

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

WHY I BELIEVE IN CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

“HE BEARETH NOT THE SWORD IN VAIN.”



Buddy Dano, Pastor
Anderson Bible Church
Anderson, Indiana 46012

September 1987

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

WHY I BELIEVE IN CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

Romans 13:1-7. Verse 1, "Let every soul be in subjection to the authorities in power. For there is no authority but of God: and those that exist are put in place by God." Verse 2, "Therefore he that sets himself against the authorities, withstandeth the ordinance of God, and those, thus withstanding shall receive for themselves judgment." Verse 3, "For rulers are not a terror to the good work, but to the evil. And wouldest thou have no fear of authority? Practice that which is good and thou shalt have praise from the same."

Verse 4, "FOR IT IS GOD'S SERVANT TO THEE FOR GOOD. But if thou dost practice that which is evil, be afraid, for not in vain doth it bear the sword. FOR GOD'S MINISTER IT IS AN AVENGER FOR WRATH TO HIM THAT DOETH EVIL." Verse 5, "Wherefore ye must needs be in subjection, not only because of the wrath, but also for conscience sake." Verse 6, "For this cause ye pay tribute also, FOR THEY ARE GOD'S MINISTERS, attending continually upon this very matter." Verse 7, "Render to all their dues, tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor."

We have before us an eternal passage of great importance in these lawless days.

Verse 1, "LET EVERY SOUL (PSUCHE) BE IN SUBJECTION (HUPOTASSO) TO THE AUTHORITIES IN POWER."

Literally, the constituted authorities. PUSCHE is the **soul, which is the REAL YOU**. HUPOTASSO is a military term for soldiers arranged in order.

Verse 1, "For there is no authority but from God, and those that exist are put in place by God."

"Every soul" here in this passage, of course, means the believer in the Lord Jesus

Christ, because this epistle was addressed only to believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, Romans 1:18.

"The authorities in power" ARE THE CIVIL AUTHORITIES ORDAINED OF GOD, into whose hands God has committed external human government. We say external as opposed to inward, spiritual, which lies outside of the province, for example, of Caesar's province.

"To be in subjection to the higher powers" means to render them their due respect and obedience according to verse 7, "tribute to whom tribute is due," etc. There is a great necessity at this hour to emphasize to all believers in the Lord Jesus Christ this solemn exhortation of the apostle. Lawlessness and contempt for authority are upon us like a flood.

This lawlessness is called in Scripture ANOMIA, which means without law, or no law. It is the essence of sin. In 1 John 3:4 "Sin is the transgression of the Law." Now that is not a correct translation. The word PARABASIS is translated in the English as "transgression," but is not PARABASIS here, nor PARAPTOMA, which is offense, but is a much deeper word. ANOMIA, literally lawlessness, is **the spirit of refusing control**, i.e., the anti-establishment movement in our day.

Now that is what God defines as sin. "Lawlessness is sin. SIN IS THE LAWLESSNESS OF THE LAW." Sin was in the world 2500 years before the Law. Already existing sin caused the Law's "Thou shalt nots." **Lawlessness is behind and below all law-breaking.** That the lawlessness of the last days is coming upon us we see everywhere. In the contempt of treaty obligations on the part of nations, in the disregard for old-time honesty in private contracts, in the "breaking loose" of "flaming youth" from parental re-

straint, and the rush to "expressionism," whether in school "dramatics" or in disdain of "old foggy" morals, in the calling of lasciviousness and adultery and homosexuality by modern names such as petting, sex experience and life style and free love, in the flood of murder books and articles and TV shows and so-called mystery novels, in the unwillingness of the public to have crime really punished, and **actually showing public sympathy with sin.**

And it is because of this latter that law enforcement breaks down. For, on the whole, judges, prosecuting attorneys, sheriffs, and police would have criminals dealt with firmly, but the "technicalities" of legal procedure are seized upon by evil, unscrupulous men to defeat the law. And who would be so foolish as to claim that things could be so if the entire community were in their hearts, righteously abhorrent toward all law breaking?

