Motivation: One day each year, “Sanctity of Human Life Sunday,” all SBC Sunday School curricula focus on the importance and value of life. Because this Biblical theme touches on so many current issues (abortion, euthanasia and human trafficking, for instance) and because it will not be fully explored in any one passage, we choose to interrupt our regular study for one week to teach this important theme.

Examination:

I. Commandments Related to Life (Deut. 5:6-21)

Believer’s Study Bible, p. 255: 5:7 “The Decalogue is reiterated here and in the succeeding verses (cf. Ex. 20:3-17). These were the basic commandments of God, summarizing Israel’s obligations under the Mosaic covenant. Though the Law was binding legally and, therefore, demanded absolute obedience. It also expressed God’s love for His people by leading them to happiness and fullness of life (4:40). The Law demanded obedience, not in order to accumulate credit with God, but because God’s grace elicited a response of gratitude from His people. The Law as not designed to redeem the people, but to benefit the people who were already redeemed. Obedience was also the way Israel was to testify to their faith (see also Gal. 3:24).”

A. The First Commandment “Do not have other gods besides Me.” (7) This spells out who we are to worship. ( Isa. 46:9-10)

1. Faith – The Bible never argues for the existence of God; His existence is assumed by faith. (Gen. 1:1a)
2. **Priority** – In an age of multiple gods (each household might have several – Genesis 31:30, 34), this commandment establishes God as supreme; He is not to be one among many but alone. (Josh. 24:2, 15). Regarding human life, convenience and expediency are often placed before obedience to God.

**B. The Second Commandment “Do not make an idol…”** (8-10) This spells out how we are to worship. (2 Cor. 10:4-5; Heb. 1:3; Rom. 8:29)

1. **Fallacy of Idol Worship**

   a. God is Spirit; it’s impossible to faithfully represent who He is by a man-made thing. (John 4:23-24)

   b. Carved images become the object of worship rather than a means of worship.

   c. When a person makes his god, it reverses the creation story. (Rom. 1:21-25)

   d. When a person makes his god, it reverses the concept of Lordship. (Is. 46:9-10)

2. **Forms of Modern Idol Worship**

   a. Guilty when we substitute one aspect of God’s revelation for God himself (cross, Bible, etc...)

   b. Guilty when we limit God to our own understanding of Him.
c. Guilty when we seek to control God, seeing Him strictly as a means by which we can achieve our own desires. (Ps. 37:4) This is often invoked in discussions involving abortion.

d. Guilty when we objectify God in any way (can’t say “God is ______.” We have to say, “God is like ______.” (John 14:9)

Believer’s Study Bible, p. 255: 5:8-10 “The first commandment in v. 7 forbids the worshipping of any but the Lord. The second commandment in these verses forbids the worshipping of objects, even though they might be thought to represent or symbolize the Lord (cf. 4:15-19). ‘Those who hate Me’ refers not to the fathers but to the children (cf. Ezek. 18:20). Unbelieving parents generally produce unbelieving children. Regarding God’s jealousy, see 4:24.”

C. The Third Commandment “Do not misuse the name of the Lord your God” (11) “Misuse” literally means “empty, frivolous, light, and insincere.” We must not view this only as a prohibition against profanity. Elton Trueblood said, “The worst blasphemy is not profanity but lip service. What is dangerous is not intellectual atheism which is unpopular but rather mild religion which is very popular indeed.” Christians must not justify wrong behavior regarding life by invoking approval of a god they invent.

Believer’s Study Bible, p. 110:11 “To ‘take’ the Lord’s name meant to ‘lift it up’ or ‘use’ it. To do something ‘in vain’ meant to do it with no good purpose or effect. In this case, ‘in vain’ includes both the frivolous use of God’s name and its wicked or deceitful use, i.e., in an attempt to deceive (e.g., swearing to a lie) or to accomplish a selfish or wicked goal (e.g., false prophecy, claiming God said something when He did not). (Eph. 4:29)

D. The Fourth Commandment “Be careful to remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy” (12) To the ancients, a part of something represented the whole. To dedicate one day meant that God was Lord all the time (or to dedicate a tithe represented all of one’s resources.)

