CATECHIST.

NINTH OUTLINE.

THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT. Qu. 45—48.

Life has been declared the highest earthly blessing of man. As the statement of an absolute truth this assertion will hardly pass. Scripture does not make such a statement. It is a mere human sentiment, and it is not shared by all men. Conditions have arisen in the lives of men when they wished for death as a greater fortune than the poor chance which they had for living. But life is a very great blessing, and, as a matter of fact, "life every man holds dear." That God wants us to have a high regard of life is shown by this commandment.

Many catechists have constructed a logical transition from the Fourth to the Fifth Commandment by relating the individual to the community. After the well-being of organized humanity, they say, in the home, State, and Church has been safeguarded in the Fourth Commandment, God proceeds to protect the most precious personal asset of the individual in the Fifth. Luther explains the connection differently: "We have now completed the discussion of both spiritual and temporal government, that is, divine and paternal authority and obedience. But here we go forth from our own house to our neighbor's, to learn how we should live with respect to one another, every one for himself toward his neighbor." (L. C., 415.) "The second commandment of the Second Table teaches us how to behave towards the very person of our neighbor, *viz.*, that we are to do him no harm, but succor and aid him whenever he is in need." (3, 1111.) By our neighbor's "person" Luther means his existence in a body as an individual; and for this life is the basis.

I. The Dignity of Human Life.

A. In Gen. 9, 3, 4 God gives man permission to slay any beast for food, provided only that in doing so he avoid savagery: no part is to be taken for food from an animal still alive. In

vv. 5, 6, however, the slaying of a human being is strictly forbidden, for this reason: man was made in the image of God. Human life, then, is peculiarly sacred in the eyes of God because He chose to express some idea of Himself when He created man. The murderer wipes out a splendid memorial of God in the world, which exists somehow even in fallen man, when he destroys a human life. God has not renounced a certain kinship with man even when man renounced God.

B. But does not God Himself destroy human life? Yes, He decreed death to the very first transgressors of His will, and Gen. 9, 6 was spoken to *mortal* men, who in their first ancestor already had forfeited their life. Moreover, in this very text in which God forbids killing, He commands the taking of human life. He does this in order to express in the most emphatic manner His abhorrence of murder. In Rom. 13, 2 He speaks of His "wrath" against the murderously inclined. But it is to Himself alone that He reserves the right to take away a man's life. He says: "*I kill,*" just as He asserts for Himself alone the opposite right, when He declares: "*I make alive.*" Deut. 32, 39. The beginning and end of human life are subject to His disposing or permissive providence.

This sovereign right over a human life may be delegated to other men who take God's place (Fourth Commandment; Gen. 9, 6; Matt. 26, 52; Rom. 13, 4), but it is God who acts through them. He alone has the right to dispose of that life in which He revealed traits of Himself.

1. Lynch law is not law, but lawlessness. It infringes on the supreme authority of God and on the delegated authority of God's representatives on earth. Moral indignation does not justify it. Peter had the best reason for moral indignation, but what does the Lord tell him? Matt. 26, 52. "This is a judicial sentence, but also a threatening warning. In the former light it rests upon an absolutely universal principle. The sword is visited by the sword in war; the sword of retribution opposes the arbitrary sword of rebellious sedition; and the sword taken up unspiritually in a spiritual cause is avenged by the certain, though perhaps long-delayed, sword of historical vengeance. Peter was in all these three aspects in a bad position and the representative of wrong. The warrior opposed himself to

the superior force of the legions of Rome, the rebel to the order of the magistrate, and the abuse of the sword in the service of religion provoked, and seemed to justify, the same abuse on the part of the world. Peter had really forfeited his life to the sword; but the Lord rectified his wounded position by the correcting word which He spoke, by the miraculous healing of the ear, and by the voluntary surrender of Himself to the authorities. But Peter had not only with wilful folly entered on the domain of this world, he had also brought his Master's cause into suspicion. Indeed, he sought to bring his fellow-disciples, and his Lord Himself, into this wrong position, and to make his own Christ a Mohammed. Therefore the Lord so solemnly denounced his act, pronounced an ideal sentence of death upon his head, which, however, was graciously repealed. The Lord's word from that hour became a maxim of Christianity (comp. Rev. 13, 10); and it was probably spoken to Peter with a typical significance. Even the Church of Rome says: *Ecclesia non sitit sanguinem*, that is, the Church does not thirst after blood, but only to have recourse to the State and fagot, of which certainly the *letter* of this passage says nothing." (Lange-Schaff.)

