

The Death Penalty: Godly or Ungodly?

By John W. Schoenheit (36 pages, 3-200008 \$5.00 plus S&H and 6% sales tax for IN residents)

Anyone who reads a newspaper or watches the news on TV sees a daily stream of ruthless and heartless criminals victimizing innocent people. Our society is so full of criminals and crime that many people have come to believe that it is normal for life to be dangerous. We adjust to this constant danger by purchasing dead bolts and security systems, traveling with cell phones, and carefully watching over our children, lest we become an unfortunate victim and another statistic. The good news is that we do not have to live in a world overrun by evil and crime.

Certainly the world would be a better place if those committing the heinous crimes in society were stopped. But how? The Bible has guidelines and commands that, if followed, would make our world a safer and more pleasant place to live. One of the biblical solutions to violent crimes is the death penalty. In fact, according to Scripture, it is perhaps the most important key to having a just legal system and a safe society.

Man did not invent the death penalty. God commanded that man carry out this form of justice so as to deter violent crimes. This short booklet shows that the whole Word of God supports the death penalty for crimes such as murder, kidnapping, and rape. This book also explains the verses that are often used against the death penalty, such as “turn the other cheek” and “overcome evil with good.” It shows that the Bible has a consistent message from Genesis to Revelation—the death penalty is part of God’s solution to the problem of evil.

Very importantly, this book shows that the “death” penalty actually *affirms the value of life*. Although many people think that the death penalty demeans human life, the Bible says just the opposite. It is demeaning of human life when a criminal takes a life or ruins one by rape or kidnapping, and then “pays” for his crime with only a moderate prison term. Such “justice” sends the message that the life of an innocent victim is not worth much, something that most criminals believe already. The death penalty, on the other hand, sends the clear message that life is very valuable indeed, and that if a person takes the life of another, the only appropriate compensation is the criminal’s own life. That is certainly God’s point of view, and He has clearly set forth in both the Old and New Testaments that the death penalty is a necessary antidote to the poisonous influence of evil people in human society.

Table of Contents:

| |
|--|
| The Death Penalty: Godly or Ungodly |
| Why Most People Believe the Bible is Against the Death Penalty |
| The Death Penalty is Man’s Responsibility |
| Murder |
| Kidnapping |
| Perjury |
| Reckless Disregard for Human Life |
| The New Testament Supports the Death Penalty |
| The Death Penalty Must be Carried Out Quickly |
| Appendix A. Misapplied Texts |
| Appendix B. Common Questions |
| Appendix C. Capital Offenses in the Old Testament |

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