1. This commandment demonstrates that man’s time is under God and God has a right to claim man’s time. God’s sovereignty means our bodies do not belong to us (1 Corinthians 6:20)
2. This commandment commands labor – Bible is never tolerant of a lazy person. (2 Thess. 3:10)

3. This commandment requires a man to rest. This is a basic need.

**Believer’s Study Bible, p. 110: Ex. 20:9-11** “Without doubt the Law is based firmly in the created order. God’s law is never arbitrary. His laws are for man’s good. The Sabbath, as the seventh day in the week, was devoted to God (cf. Gen. 1:1-2:3). In the age of N.T. grace, Paul specifically rejected the legal necessity of keeping the Sabbath, but he and other Christians soon began meeting to worship on the first day of the week, as the Lord’s Day. Keeping the Sabbath day is clearly identified in 31:13-17 as a covenant sign between God and the sons of Israel. The Hebrew word *shabbat* basically means ‘rest,’ in the sense of cessation of one’s work in order to pursue the things of God. In regard to holy days, cf. Col. 2:16, 17. God created the world, and the seventh day, i.e., Saturday, commemorated that. Jesus redeemed the world, and the first day, i.e., Sunday, commemorates that.” (I Cor. 16:1-2)

**E. The Fifth Commandment “Honor your father and your mother”** (16) We know that God values relationships. Paul reminds us that this is the first commandment with a promise (Eph. 6:2) “that your days may be long.” Gary Smalley said that “honor is love put into practice.” We are to honor our parents all our lives.

**F. The Sixth Commandment “Do not murder”** (17) Since God had just led them into battle with the Amalekites; this is not a prohibition against war. In other laws, God prescribes capital punishment. Above all, this is a command to respect the sanctity of life. Cain was guilty of the murder of his brother and received a harsh punishment (Gen. 4:11-14). Jesus expanded on this theme in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5:21-26).

**G. The Seventh Commandment “Do not commit adultery”** (18) God upholds the value and sanctity of marriage vows. This commandment protects the home. It forbids any sex outside of the marriage covenant. One’s relationship to one’s spouse is used as a symbol of Christ’s relationship to the church (Eph. 5:25-27). When Israel violated the covenant vows with
God, adultery was said to have occurred with other gods. The entire look of Hosea expounds on the theme of physical adultery as a picture of spiritual adultery. Again, Jesus expanded this commandment (Matt. 5:27-28; Heb. 13:4) If sex outside of marriage was eliminated, so would the vast number of abortions.

H. The Eighth Commandment “Do not steal” (19) Paul commands in his discourse on relationships “Anyone who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with their own hands, that they may have something to share with those in need.” (Eph. 4:28) Whereas people may be scrupulously honest about material things, they may feel no guilt about stealing time on the job or away from the family or about stealing affection, self-esteem, or good feelings. Many affairs have become by stealing affection. We can take away much that is valuable to a person through the words we say.

I. The Ninth Commandment “Do not give dishonest testimony against your neighbor.” (20) Jesus said, “You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” (John 8:32, 36) God places a value on truth. Conversely, Satan is called “the father of lies.” (John 8:44, 14:6, 17:17). It’s almost impossible to continue sinning without lying.

J. The Tenth Commandment “Do not covet…” (21) This is a commandment regarding an attitude toward things. Our desire for physical can crowd out our desire for spiritual things. (Luke 12:15) Paul goes so far as to call covetousness “idolatry” (Col. 3:5). Believer’s Study Bible, p. 111;

Exodus 20:17
“The term ‘covet’ is used here of a strong desire for personal benefit at the expense of others. Man is to be content with God and with what God provides. This was the only commandment whose violation was purely internal. This fact, together with the commentaries on the Law by Jesus (Matt. 5:17-32) and Paul (Rom. 7:7), shows that God’s true intent was not just to limit unrighteousness, nor to encourage external righteousness. His desire was for the true righteousness that is produced by a heart committed to Him. This was only to be made possible, however, through Christ (Rom. 13:8-14, 9:22, 10:4; Matt. 5:17; 2 Cor. 5:21). As one writer paraphrased:

