

Bible lays a strong obligation on Christians concerning this. Proverbs 24:11 *Rescue those who are being taken away to death; hold back those who are stumbling to the slaughter.* Christians ought to use every lawful means to save these children.

#### Discussion Questions

- Discuss what you can do individually or as a family to save unborn babies from being murdered.
- Spend some time in prayer asking God to stop the evil of abortion.

#### **Day 5 – Review Q&A and recite memory verse**

Yesterday we talked about the obligation of God's law to save the helpless who are being killed. But what about those who aren't helpless? What about those who are choosing to hurt themselves. All around us are people wallowing in sin, self-deceit, and pride. Sometimes their sin goes so far as to harm themselves. Do we have an obligation to the lost people of the world who have given themselves over to despair? Remember when Paul and Silas were stuck in prison for the gospel. God shook the doors off the hinges, and chains off their feet.

Acts 16:27-28 *When the jailer woke and saw that the prison doors were open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped. But Paul cried with a loud voice, "Do not harm yourself, for we are all here." Paul could have let the Philippian jailer kill himself. He was helping to persecute and jail Christians! But Paul was instead filled with love and compassion for the man. He preserved his life by letting him know the prisoners were all there. There was no need for despair. Additionally, he thought beyond the immediate needs of the man to his eternal, spiritual needs. Acts 16:30-31 Then he brought them out and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" And they said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household." Paul preserved his life then shared the gospel to save his soul!*

#### Discussion Questions

- How can our own pride and desire for revenge prevent us sharing the gospel?
- What are some good reminders that can help us think rightly and encourage us to evangelize those around us?

# Baptist Catechism

## Family Worship Guide



## West Oaks Baptist Church

(in preparation for Sunday, February 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2025)

### Baptist Catechism Question #73

**Q:** What is required in the sixth commandment?

**A:** *The sixth commandment requireth all lawful endeavours to preserve our own life and the life of others.*

#### Suggested Memory Verse

*Proverbs 24:11 Rescue those who are being taken away to death; hold back those who are stumbling to the slaughter.*

### Day 1 – Review Q&A and recite memory verse

Should a Christian defend himself? This question has been a source of confusion and debate throughout church history. Some have claimed that the teaching of Jesus to “turn the other cheek,” prevents Christians from defending their lives. This week we find that the 6<sup>th</sup> commandment requires us to use *all lawful endeavours to preserve our own life*. The catechism, along with the reformers, answer the self-defense question above with a sure ‘yes!’ Christians can, and even must, try to defend themselves when their lives are in danger. What about Jesus’ teaching to turn the other cheek? It is important to realize that slapping someone’s cheek in ancient times (now too) was a sign of disrespect. Jesus is teaching about how to respond to those who might disrespect you. You are not to try and guard or defend your pride. Elsewhere Jesus talks more directly to the question of self-defense. Luke 22:36 He said to them, “But now let the one who has a moneybag take it, and likewise a knapsack. And let the one who has no sword sell his cloak and buy one. Matthew 10:23 When they persecute you in one town, flee to the next... In these two verses Jesus answers the question with two possible outcomes. Sometimes we might need to defend ourselves with weapons prepared ahead of time. Other times we might be called upon to flee from those who seek to hurt us. In both cases Jesus is concerned that we follow the law to seek to preserve our own lives.

#### Discussion Questions

- Can you think of any situations when a Christian shouldn’t defend himself?
- Does defense of your life always have to be physical defense? Can you think of times when the Apostle Paul defended his own life in the Bible?

### Day 2 – Review Q&A and recite memory verse

God commends self-defense as the lawful preservation of life. Yet many go beyond the law of God and use their strength, fists, guns, or other means to pay people back for the evil they have done. It can feel good to see the bad guy ‘get what’s coming to him.’ We see it in movies. We read about it in the newspaper. The good guy vigilante tracks down the evil man and makes him pay for his crimes. We do this in smaller ways in our own families. How often do kids try and get back at siblings by hitting or yelling. Spouses can do this same sort of payback as well. This is not what the 6<sup>th</sup> commandment requires. We are to use *all lawful means to preserve life*. While it is lawful to use self-defense, it is lawful for the police to track down and stop an evil man, and it is lawful for the courts to pronounce sentence for his evil, it is not the individual’s responsibility to enact justice. Romans 12:19-21 *Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.” To the contrary, “if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink...”* God is the one who will pay back everyone for what they have done. You and I need grace. We also need to extend grace.

#### Discussion Questions

- Can you think of any situations recently where you were tempted to try and get your own justice? What was the godly answer?
- How does the gospel help us when we feel like we need justice?

### Day 3 – Review Q&A and recite memory verse

It is important to preserve the life God has given you. This may mean defending yourself when evil men seek to harm you. It may also mean avoiding death by not jumping across a busy street with cars whizzing by. But is the 6<sup>th</sup> commandment only concerned with not dying? The truth of the commandment is not isolated to matters of life and death but also with how you care for the life you’ve been given. 1 Timothy 5:23 No longer drink only water, but use a little wine for the sake of your stomach and your frequent ailments. Paul counsels his disciple Timothy to take care of his body. Timothy had been avoiding drinking wine, likely for religious purposes. Paul realizes that changing what he drinks will actually help Timothy’s illness of his stomach. Paul’s concern here is not Timothy’s life. There’s not indication he’s about to die. Rather, Paul wants Timothy to be well and not to be sick all the time. We, too, are to seek the health and well-being of the bodies God has given us. This means seeking to regularly exercise as well as eat in ways that are healthy and good for our bodies to grow and flourish. We ought to avoid regularly eating an unhealthy diet. We also ought to avoid sloth or excessive overwork. While there may be times when the responsibilities God gives us makes it hard to be as healthy as possible, we should still seek to honor God by caring for our bodies as he gives ability.

#### Discussion Questions

- Can a Christian go too far in trying to be healthy? How would you know if you’re doing that?
- What are some ways you can take better care of your body?

### Day 4 – Review Q&A and recite memory verse

Am I my brother’s keeper? These words spoken by Cain to God are bitter irony as Cain knew he had murdered his brother Abel. Yet the question Cain asked is one we all need to face as well. Am I responsible for my brother or my neighbor? If I am, how far am I responsible for them? The 6<sup>th</sup> commandment *requires all lawful endeavours to preserve...the life of others*. While you are not responsible to try and save everyone in the world who faces death, God does hold you responsible to help those he puts in your way with the resources and abilities he has gifted you. This is obvious when we think about seeing a little child wandering into the road. It doesn’t matter if the child belongs to you. If you see the danger you should save the child. We should also try and save those who evil men are seeking to murder. Fathers should be ready to defend their family if evil men attack. Men who have strength should defend the helpless when they are in danger. In our land the most helpless people who are regularly murdered by evil men are babies in the womb of their mothers. Evil men and women use vile means to kill unborn babies every day. The