



Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church  
*Pastor Terry's Thoughts of the Week*

**The Words for today:  
Don't Kill!**

OK. I can handle that. When I taught confirmation classes, I told the young people they could ask me anything they wanted about anything and I would answer them honestly. If you really want to be taken over the coals, try that sometime! But be honest in your answers because falsehood can be detected by those young 'uns.

But there is more to it than not killing. There is also confessing, forgiveness and acceptance of what our lives have been like. I've known those who have served in the military to carry the burden of death with them for many years. The thought that they killed another human being was a burden they never thought could be forgiven. Ladies and gentlemen, meet the love of God. He knows that our ways on earth are not perfect. He also knows that our instinct is to fight when we are attacked – and too often instinct wins.

But we are forgiven, even when we have killed another human being if we confess and are sorry for that act. Most people are, and find that God does forgive. Most of us say, we are fortunate in that we haven't been forced into a situation where our anger has gotten the best of us. Or have we.

Luther reminds us that not killing also means helping our neighbor as much as we can. Of course we make some "rules". We'll help them only if we can be sure they really need it. We'll help until someone forgets to say "thank you", then, feeling unappreciated for our good works, we'll quit. We'll help only if we are never taken advantage of by the recipient. That is, if they ask for more than they really need, by our standards.

A few weeks ago we sorted food from the postal workers drive. There were way out of date goods that had to be destroyed. That's sad, but there are those who feel the poor can exist on something we wouldn't eat ourselves.

Sometimes ragged, soiled or downright rancid clothes are brought to the community center. "They" don't need anything better than that!

There is a quote from C.S. Lewis that hangs on the wall of the center. I know I'll quote it wrong, so I'll just give you the gist of it: On my death bed I will not be ashamed to know I was taken advantage of in my lifetime, but I will not rest quietly if I have left a need I could fulfill remain.

We may not have killed directly, but have we filled the need of another? We may have given a can or two of food on the food drive – in fact it may be our habit to bring a few cans each week to church for the food wagon, but have we quietly listened to the cries of an other, have we set aside time to pray for others and to follow up those prayers with action? Have we done something simple like watched a neighbor's house when they are gone? Have we done something unseen like finding our little niche in the home family and church family that should be done but doesn't get done unless we do it? (We need people to make coffee! Get to it!)

This week – Don't kill! This week do all you can to help the world see God's love in action. Help out and do it quietly!

*TMK*

-- *Week of June 14, 2009*