2. Suicide is an invasion of God's right. The notion prevailing in our day that men are their own masters, and hence can determine whether they will live or not, is wicked — whether a man commits his hideous act in wanton levity, Matt. 4, 6, or because of a great misfortune (Saul), or in despair over sin (Judas).¹⁾

3. As another intrusion into a domain where God alone rules, infanticide must be mentioned, though we are persuaded that it should never be discussed before young catechumens, and, in general, only in a pastoral way in private admonition. Neither mother nor father have a right to determine whether their unborn child shall live.

C. The sacred regard which God wants men to have for human life justifies not only executions of murderers,²⁾ but also

1) Suicide committed in insanity should not be regarded as suicide, but as any other act of a deranged mind for which the person doing it has ceased to be responsible. To what extent the unfortunate victim has been responsible for the causes that led up to his deplorable condition, we cannot judge. In not a few instances his condition was brought on by others.

2) Gen. 9, 6 imposes the death penalty on the homicide; Ex. 21, 12; Lev. 24, 17 reinforce this law. The next of kin to the murdered, the *goel hadam* ("demander of the blood") carried out the judgment. Num. 35, 19, 21; Deut. 19, 12. — To Matt. 26, 52 Luther adds this gloss: "Those 'take the sword' that use it without authority." — In Rom. 13, 2 the sword of the magistrate is the official token of the *jus vitæ et necis*, and when

acts of self-defense³⁾ and defensive wars;⁴⁾ for those who attack

using it officially, the magistrate is a *diakonos Theou*. The "wrath" which he "executes" is not his own, but God's wrath.

3) "Yes, indeed," said Luther to a guest who had asked him whether he would defend himself when attacked by robbers, "in that case I would be judge and ruler, and would not hesitate to wield the sword, because there would be no one near to protect me." (Erl. 62, 206.)

4) Every righteous war is a war of self-defense; wars for conquest are wicked. As wars are planned and declared often without the full knowledge of its causes and objects on the part of the subjects, it is usually difficult for the subjects to determine whether the war is just. It is a question whether a wholly just war has ever been waged, just as it may be questioned whether the so-called "righteous" anger, for instance, of a father or a teacher, is ever altogether righteous. Even our good works remain hopelessly imperfect while we live in the flesh, and must be covered up with the perfect righteousness of Christ and deposited in the Fifth Petition. It may likewise be questioned whether there ever has been a war of the righteousness of which every one participating in it had full knowledge. It is the duty of Christians to inform themselves on this point as far as they can, in order that they may not go into the war as murderers in God's sight. They cannot sacrifice their conscience to any human authority. But they must not mistake sentiments for convictions; and whatever they do not fully grasp in any strange dispensation of Providence they should commit to God in prayer, and be ready to do their duty in war when that duty is painful to them. On the expedition of Abraham against Chedorlaomer, Gen. 14, Lange-Schaff has these interesting glosses: "The first well-defined appearance of war in its different aspects. A war of the world against the world—the kings—the alliances—the conquerors—the rulers and their revolted vassals—the prominent leader (Chedorlaomer)—the attack—the victory and defeat—the plunder, and service of the captives—of the hard destiny of those who dwelt quietly in the land (Lot)—of the wide-spread terror, and the rebuke of that terror, before the true heroism with which the true hero of faith opposes a defensive and necessary war, to the attacks of the confident and haughty prince. The children of God find themselves unexpectedly involved in the wars of the world, as the history of Abram, Lot, and Melchizedek proves. The destructive nature of war, so far as it is the fruit of human passions, and the providential overruling of it unto salvation.—The fearful overthrow of the Sodomite pentapolis in the vale of Siddim and the wonderful rescue by Abram, the man of faith, wrought no repentance in the people of that valley, although they were already weakened and enervated by their luxury, nor even any gratitude towards Lot, for whose sake they were rescued. (Chap. 19, 9.) Hence the lost battle and the terrors of war in the valley of Siddim became a portent and sign of their later overthrow.—It did not enter the thought of Abram that the princes against whom he went out to war were for the most part de-

us come with the purpose of taking our lives, and must be dealt with as murderers.

