

The Law of Life

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS



THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT



1. Though deceptively straightforward, the Fifth Commandment—“You shall not kill”—raises many questions regarding to what extent it can be applied. Do you believe it covers all types of “killing?” If so, explain. Or, are there conditions in which the taking of a life is excusable, permissible, or even encouraged? Explain.
2. Life comes at us, as they say, hard and fast. We use whatever “power” we possess to deal with its challenges. What are legitimate ways to use our power? What separates the healthy, productive uses of power from the unhealthy, unproductive uses of power? Ask the question a different way. What uses of power are evil? What uses of power are good?
3. Jesus embodied a non-violent use of power to push his platform of justice forward. What examples as recorded in the New Testament can you recall from his life that embraced the non-violent path? Do you think it is, in fact, possible to live in this world as a person committed to non-violent resistance?
4. Suppose we reframe the Fifth Commandment in the positive form, such as “you shall enable life.” How else might the Fifth Commandment be framed positively? And, what real difference does it make to frame a commandment in the negative as opposed to the positive?