Perhaps the most glaring of all instances of the last days lawlessness is the tolerance of Red Communism. We do not now speak of Russia, **but of the fact that Communistic doctrines, which openly declare war upon all Divinely appointed order, are held, even by professing Christians** in England, the United States, and Canada, and all over the world. **We have no more right to "sit down" upon another's property against his will, than any common thief that enters your home to plunder.**

God's Word defends the rights of property, just as the right to life. "Thou shalt not steal" and "Thou shalt not murder" are in the same code of the Law. Christians need to read and to heed Matthew 20:1-15. The "householder" here "agrees" with the laborers. These had the right to decide what he could profitably pay them, and agreed to pay it. They had the right to sell their labor at an agreed price. And he recognized what they earned as theirs. "Take up that which is thine and go thy way." But as concerning that which was his, and which they had not earned, he says, "It is not lawful for me to do what I will WITH MINE OWN?" He paid them what they had earned, and sent them off his property.

Now Jesus Christ gave us that lesson. **And Jesus Christ calls the eye evil, in verse 15, that would covet what it had not earned. NO WONDER MARX AND LENIN AND THE COMMUNISTS HATE THE WORD OF GOD. IT CONVICTS THEM OF COVETOUSNESS AND THIEVERY.** Read Matthew 20:1-15 again and see what you think our Lord would have said of those laborers, if they had "sat down" in that vineyard claiming "IT REALLY BELONGS TO US, THE WORKERS. And we will not move until this householder raises our wages to what we ask." You see, **the only way for Communism to exist is to DESTROY ALL HOLD OF THE BIBLE ON MEN. Communism is the devil's opium for a people willing to let go of the Word of God.**

Let Christians beware of the special lies of all movements of force, "direct action" the Reds call it, to right the wrongs of this present world. There are wrongs, as James tells us in James 5:1-6, but the Christian is told to be "Patient until the coming of the Lord." James 5:7, 8. "Pray and wait." Things will get worse and worse, until "violence fills the earth," as in the days of Noah. **But God will deliver you, if you will trust Him, and do not put forth your hand with "violent men."**

Read Proverbs 1:10-15, where you have a vivid picture of all the "share the wealth" movements. **Let the Lord's people avoid them as the very plague they are. If, instead of "godliness with contentment," earthliness and covetousness seize your heart, you are really setting in on Lenin's and Stalin's path, which ends in Hades, and makes a land a bloody horror meanwhile.**

That "restlessness" of today is really that deep lawlessness which God calls sin. "SIN IS LAWLESSNESS." Satan and his man of sin is also called "THE LAWLESS ONE" in 2 Thessalonians 2:7, 8. And there we are told that the "mystery of lawlessness" is already working, but that there is one that restraineth, God the Holy Spirit, until we are all taken out of the way, and then shall be revealed the Lawless One. That is the title for the coming anti-Christ in the Great Tribulation.

Now since the believer in the Lord Jesus Christ knows that lawlessness and violence, lust and covetousness are characteristic of the last days, and knows from Daniel's prophetic interpretation of the great image Nebuchadnezzar saw, that we must be nearing the time of the end of the Age. How peculiarly needful that we all lay to heart these instructions concerning magistrates.

MAGISTRATES ARE "PUT IN PLACE, SET UP, OR ORDAINED BY GOD." Never mind if they are bad ones. The Word still stands. "Ordained" is TASSO in the Greek. It is in the present tense, which means continuous. "There is no power but of God." Power is the word EXOUSIA, which is "authority" in the Greek.

Remember our Lord, our Saviour, suffered under Pontius Pilate, one of the worst Roman governors Judea ever had. And Paul suffered under Nero, the worst Roman emperor. **And neither our Lord nor His apostle denied or reviled the "authority."**

Notice in our passage here in Romans that the "AUTHORITY IS CALLED A SERVANT." The Greek word is DIAKONOS, the word used sometimes for deacons. "A SERVANT OF GOD TO US FOR GOOD," verse 4. And those exercising authority ARE CALLED MINISTERS OF GOD FOR GOOD. The Greek word for ministers is LEITOURGOI, which is the word used for priests in the Old Testament in the tabernacle and the temple later on, which means a Divine function, **a service for the Lord.**

This minister in this passage is set up by God as "AN AVENGER FOR WRATH TO HIM THAT DOETH EVIL." Verse 4 and again in verse 6. "Against the evil worker, the ruler is an avenger for wrath." Notice "NOT BEARING THE SWORD IN VAIN," like some lodge officer, or in a parade, but bearing the word given to him by the covenant of Genesis 9. A sword with necessarily the death penalty wrapped up in it, to be exercised when necessary. Why? "WHOSO SHEDDETH MAN'S BLOOD, BY MAN SHALL HIS BLOOD BE SHED." God said to Noah, when He lodged governmental authority in human hands, for the support of this governmental work, we pay "tribute." "THEY ARE GOD'S MINISTERING OFFICERS, ATTENDING CONTINU-

ALLY UPON THESE VERY THINGS," verse 6.