scendants of Shem, and indeed the people of his former home, and that those whom he rescued, and with whom he connects himself, are descendants of Ham. The motive of the war was to save Lot, and the alliance for the right, against the alliance for wrong, was decisive for him. The love to his brother, the Hebrew, has special power. Brotherly love. Every Hebrew, in the best and highest sense, must help others as his brethren. But in 'the Hebrew' here the important thing is that he 'comes from across the river,' not as Delitzsch holds, that he is descended from Heber." (Kurtz has pointed out another motive impelling Abram to this war: "His march and victory have another and a higher reference in the object of the history. Even here it is not to glorify Abram, but rather the wonderful providence of God over His chosen, through which all here enters in immediate connection with the divine plan. Abram is the designated possessor of the land; it is his concern, therefore, to guard the land from all assaults, and to avenge its injuries; it is the part of God, who has designated him to this, and to give him the victory." So Jacobus: "His title to the land involves him in the war. He must defend that which has been given to him. He is no sooner confirmed in his title than the land is invaded by a confederacy of hostile kings. Thus the kingdom of God is no sooner set up anywhere than there is a rallying of the world-kingsdoms against it.") — "Abram has not only, in his faith, a heroism and self-sacrifice which overcomes the world, he has also the heroic strength and spirit. His servants are men trained to arms. He knew that, in an evil world, one needs defense and weapons, and must be armed. In his war with the world he does not despise an honorable alliance with those who, in a religious point of view, may have different ways of thinking from himself. Indeed, he acts throughout in the true hero-spirit. The rapid, instantaneous onset, the well-ordered and irresistible charge, the outmarching and flanking of the enemy, the falling upon him by night, the fierce pursuit to the very utmost, to the completed result, these are the original, fundamental laws of all intelligent warfare. *And it does not admit of question that Cromwell learned these fundamental principles of warfare from Abram and other Old Testament heroes, and it is probable that Napoleon, in these, as in many other points, was an imitator of Cromwell,* as it is certain that Gneisenau and Bluecher have learned from the method of Napoleon. In the spirit of prayer Cromwell, the invincible, was greatly in advance of Napoleon; the heroes of the times when freedom triumphs place victoriously the joyful longing for deliverance of the people over against the demoniac lust of conquest of the murderers of the people." (*Ad locum.*) — In Luther's writings the following are of incisive importance to the student of the relation of a Christian to war: *Whether Soldiers Are in a Blessed Estate* (1526), 10, 488 ff.; *Theological Opinions on Self-defense* by Luther, Melanchthon, Bugenhagen, Jonas, Spalatin, and other theologians, also of jurists of Wittenberg, 10, 532—577.

II. *Disregard of Human Life.* Qu. 45. 46 a. 47.

A. This is the general phrase that embodies the sinful principle underlying any and every act against the Fifth Commandment.

1. It is exhibited in its grossest form in any outright attack upon human life, for the purpose, or with the result of, destroying it. That is the meaning of "kill."⁵ Cain was the first murderer.

a. Cain's murder was fratricide; according to Gen. 9, 5 every murder is fratricide in a wide sense; for the murderer always slays a being who with him calls God his Father. — In Matt. 5, 21 the term "brother" refers not only to Jews, but to neighbors generally; for these teachings of the Lord, according to Matt. 28, 19, were to be carried to localities where there were no Jews. — Comp. Is. 58, 7: "thine own flesh."

