

The Fourth and Fifth Commandments

The Office of Vespers

7:00 p.m.

March 11, 2026

In this [Fourth] [C]ommandment belongs a further statement regarding all kinds of obedience to persons in authority who have to command and to govern. For all authority flows and is propagated from the authority of parents. For where a father is unable alone to educate his [rebellious and irritable] child, he employs a schoolmaster to instruct him; if he be too weak, he enlists the aid of his friends and neighbors; if he departs this life, he delegates and confers his authority and government upon others who are appointed for the purpose. (Luther, Large Catechism, 141).

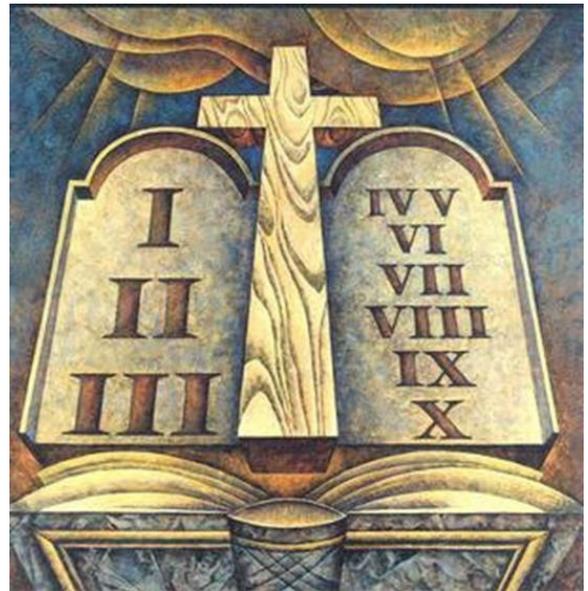
All humans possess dignity and worth because they are made in God's image. Dignity is something given. We understand human dignity to be rooted in Creation. Humanity was created in the image of God (Genesis 1:27), and we are held accountable to acknowledge that dignity even after the image of God was lost in the fall.

We can go even further, and recognize an expansion of human dignity in the Incarnation (the Son of God becoming a man), Redemption (the death of Christ in our place), and the Resurrection (every person will be raised on the last day. There is a scale of "murder," from genocide to anger. All forms of "murder" are prohibited by the Fifth Commandment. Some are punishable by law. (It is good to remember that the law of God is more comprehensive than human law.)

God values all life, and this affects the way Christians view the end of life. One often hears discussions about "quality of life." A Christian understanding of human dignity would reject this category as unhelpful. Life is life. A "bad" life is life. The law (both human and divine) must make this judgment. When it comes to the end of life, and especially the difficult decisions that must be made, the rule is simple (although often very difficult to observe): "The 5th Commandment requires us to extend life. It does not require us to extend death." Thanks be to God!

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Vespers after *Oculi*

“The Fourth and Fifth Commandments”

**Shepherd of the Springs Lutheran
Church**
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*A Confessional, Evangelical, Sacramental, and Liturgical
Congregation of the Lutheran Confessions --
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MEMBER: THE LUTHERAN CHURCH – MISSOURI SYNOD

[We rise]

Opening Hymn

“Oh, Blest the House” #862

Opening Sentences p. 229

PSALMODY

Psalm 138

[Read responsively by half verse]

[Be seated]

READINGS

First Reading **2 Samuel 15:1-14**
O Lord, have mercy on us. **Thanks be to God!**

[We rise]
Holy Gospel **St. Luke 10:25-37**
O Lord, have mercy on us. **Thanks be to God!**

Responsory for Lent p. 231

[Be seated]

Office Hymn

“These are the Holy Ten Commands” #581
[stanzas 1, 5-6, 11-12]

Sermon

[We rise]
“On My Heart Imprint Your Image” #422
[replacing the Canticle]

[Be seated]

The offering is received

[We rise]

PRAYER

Kyrie, Lord's Prayer p. 233

O Lord, hear my prayer.

And let my cry come to you.

Collect of the Day: O Lord God, heavenly Father, who by the blessed light of Your divine Word have led us to the knowledge of Your Son, we most heartily beseech You to replenish us with the grace of Your truth and rejoicing with the sure confidence of Christ, our Savior, may in the end be brought unto everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, Our Lord; who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit: One God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Collect for Lent: Almighty and everlasting God, You despise nothing You have made and forgive the sins of all who are penitent. Create in us new and contrite hearts that lamenting our sins and acknowledging our wretchedness we may receive from You full pardon and forgiveness; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, One God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Collect for Peace p. 233

Benedicamus, Benediction p. 234

Closing Hymn

“To God the Holy Spirit Let Us Pray” #768

The Forth Commandment

Thou shalt honor thy father and thy mother [that it may be well with thee and thou mayest live long upon the earth].

What does this mean?—Answer. We should fear and love God that we may not despise nor anger our parents and masters, but give them honor, serve, obey, and hold them in love and esteem.

The Fifth Commandment.

Thou shalt not kill.

What does this mean?—Answer. We should fear and love God that we may not hurt nor harm our neighbor in his body, but help and befriend him in every bodily need [in every need and danger of life and body].