



# STUDY GUIDE

## DO NOT MURDER

### KEY TERMS:

kill  
immoral

murder  
capital punishment

pacifism

**NOTE-TAKING COLUMN:** Complete this section during the video. Include definitions and key terms.

**CUE COLUMN:** Complete this section after the video.

Why is the Sixth Commandment the least understood?

What is the Sixth Commandment really about?

What is the difference between killing and murdering?

How is the Sixth Commandment important in determining moral human behavior in terms of taking lives?

What is the worst act a person can commit?

## DISCUSSION & REVIEW QUESTIONS:

- Towards the beginning of the video, Mr. Prager clarifies that, "...murder can only mean one thing: The illegal or immoral taking of a human life." Who or what do you think determines whether the taking of a life is illegal or immoral or not in any given case? Explain. Do you think that murder only applies to human lives? Why or why not?
- Mr. Prager informs us that, "The very same part of the Bible that contains the Ten Commandments... commands the death penalty for murder; allows killing in war; prescribes animal sacrifice, and allows eating meat." What exactly is the correlation between these other conditions of killing and the Sixth Commandment? Why is the fact that these other conditions appear in the same section of the Bible that the Ten Commandments do such compelling evidence of God's affirmation of other types of killing?
- Later in the video, Mr. Prager explains that, "Opponents of the death penalty are free to hold the view that all murderers should be allowed to live. But they are not free to cite the Bible to support their view. Yet, many do. And they always cite the Commandment, "Do not kill." But that... is not what the commandment says, and it is therefore an invalid argument." Why do you think that many people, even people of Abrahamic faiths who should know better, incorrectly site the Bible as a basis for all killing to be wrong? If this argument is taken away, what do you think is the most compelling argument that people who believe that all killing is wrong have left, if any?
- Mr. Prager points out that holding a pacifist position is immoral because, "...what other word than "immoral" can one use to describe forbidding the killing of someone who is in the process of murdering innocent men, women and children, in, let's say, a movie theater or a school?" and that, "...it is dishonest to cite the commandment against murder to justify pacifism. There is moral killing – most obviously when done in self-defense against an aggressor – and there is immoral killing. And the word for that is murder." Why do you think that some people believe that a cop taking down a school shooter by lethal means is wrong? What do you think leads some people to hold such an extremist position, that all killing is immoral?
- Towards the end of the video, Mr. Prager shares with us that, "...murder is the worst act a person can commit;" indeed that, "...murder leads the list [of commandments regarding humans] because deliberately taking the life of an innocent person is the most terrible thing we can do." Why is murder the worst offense? Why do you think that, in general, so many people remain ignorant regarding the difference between killing and murdering?

## EXTEND THE LEARNING:

### CASE STUDY: Richard Vernard Wagner

INSTRUCTIONS: Read the article “Lower Merion man convicted in 2007 DUI fatality back in jail for new DUI,” then answer the questions that follow.

- Who is Richard Vernard Wagner, and what did he do? What was so terrible about what he did?
- Do you think that Mr. Wagner murdered Ms. Bates? Why or why not? Do you think either of his punishments fit either of his crimes? Why or why not?
- Although murder is clearly a subset of the category of killing, do you think that being able to determine which subset of killing a given case falls under is usually clear? Why or why not? Do you think that God would judge Mr. Wagner as having broken the Sixth Commandment? Why or why not?



# QUIZ

DO NOT  
MURDER

---

1. **The Sixth Commandment is the most easily understood of the Ten Commandments.**
  - a. True
  - b. False
  
2. **Which of the following is a definition of “kill”?**
  - a. Taking any life.
  - b. Taking a human life deliberately or by accident.
  - c. Taking a human life legally or illegally, morally or immorally.
  - d. All of the above.
  
3. **Why did the King James translation of the Bible use the word “kill” rather than “murder”?**
  - a. When the translation was made in 1610, “kill” was synonymous with “murder”.
  - b. Because the original Hebrew says “kill”.
  - c. Because the Old Testament was translated from Latin, not Hebrew.
  - d. When the translation was made in 1610, the word “murder” did not exist.
  
4. **What two positions do people use the King James translation of the Sixth Commandment to justify?**
  - a. Animal and women’s rights.
  - b. Opposition to capital punishment and abortion.
  - c. Pacifism and capitalism.
  - d. Opposition to capital punishment and support of pacifism.
  
5. **What part of the Bible shows that all killing was not prohibited?**
  - a. The Prophets.
  - b. The Gospels.
  - c. The Torah.
  - d. The New Testament.



# QUIZ - ANSWER KEY

DO NOT  
MURDER

---

1. The Sixth Commandment is the most easily understood of the Ten Commandments.

- a. True
- b. False

2. Which of the following is a definition of “kill”?

- a. Taking any life.
- b. Taking a human life deliberately or by accident.
- c. Taking a human life legally or illegally, morally or immorally.
- d. All of the above.