b. Gross murder can be committed by proxy through an appointed or hired agent. David is charged with the murder of Uriah, 2 Sam. 11, 15 f. (Comp. chap. 12, 7: "Thou art the man"; v. 9: "Thou hast killed Uriah.")

c. Joab was a partner in David's murder; he may not have known David's motive and object, but the narrative in chap. 11, 16. 21 shows that he sensed a plot that had been set afoot against Uriah. — Here is an illustration of legal murder, the instruments of constituted authority being employed to disguise a wicked design. — In like manner Elijah fixed the killing of Naboth on Ahab (1 Kings 21, 19: "Hast thou killed?"), and Ahab acknowledged the deed (v. 21: "Hast thou found me, O mine enemy?" — "I have found thee").

d. Accordingly, the magistrates to whom God has delegated the awful authority to take men's lives, the governments who have been given the right to declare war, bear a tremendous responsibility. Theirs is the most hideous form of murder because they can dress it up in the garments of righteousness and virtue. The Hebrew midwives Shiprah and Puah would not soil their consciences with authorized murder, Ex. 1, 15. There is no doubt that executions have taken place on this wicked earth which put the poor victim in heaven and his judges and executioners in hell.

2. In his explanation of the Fifth Commandment Luther does not refer to the gross form of killing at all. Killing in this form is relatively rare. But over and against ancient and modern Pharisees our Lord has shown that the purpose of the Fifth Commandment is really defeated by a literal interpretation of its terms. The God who

5) "Kill" is derived from the Icelandic *Kolla*, to hit on the head (from *Kollr*, the head).

uttered these words, "Thou shalt not kill," saw real murder when human eyes would not perceive them, and by the comprehensive terms which He employed denounced murder in any form and degree. There are subtle ways of killing a person.

a. Subtle and indirect murder Luther characterizes as "hurting or harming our neighbor in his body." Hurting ("Schaden tun") denotes doing bodily injury, *e. g.*, inflicting a wound, as when Peter cut off Malchus's ear;⁶⁾ or wounding a person and leaving him exposed and without medical attention, as happened to the traveler whom the Good Samaritan found half dead, Luke 10; or overworking a person and withdrawing from him the necessaries of life, as the systematic cruelty by which the lives of the Israelites in Egypt were "made bitter," Ex. 1, 10—15.⁷⁾ Harming ("Leid tun") relates to inward grief in as far as it affects the physical life, the health, etc., of a person. Jacob declared that the evil message concerning Joseph which his sons brought him would hasten his end, even as it was already filling his declining years with misery. By their cruelty his wicked sons had become murderers both of their brother Joseph and of their father Jacob. Gen. 37, 35. Grief, sorrow, care, worry, prey upon men's vitality; hence, to cause these is to commit subtle murder, to kill men by a slow and indirect process. People are known to have died without any visible wound having been inflicted on them, "of a broken heart."

b. This interpretation of "killing" Luther has justified as follows: "Where murder is forbidden, all cause also is forbidden whence murder may originate. For many a one, although he does not kill, yet causes and makes imprecations, which, if fulfilled with respect to any one, he could not live long." Luther also appeals to Christ as sanctioning his interpretation: "This commandment is now easy enough and is often treated, because we hear it annually [Sixth Sunday after Trinity] in the Gospel of St. Matthew (5, 21 ff.), where Christ Himself explains and sums it up — namely, that we must not kill either with hand, heart, mouth, signs, gestures, help, or counsel." (L. C., 416.)

6) Matthew and Mark state that Peter struck *to otion*, Luke, *to ous*; hence Lange-Schaff claim that Peter not only cut off the external lobe, but struck at the middle of the head and meant to split Malchus's head.

7) The Pharaoh plainly intended to work the Israelites to death. He is the scriptural prototype of the slave-driver and the inhuman factory boss who forces the utmost amount of work out of his laborers and pays them starvation wages. These practises were started in our modern age by the great industries of "Christian" England, and spread thence to every other of the great countries of modern times, driving the laborers into secularism, socialism, anarchism, etc.