“Above all else, love God alone, bow down to neither wood nor stone; God’s name refuse to take in vain, the Sabbath rest with care maintain. Respect your parents all your days, hold sacred human life always. Be loyal to your chosen mate; steal nothing neither small nor great. Report with truth your neighbor’s deed and rid your mind of selfish greed.”
Deuteronomy Lesson 1: “Valued”

II. Grace (Deuteronomy 19:1-13)

A. Cities of Refuge “you are to set apart three cities” (2) In ancient Israel, the judicial process was quite different than what we expect. Any time a life was taken, justice rested with the next male kin of the deceased, “the avenger of blood” (6). To avoid miscarriage of justice, anyone guilty of taking another life could flee to a city of refuge for safety until the elders sorted out the guilt or innocence of the accused (6, 12). The cities of refuge were a testimony to the value of human life.

HCSB, p.314, 19:1-3
“The Israelites must set apart three cities of sanctuary or refuge for persons accused of manslaughter. These were to be strategically located so that they would be accessible to anyone anywhere in the land. Three cities had already been allotted east of the Jordan River (4:41-43), and there would be a need for three more in Canaan proper. In the event of population growth, three more cities would be added, making nine in all (19:8-9).”

B. Command for Life “In this way, innocent blood will not be shed” (10) Since the “avenger of blood” was sworn to kill the accused, the elders of the cities of refuge offered protection until the evidence could be judged. Two wrongs would not equal a right. The taking of another life, whether accidental or premeditated was a serious matter with grave consequences.

HCSB, p.314, 19:10
“The establishment of strategically located cities of refuge would allow accused parties to find safety before unwarranted vengeance could be inflicted. They would preclude bloodshed in the land the Lord was giving them. Innocent blood defiled the land so that the land figuratively became hostile toward the guilty person and resisted his attempts to make use of it. When Cain killed Abel, Abel’s blood cried out to the Lord from the ground. It would thereafter withhold its yield from Cain (Gn 4:10-12). The soil of Israel would likewise become polluted by the blood of innocent victims (Nm 35:33-34; Dt 19:13).”
Deuteronomy Lesson 1: “Valued”

Written by David Self
Monday, 13 January 2020 00:00 - Last Updated Sunday, 12 January 2020 05:44

Application:

1. ⚪️ Pray: 1) For women considering abortions, 2) For women suffering from post-abortion trauma and for the staff of pregnancy centers and right to life organizations.

2. ⚫️ Act: 1) Know the Bible, 2) Volunteer at a local pregnancy center, 3) Vote intelligently.

3. ⚫️ Love: Demonstrate God’s love toward those in need whether physically challenged or spiritually destitute.

Adult Leader Pack: Item 5: Poster: Jesus Quotes Deuteronomy; Item 7: Handout: Deuteronomy Time Line; Item 10: Handout: Jesus Quotes Deuteronomy

Illustrator: pg. 40 “Cities of Refuge: A Haven for the Innocent”

Notes: **You may access David’s Lesson Preview in MP3 format at: www.hfbcbiblestudy.org

Dates: 1/6-9 – Daniel Fast; 1/11 – Summit Celebrate Missions; 1/11 – Flourish Launch – (Women’s Ministry);
– Midlink preview;
1/17-19
– LIFT Weekend;
1/18
– Men:Serve;
1/22
– Midlink 1 thru 2/26;
1/26
– Fitness EXPO;
1/31
Deuteronomy Lesson 1: “Valued”

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Monday, 13 January 2020 00:00 - Last Updated Sunday, 12 January 2020 05:44

– Midnight Madness;
  2/7
– Night to Shine;
  2/9
– Preparation for Marriage;
  2/9
– First Camp;
  2/14-15
– Superstart Preteen Conf.;
  2/16
– MIYCO;
  2/21
– Marriage Matters;
  2/23
– Parent Commitment;
  2/27
– HPD Cadet Graduation;
  2/29
– Senior Adult Rodeo Hoedown;
  3/4
  - Midlink 2 begins;
  3/7
– Men’s Conf. Iron Sharpens Iron;
  3/7-19
– RUSHMORE;
  3/28