3. Why did the King James translation of the Bible use the word “kill” rather than “murder”?

- a. When the translation was made in 1610, “kill” was synonymous with “murder”.
- b. Because the original Hebrew says “kill”.
- c. Because the Old Testament was translated from Latin, not Hebrew.
- d. When the translation was made in 1610, the word “murder” did not exist.

4. What two positions do people use the King James translation of the Sixth Commandment to justify?

- a. Animal and women’s rights.
- b. Opposition to capital punishment and abortion.
- c. Pacifism and capitalism.
- d. Opposition to capital punishment and support of pacifism.

5. What part of the Bible shows that all killing was not prohibited?

- a. The Prophets.
- b. The Gospels.
- c. The Torah.
- d. The New Testament.

# The Times Herald

## Lower Merion man convicted in 2007 DUI fatality back in jail for new DUI

By Carl Hessler Jr.

Posted: 02/25/16, 1:07 PM EST | Updated: 2 days ago

COURTHOUSE >> A Lower Merion man who served time for a 2007 drunken driving crash in Chester County that claimed his girlfriend's life is back in jail for driving under the influence of marijuana while his current girlfriend was in his car.

Richard Vernard "Richie" Wagner, 31, most recently of the first block of Prospect Avenue, wept as he was sentenced in Montgomery County Court to 14 months to five years in jail after he pleaded guilty to a charge of driving under the influence of a controlled substance in connection with a February 2015 traffic stop in the Bryn Mawr section of Lower Merion.

"Mr. Wagner didn't learn from the most extreme circumstance he could have experienced," said Senior Judge John Braxton, referring to Wagner's 2007 conviction of a charge of homicide by vehicle while DUI. "You have to have some time away."

Braxton allowed Wagner to serve what is essentially a state sentence in the county jail.

With the latest charge, prosecutors alleged Wagner was driving a Chevrolet Malibu while under the influence of marijuana about 12:06 a.m. Feb. 12, 2015. Lower Merion police stopped Wagner's vehicle near the intersection of Prospect and Lancaster avenues and immediately detected "the strong odor of burnt marijuana emanating from inside the vehicle," according to the criminal complaint.

Wagner admitted that he was "smoking a blunt" in the vehicle prior to getting pulled over. Wagner's girlfriend also was in the vehicle, police said.

In an unusual twist, the incident occurred on the anniversary of a 2007 crash, during which Wagner was driving while intoxicated and in which his then girlfriend, a passenger in the vehicle, was killed.

In November 2007, Wagner, then 22 and of West Bradford, Chester County, was sentenced to four to eight years in state prison after he pleaded guilty to a charge of

homicide by vehicle while driving under the influence of a combination of alcohol and cocaine and marijuana, according to testimony. Wagner's then girlfriend, Megan B. Bates, 21, of West Whiteland, was killed in the 1:30 a.m. Feb. 12, 2007, one-vehicle crash after Wagner's Mazda Millennia struck a utility pole on the east side of Pottstown Pike, just south of Grove Road, in West Goshen Township.

At the time of the fatal wreck, Wagner had a blood alcohol content of 0.165 percent, more than twice the legal limit of 0.08 percent, according to police.

Wagner, according to court documents, also has a DUI conviction stemming from an October 2003 incident in Westtown Township, Chester County.

"This defendant is a clear danger to the community. Nobody's saying Richie is a bad kid but the defendant is a walking bullet in a body, he is a human handgun and he's a reckless trigger upon society," said Assistant District Attorney Scott Frame who argued for the maximum available sentence of 2 ½ to five years in prison for Wagner.

"He hasn't learned anything. He had a passenger in his car after killing somebody while doing the same thing," added Frame, making the judge aware of the similarities between the 2007 and 2015 incidents.

But defense lawyer Shawn-Ryan White argued for leniency on behalf of Wagner.

"He deserves justice and not gratuitous punishment. He isn't a hardened criminal," White argued.

Several of Wagner's relatives and his current girlfriend also pleaded for leniency on his behalf, characterizing him as "a good kid" who made some bad decisions and as someone who has a strong work ethic and who is trying to turn his life around by going back to college.

Wagner, wearing blue jailhouse garb, wept uncontrollably at times as his relatives spoke and as testimony turned to the fatal 2007 wreck.

"I loved her, your honor. I truly did. She was my best friend," Wagner sobbed, recalling Bates.

Wagner implied he suffered from depression and used marijuana to self-medicate.

"The marijuana, it's pathetic. It's stupid. I hate it. I don't ever want to touch it again. I have no excuse. What I did was illegal, it was stupid and it was wrong and I'm so sorry from the bottom of my heart," Wagner, tears streaming from his eyes, said as he vowed to make positive changes in his life.