

The Fifth Commandment

You shall not murder.

What does this mean? We should fear and love God so that we do not hurt or harm our neighbor in his body, but help and support him in every physical need.

You shall not murder seems like a pretty easy Commandment to keep, doesn't it? I mean, I've never murdered anyone. Have you? In the ***Explanation of the Small Catechism***, it says that this Commandment is about God's gift of life. And that means all of life, so the answer to the question, "What does this mean?" is *We should fear and love God so that we do not hurt or harm our neighbor in his body, but help and support him in every physical need*. Have you ever hurt someone by hitting them or kicking them? I know I have. It looks like some of us have broken this Commandment. But Jesus takes it even further. He says in the Sermon on the Mount, *"Everyone who is angry with his brother will be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother will be liable to the council; and whoever says, 'You fool!' will be liable to the hell of fire" (Matthew 5:22)*. Have you ever called someone a bad name, or maybe just been angry with them? It looks like we've all broken this Commandment several times. What can we do?

1 John 1:9 says: *If we confess our sins, [God] is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness*. We can tell Jesus we've sinned and that we're sorry for those sins. The Bible promises that He will forgive us and wash those sins away. Then we can ask the Holy Spirit to help us not do those things again. Isn't it good to know that when we do break God's Commandments, He will forgive us?