



19 Minutes with Luther

The Fifth Commandment

- The Knowledge of God
- Law and Gospel
- Introduction to the Law
- 1st Commandment
- 2nd Commandment
- 3rd Commandment
- 4th Commandment
- **5th Commandment**
- 6th Commandment
- 7th Commandment
- 8th Commandment
- 9th & 10th Commandments
- The Conclusion
- The Gospel & the Nature of God
- The Apostles' Creed (Faith)
- 1st Article (Creation)
- 1st Article (Preservation)
- 1st Article (Protection)
- 1st Article (The Fall into Sin)
- 2nd Article (Christ's Person)
- 2nd Article (Christ's Office)
- 2nd Article (Christ's Work)
- 2nd Article (Christ's Humiliation)
- 2nd Article (Christ's Exaltation)
- 2nd Article (Christian Life)
- 2nd Article (Saved by Faith)
- 3rd Article (The Holy Spirit)
- 3rd Article (Calls)
- 3rd Article (Enlightens)
- 3rd Article (Sanctifies)
- 3rd Article (Keeps in Faith)
- 3rd Article (Invisible Church)
- 3rd Article (Visible Church)
- 3rd Article (Forgiveness)
- 3rd Article (Eternal Life)
- Baptism (Part 1)
- Baptism (Part 2)
- Holy Communion (Part 1)
- Holy Communion (Part 2)
- Keys & Confession (Part 1)
- Keys & Confession (Part 2)
- Keys & Confession (Part 3)
- Introduction to the Lord's Prayer
- The Address
- 1st Petition
- 2nd Petition
- 3rd Petition
- 4th Petition
- 5th Petition
- 6th Petition
- 7th Petition
- The Doxology

You shall not murder.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God that we do not hurt or harm our neighbor in his body, but help and befriend him in every bodily need.

1. God protects human life in the Fifth Commandment. Why, according to Isaiah 55:6, "*Seek the LORD while he may be found,*" is the time of a person's life so important?

2. Who alone has the right to take life? Give specific examples of the kinds of taking life that violate this commandment.

3. Give specific examples of the kinds of taking life that do not violate this commandment.

4. In the Fifth Commandment, God forbids suicide. In what sense is suicide worse than murder? Give examples of present-day reasons by which people defend the act of suicide.

5. In his Sermon on the Mount, Jesus said that the Fifth Commandment can be broken without the actual taking of life. What are the ways in which this commandment might be violated without the taking of life?

6. What are some sins of omission against the Fifth Commandment?

7. State your reasons for agreeing or disagreeing with the following statements:

The theory of evolution makes a person's body and life a cheap thing.

A person who commits suicide is automatically damned.

We commit more sins of omission than commission against the Fifth Commandment.

8. Evaluate: The Smiths call their pastor for help. Grandpa has had a stroke. He is unconscious. His brain damage is extensive. He is having trouble breathing. The family asks their pastor if they should request that Grandpa not be placed on a respirator.

9. What did Jesus do to save us from our sins against this commandment?

Luther said:

"Under this commandment not only is a person guilty who does evil to his neighbor, but he is also who can do him good—prevent or resist evil, defend and save him, so that no bodily harm or hurt happens to him—and yet does not do it." (Tappert, pp. 390,391.)

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father, be patient with us. Forgive our sins of omission and commission: the times we've neglected others and the times when our thoughts, words, or actions have been hurtful or hate-filled. Lead us always to see life as a gracious gift from you, and move us to share your love with others. In Jesus our Savior's name we pray. Amen.

At home

- Memorize the Fifth Commandment and its meaning.
- Identify and "adopt" a shut-in from church, an elderly person, or someone in need. Be a friend to that person, and help him or her with his or her needs.

Helps

(1) A person's lifetime is important because it is a time of grace—his or her only opportunity to come to know Jesus Christ and be saved. (2) God gives life, and he alone has the right to take it. Abortion (the killing of the unborn), euthanasia (mercy killing of the elderly), infanticide (mercy killing of the young), murder, and causing another's death through carelessness violate God's will. (3) God allows the government to take the life of a murderer (capital punishment). God also allows individuals to take life in self-defense or in a just war. (4) Those who commit suicide do not have an opportunity to repent. Suicide is defended by claiming that it is an individual's right, that it allows one to die with dignity, and that it puts an end to suffering and poor quality of life. (5) Hatredful thoughts, words, and actions that harm one's own or another's body also violate the Fifth Commandment. (6) God demands that we be patient, kind, forgiving, helpful, and friendly to all others. Failing to do these things are sins against the Fifth Commandment. (7) The theory of evolution cheapens human life by denying that God is the giver of life and that he created people for a divine purpose and with an immortal soul. Although both men in the Bible who committed suicide went to hell, Scripture does not tell us that those who commit suicide are automatically damned. God is the Judge. It is unbelief that damns. Mentally ill people may commit sinful acts, even suicide, without having fallen from faith. Answers regarding omission and commission will vary. (8) Answers will vary. Remember that God is the Giver of life. He is also the one who determines the end of one's life. At times God may make it clear that a person's life is coming to an end. (9) Jesus saved us by keeping the Fifth Commandment perfectly in our place and by offering his life on the cross of Calvary as the payment for our sins against this commandment.