3. The chief forms of subtle murder are:—

a. Anger, which is hardly ever free from the desire to inflict palpable pain, and in every instance enters as a disturbing element into the peace, happiness, and well-being of another person. Moreover, it has actually been found to be the tap-root of murder: Cain's murder grew out of it, Gen. 4, 4. Paul utters this solemn warning: 'Be ye angry, and sin not; let not the sun go down upon your wrath,' Eph. 4, 26. Hot-headed and disputatious persons, therefore, have a special reason to observe the rising anger in their hearts. Peter Balbier, one of Luther's friends for whom he wrote an instruction concerning prayer, stabbed his son-in-law, with whom he was sitting at meat, in a quarrel. But even cool and phlegmatic nature must be careful: men lose their judgment and cannot control themselves in anger, and their anger, though it may have started from a just cause, becomes a humiliating and disgraceful exhibition of their murderous heart in its progress. "Therefore it is forbidden to every one to be angry." (L. C., 416.)

b. Hatred, which is settled anger, anger that has become inveterate, and strong with age, like wine. 1 John 3, 15 the person hating another is denounced as a murderer.⁸⁾ The Lord declares in Matt. 5, 21 that the *krisis*, condemnation, which the Pharisees reserved only for actual murder, is due even for anger.⁹⁾

c. Vengefulness, an accompanying feature of anger and hatred, Rom. 12, 19. Vengeance is not wrong in itself. *Ekdikesis* literally means "righting," viz., a wrong. Vengeance is the final and drastic assertion of a violated right. But the person who is angry and hates is not a fit judge of his own right and the other's wrong. His desire for revenge becomes a cloak for his intent to hurt and harm his neighbor. Therefore Scripture couples "revenge" with "wrath" in Rom. 12, 19 and forbids both.¹⁰⁾ The plain assumption in this text is,

8) Luther translates "Totschlaeger"—the exact rendering for *anthropoktonos*.

9) The German translation of Matt. 5, 21 has no equivalent for the English "without a cause." Luther translated from the Greek New Testament of Erasmus, which was based on Code B (Vaticanus); this manuscript omits *eike*. So do all modern Greek New Testaments, and the Revised Version. Luther is strictly up to date. Some commentators plead for the retention of "without a cause" for popular purposes. As if there were no other Bible-texts to teach that truth!

10) *Dote topon te orge* is sometimes interpreted: "Give room to your own wrath," that is, Let it evaporate; wait till you are cooled down. But would vengefulness become permissible when engaged in in a cool, deliberating manner, without any display of passion? No. The wrath, therefore,

that the party seeking revenge has actually suffered wrong. Even in that case man's wrath must yield to God's wrath.¹¹⁾ Whoever has suffered injury can afford to wait for God's hour for righting his wrong. God has said (Deut. 32, 35): "I will repay." That is a sufficient guarantee that there will be a proper retribution in due time. And when God adds: "Vengeance is Mine," He warns all not to trespass on forbidden ground by taking vengeance into their own hands. Human vengeance is ever imperfect and often a sorry travesty on justice. "This commandment insists upon it that no one offend his neighbor on account of any injury, even though he have fully deserved it. . . . Since this inheres in every one by nature, and is a matter of ordinary experience, that no one is willing to suffer at the hands of another, God wishes to remove the root and source by which the heart is embittered against our neighbor, and to accustom us ever to keep in view this commandment, always as in a mirror to contemplate ourselves in it, to regard the will of God, and with hearty confidence and invocation of His name to commend to Him the wrong which we suffer; and thus let our enemies rage and be angry, doing what they can. Thus we may learn to calm our wrath, and to have a patient, gentle heart, especially toward those who give us cause to be angry, *i. e.*, our enemies." (L. C., 416 f.)

d. Irreconcilableness, Matt. 5, 25, usually accompanies hatred and vengefulness, and is murderous, not only in design, because by severing all connection, having nothing to do with a person, the irreconcilable person virtually considers the hated person dead to himself and leaves him to perish, but also in immediate effect, because it inflicts intense and, in not a few instances, deadly grief.

e. Spiteful speech, the expression of the malicious thoughts of the heart, is the next evolution of subtle murder. "Raca" in Matt. 5, 22 has been rendered "empty head" and "blackguard";¹²⁾ "thou fool," *moros*, is the Hebrew *nabal*, which we met with in Ps. 14, 1; it denotes the "hopeless, helpless fool or atheist." — Jeremiah's enemies agreed to "smite him with the tongue," chap. 18, 18. — Provoking words are, as a rule, accompanied by irritating and insulting gestures of detestation. When Cain became "very wroth" at Abel, "his face

to which the apostle refers is God's wrath, as the following words show, and *dote topon* means: Give way to Him.