So we have in this passage to be considered the governmental authority as an abstract thing established by God, and then the personal ruler's exercising his rights and duties under the authority. God established human government under the principle of Divine Institution number four, in national entities, and appoints certain men to administer it. **He puts men in places of authority and He removes them also.**

Verse 2, "Therefore he that sets himself against the authority, withstandeth the ordinance of God, and those, thus, withstanding, shall receive to themselves judgment."

"Resisteth" is the Greek word ANTI-TASSO, which is to arrange in battle against. It's in the middle voice. The second time we see "resist" in this verse it is ANTIHESTEMI, and it is in the perfect tense, which means it is permanent.

It is only in spiritual matters, "things that are God's" that of "obeying God rather than men" is our path. The things pertaining to God are those that concern our obedience to our profession of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. That is all matters of our Christian way of life, and Caesar has no right to touch our conscience when it comes to serving the Lord. But we are never ever lawless. If I yield to Caesar then I am a traitor to the Lord and to the Truth.

We should emulate all martyrs here, and even those who are suffering for the Truth under Caesar's wickedness in our own day. For instance, under pagan Hitlerism in Germany, or atheistic Communism in Russia, where often the most noble witnesses of Christ are found.

There are Christian martyrs in our day in Russia and in China. **But as to our persons and our property and our lives, that is, as regards earthly things, we are subject to the power that God has put in place or ordained, and should not "withstand them."**

Those who do so withstand, will bring on themselves not only guilt, but Divine Discipline. This is from the word "judgment," which is KRIMA in the Greek. It is a judicial sentence from God through the magistrate.

The believer in the Lord Jesus Christ, above all men, should be in quiet subjection to constituted authority. And as Timothy said, “Pray for those in authority so that you can live a peaceable life here on this Earth.”

Verse 3, “For rulers are not a terror to the good work, but to the evil. And wouldest thou have no fear of the authority? Keep practicing that which is good, and thou shalt have praise from the same.”

This is the general rule. Of course, Satan will stir up special trouble against those who are proclaiming the Gospel, **which he desperately hates**, as he stirred up unjust accusation and persecution against the apostles, and the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. Also, there is another principle found in 1 Peter 3:17, “that some will suffer for well doing.”

This whole passage, however, regards the general path of the believer with reference to Divinely constituted authorities, rather than the peculiar enmity of Satan and the world toward the message of the Gospel. **Every Christian, in his life, should be praiseworthy in the eyes of rulers, and, if consistent, he generally is so.**

The Greek for “good work” is AGATHOS ERGON. “Evil” is KAKOS and “fear” is PHOBOS.

“Authorities in power” is an expression that embraces every form of governing power, monarchical, aristocratic, or republic. The Word of God insists not merely on the Divine right of kings, but “there is no authority except from God.” Nor is there an excuse on this plea for change. Yet if a revolution should overthrow one form and set up another, the Christian’s duty is plain, “Those that exist are ordained by God.”

His interests are everywhere, are heavenly, are in Christ, his responsibility is to acknowledge what is in power as a fact, trusting God as to the consequences, and in no case behaving as a partisan. Never is he warranted in setting himself up against the authority as such. **The Word of God never condones revolution.** In those cases where Christians have been able to withdraw from intolerable situations, this rule is in no wise broken. The Huguenots fled from France to

England, and the Puritans from England to America, for freedom of conscience, much as the Lord instructed, “If they persecute you in one city, flee to another.” **Escape is sometimes possible, and is not rebellious.**

Verse 4, “For it, the authority, is a servant of God, to thee for good, but if thou do that which is evil, be afraid, for not in vain does it bear the sword.”

“To bear” is literally to bear constantly, illustrated in the provincial Roman magistrates’ habitual wearing of the sword. It was also borne before them, in public processions, as a symbol of their right to punish by death. **That is in accordance with God’s covenant with Noah, after the flood, which covenant remains in force,** “Whoso sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed.” Those who decry “capital punishment” are themselves withstanding the Word of God as to the very foundation of human government. **They are negative to God’s Word and they are traitors to our country... evil.**

“For a minister of God it is, an avenger for wrath to him that doeth evil.” There are people in every community **who live in constant terror of government, because of their evil doing.** Let no Christian be in such a state! You say, would the magistrate have a right to deal with a real Christian if he became an evil doer? **MOST CERTAINLY, and would be bound to do so.** PETER SAYS, “LET NONE OF YOU SUFFER AS A MURDERER, OR AS AN EVIL DOER, OR AS A MEDDLER IN OTHER MAN’S MATTERS.”