11) Accordingly, when the constituted authorities slay and punish, they are preservers of life: they remove from the community elements that destroy, embitter, and shorten lives.

12) It is from *rakak*, to spit out; "the prolonged imperative: Spit out! was used as an interjection to designate heretics, at whom it was customary to spit." (Lange-Schaff.)

fell." Gen. 4, 5,¹³) and then he "talked with Abel,"¹⁴) v. 8. — The Jews gnashed their teeth upon Stephen, Acts 7, 54.

4. With this significant, searching phrase "Schaden oder Leid tun" Luther thus leads us from the contemplation of direct murder into the numberless varieties into which indirect and subtle murder branches out. He takes the cover from our murderous hearts; for "out of the heart proceed murders," Matt. 15, 19. The plural refers to the various kinds and degrees of murder. "The entire sum of this commandment is to be impressed upon the simple-minded most explicitly, *viz.*: What is the meaning of *not to kill*? In the first place, that we hurt no one with our hand or deed. Then, that we do not employ our tongue to instigate or counsel thereunto. Further, that we neither use nor assent to any kind of means or methods whereby

13) He became so incensed that his nostrils distended (*ephu*); he "hung down his head, and looked upon the earth. This is the posture of one darkly brooding (Jer. 3, 12; Job 29, 24) and prevails to this day in the East as a sign of evil plottings." (Rawlinson.)

14) The solemn *amar* is used in this verse instead of *dabar*. "Knobel represents these words as a *crux interpretum*. Rosenmueller and others interpret it: he *talked* with Abel, that is, he had a paroxysm or fit of goodness and spoke again peaceably with his brother. It is against this that the use of *amar* and *diber* cannot be authenticated by sure examples. Therefore Jerome, Aben Ezra, and others, interpret it: he told it (namely, what Jehovah had said to him) to his brother. On the contrary, Knobel remarks: It does not seem exactly consistent that the still envious Cain should thus relate his own admonition. Here, however, the question arises whether we are required to take *wajomer* in that manner. The sense of this may be that Cain simply preached to his brother in a mocking manner the added apothegm, Sin lieth at the door. In a similar manner, to say the least, did Ahab preach to Elias, Caiaphas to our Lord Christ, Cajetan to Luther, etc. The Samaritan text has the addition: *nelkah hassadeh* (let us go into the field). It has been acknowledged by the Septuagint, the Vulgate, and certain individual critics. But even ancient testimonies show it to have been an interpolation. Knobel, together with Boettcher, has recourse to a conjecture that the reading should be *shamar* (he watched) instead of *amar*. Delitzsch, again, supposes that the narration hastens beyond the *oratio directa*, or the direct address, and gives immediately its carrying out in place of the thing said, that is, he regards the invitation, 'let us go into the field,' as implied or understood in the act. In a similar way, Keil. We turn back to the above interpretation with the remark that the narrator had no need to state precisely that Cain preserved the penal words of God as solely for himself, if he meant to tell us that out of this warning admonition Cain had made a hypocritical address to his brother." (Lange-Schaff.)

any one may be injured. And finally, that the heart be not ill-disposed toward any one, nor from anger and hatred wish him ill, so that body and soul may be innocent in respect to every one, but especially in respect to those who wish you evil or actually commit such against you. For to do evil to one who wishes and does you good is not human, but diabolical." (L. C., 417.)

B. God's anger is ablaze against those who break this commandment. Not only has He empowered the magistrates, Gen. 9, 6; Matt. 26, 52; Rom. 13, 4 (and the Jewish Church with its local courts and great councils, Matt. 5, 21, 22), to punish murderers, but He proposes to punish the offenders Himself. Think of what God's wrath and vengeance means, Rom. 12, 19. How will He "repay"? He threatens the murderers with "hell-fire," Matt. 5, 22, with the eternal "prison," Matt. 5, 25 (cf. v. 26), and shuts them out from "eternal life," 1 John 3, 15. The Christian hope of a future life in heaven cannot "abide" in a murderer's heart.

C. Does God really address this commandment to everybody?

1. "If you merely skim the surface of this commandment, these words, 'Thou shalt not kill,' will not impress you; you will hear in those words nothing but a prohibition of outright manslaughter, committed with the hand in open act. But stop a little and consider. God does not say: Your hand shall not kill, but you, you, yourself. Who are you? You are a soul and a body with all the powers contained in them, hand, tongue, eyes, heart, desire, and will. Now, when God commands, 'Thou shalt not kill,' you are instructed not to kill with the tongue, nor with the will, nor with the heart. For if any one of those parts of you kill, it is you that is killing. Hence the true meaning of this commandment is that you are not to be angry, nor harbor ill will, nor curse, nor speak evil of your fellow-man, nor turn your face away from him, nor show contempt of him, nor inflict injury on him, nor wish him harm." (4, 233.) "God well knows that the world is evil, and that this life has much unhappiness; therefore He has placed this and the other commandments between the good and the wicked. As now there are many temptations against all the commandments, so the temptation in respect to this is that we must live among many people who do us wrong, that we have cause to be hostile to them. As when your neighbor sees that you have better possessions from property and more happiness, a larger family,

and more fertile fields, from God than he, he is offended, envies you, and speaks no good of you. Thus by the devil's incitement you will have many enemies who cannot bear to see you have any good, either bodily or spiritual. When we see them, it is natural for our hearts in their turn to rage and bleed and take vengeance. Thus there arise cursing and blows, from which follow finally misery and murder. Therefore God, like a kind father, anticipates, interposes, and wishes to have all quarrels settled, that no misfortune come of them, nor one destroy another." (L. C., 416.) "God reasons thus: I have wild, unreasoning, mad, raving animals in this world, wolves, bears, lions, etc. I must lock these up, put them in iron cages, bolt the doors, and wall them in with strong walls, lest they go at each other's throats and do great damage. For if God was not moved by this concern, why should He have to give us the commandments? Hence, God knows our heart and our nature exceedingly well. He knows that murder is inborn in our flesh; accordingly, He issues also this commandment, in order that we may know ourselves. He is concerned lest we murder each other like mad, raving dogs, wolves, and bears. He regards us as desperate knaves, who would kill and murder one another. The story which Moses tells after he has told about Adam is concerning murder and killing, one brother slaying the other. Go to now, my friend, and brag about our going to be holy! We boast our reason, wisdom, and free will, but what does God think of us? He considers us all murderers and manslayers, not one excepted. God acts like a burgomaster or ruler who hears that some have threatened that they are going to do damage, break into houses at night, etc., and therefore orders his guards to keep watch and restrain them. Thus God expects no good from us, but regards us all as murderers; accordingly, He commands us not to kill." (3, 1112.) "God speaks these words into the community and excepts no one. He passes judgment on all men, good and evil, poor and rich, high and low, whether they be princes, lords, or servants. (Rom. 11, 32; Gal. 3, 22.) He might have spared those saintly folk, the Pharisees, but He spares no one, excepts no one, rounds them all up in a group, as if to say: You are all knaves, murderers, and manslayers. There is not one among you but has a bloodhound in his bosom." (3, 1113.)

2. "God and the government are not included in this commandment, nor the power which they have to kill. For God has delegated His authority to governments, to punish evil-doers, instead of parents, who aforetime (as we read in Moses) were required to bring their children to judgment and sentence them to death. Therefore this prohibition pertains to individuals and not to governments." (L. C., 415 f.)