Showing us that Christians are such, and therefore they have no protection from human law. But Peter’s exhortation has not kept some true Christians out of these things insomuch indeed, that God’s established government on Earth would not, or should not, permit them to go unpunished here, if murder or crime has been done, although the blood of Christ was their entrance into heaven. **You get the chair as a Christian murderer and go right to be with the Lord. From the electric chair to the right hand of God.**

The word “sword” is interesting because there are many words for sword in the New Testament, because there were many differ-

ent kinds of swords in the ancient world. The word used here is MACHARIA, which was the super weapon of the ancient world. It was the one weapon that the Romans used to conquer the world. It was a two-edged sword which was light and short and effective. And it overcame the ancient world, and especially those who used that broad two-handed thracian sword and were constantly off balance. But the Romans conquered the world with their MACHARIA, and God the Holy Spirit selected that specific word.

Now in the Bible the Word of God is called the MACHARIA, for that purpose, where it says, "The Word of God is alive and powerful; sharper than any two-edged sword." **which means it is the eternal super weapon of the world. It works. It cuts. It penetrates even into dividing the soul from the spirit. That is how sharp the Word of God is.**

Now when the Lord asked Peter if he had a sword, Peter said no. **And the Lord told him to get one**, and Peter came back with two. The Lord said that is enough Peter. And you remember how that Peter used that sword to cut off the high priest's ear, which the Lord restored. That was the self-same sword. **Peter had the right to bear arms, AND SO DO WE. THAT IS IN OUR CONSTITUTION.**

Verse 5, "Wherefore ye must needs be in subjection, not only because of the wrath, but also for conscience sake."

Believers are to be in subjection, not only to avoid earthly governmental dealing, but because of a loving conscience toward the Lord, knowing that in being subject, they are doing the will of God, following the Word of God, applying the Word of God to their experience as well as avoiding trouble.

Now religion is different than Christianity and religion says that we are not to be in subjection to any government, and consequently we have religious people, not Christians, who are conscientious objectors and who will not salute the flag of the United States of America, which has been fought for and died for. Religion rejects this principle of establishment. But the Christian is exhorted not to be relig-

ious and be under subjection to the authority in our city, in our state, and in our country. Patriotism. There is Biblical patriotism and patriotism is a Divine Desire.

The constituted authorities include all the civil officers, state, country, and municipal, together with the police, militia, and military forces. There are many indeed in these foolish days who call themselves pacifists, and decry the work and office of the soldier. But Biblically speaking here they are "unconscientious objectors," and we support and honor them in our country. A classic illustration is Cashius Clay, Mohammed Ali—the fighter, conscientious objector, religious Muslim, not Christian.

Yet in the same breath they would telephone for the police if they found someone breaking into their homes and stealing their trophies. Police protect towns and cities. State constables and militia, under the hand of the governor, protect life, liberty and order in the state, and a national army does likewise for the nation. Universal military training is the order of the day, and Biblical.

It is God who has allowed the formation and growth of nations, and given them as Scripture says, "The bounds of their habitations," and the "authorities" who govern them do so by Divine command.

"They bear the sword," **whether for order within the nation, or for defense toward an outward enemy. Therefore it is folly to call the work of a soldier evil, and to confuse personal murder with the public execution of justice.** WHEN SOLDIERS ON SERVICE, literally in Luke 3:14, asked John the Baptist, "And we, what must we do?" His answer was NOT "resign your commission, or leave the army, or desert or run to Canada." On the contrary he recognized their word as honorable, saying to them only, "Extort from no man by violence, neither accuse anyone wrongfully, and be content with your wages." Generally with soldiers, very small.

Cornelius the Centurion, of Acts 10, "a devout man," one that feared God, with all his house, and gave much alms to the people, prayed to God always, heard the Gospel

at Peter's mouth and believed it, and was filled with the Holy Spirit, and he kept right on being a soldier, a minister of God's service along the line of government.

Such men as General Havelock, General "Chinese" Gordon of the British army, General O. O. Howard, and General "Stonewall" Jackson, and General Robert E. Lee of Civil War fame, and General Allenby, in the World War, have performed nobly and ably their soldier's duty, the while maintaining a Christian walk with God.

Pacifists and internationalists are sometimes ignorantly, deadly enemies of God's order. IT IS A COWARDLY AND A DECADENT GENERATION THAT IS WILLING TO ENJOY A HERITAGE PURCHASED AT THE COST OF BLOOD AND TEARS, AND THEN WITH AN IGNORANT OR BASELY PERVERTED CONSCIENCE, SAY, "I DO NOT BELIEVE IN WAR," OR "I DO NOT BELIEVE IN FIGHTING." A generation ignorant, first, of the very Scriptures we are now studying, which tell us that magistrates, bearing no vain swords, and ministers of God; ignorant, second, of the lessons of history.

"Ill fares the land, to hastening ills I prey."
"Where wealth accumulates and men decay."

Effeminacy, dilettanteism, and loss of patriotism have always gone together. The hordes of Barbarians from the north came down on a Rome enfeebled by luxury and hideous sins, and we know the result. Today America is filling up with the same sort of moral weaklings. **WE ABHOR WAR, BUT WAR WILL BE. Christ said so, till He comes to this Earth again.**

So we say to pacifists "Study the Word of God and study history, and be awakened from a fool's dream of unrealities." To those "conscientiously objecting" to bearing arms, we say, "Study God's Word here in Romans 13." The magistrates, the rulers, and ministers of God, "Bearing not the sword in vain."

Pacifist principles are doomed to defeat, for they are anti-biblical.

You ask me, would you fight? If called to military service by the government, I would say, "My function is teaching the Word of God, and I would gladly go into battle, and

be placed in a position of danger, and minister the Word, even to an active enemy, or to a prisoner, from the enemy's ranks, with the same earnestness and as truthful as I am doing it now in my own country." And if I was captured I would not divulge my country's secrets to the enemy. This would be rebuked by God Himself. **Because God Himself establishes nations, and gave them to the duty of protecting their citizens and their borders.**

Strange "dupes" are American "pacifists" and "internationalists." Christians who desire to know the conditions of the Age, and how rapidly "the iniquity of the end" is rushing toward us, should read pages 68-140 of A.C. Gaebelain's "*Conflict of the Ages*." While we are not to be perplexed by the terrible things happening in the world, for the Lord said, "When ye hear of wars and rumor of wars see that ye be not troubled, for all these things must come to pass."

Nevertheless, we should not be as the leaders of Israel, blind to the days in which they lived. All these new forms of power, Communism, Fascism, Nazism, and also the subtle powers of evil workings in America are preparing the way for the Anti-Christ, the Lawless One.

And so we read the Scriptures, and re-read them. THEY ALONE ENLIGHTEN, REPROVE, CORRECT, AND INSTRUCT.

Verse 6, "For this cause ye pay tribute also, for they are ministers of God, attending continually upon this very matter."

Here the Scripture uses the word from which we get "liturgy," LEITOURGOI, in describing these "authorities." God uses the same word in Hebrews 1:14 regarding angels, calling them "ministering spirits," and also concerning the "ministering" of Old Testament priests. Hebrews 10:11.

In these days of restlessness toward restraint, and flouting of authority, we need to meditate much on the fact that the constituted authorities are "liturgists of God," not indeed at all in spiritual things, but none the less God's own ministers in governmental things. It is on this account that those governed pay tribute, for

these ministers of government must be supported.

Verse 7, "Render to all their dues, tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honor to whom honor."

Here the word "tribute" is taxes. And that is listed first. How great the temptation to avoid rendering this that is due. Next, "custom," which is on goods. "Tribute" is PHOROS, **a general tax paid by subjects to a ruling nation.** Luke 20:22, "Is it lawful for us to give tribute unto Caesar, or no?"

"Custom" is TELOS, which is a tax on us, or duty on our goods, by our own nation. And this is where people loathe to have the customs officer go through our effects. But we must remember here in context, that **customs are dues by God's appointment.**

Now, tithing in the Old Testament was TAXATION and everyone paid the same percentage, not like in our country with the graduated income tax. But in the Old Testament tithing was 10% of your income into the temple treasury, which was the storehouse under the Age of Israel. There is no such thing today. There is no storehouse or treasury, there is no temple. Israel is set aside.

In the Church Age, the believer's body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, and giving according to 2 Corinthians 8, 9, is still GRACE giving, free will offerings like in the Old Testament. And we are to give as the "Lord prospers us," and that is not **grudgingly or of necessity because God loves a cheerful giver. There is much in giving today that is not giving and is not gracious but strictly gimmick giving.** The Scripture says, "As you purpose in your own mind," that is how you give.

"Fear to whom fear." "Fear" here does not mean terror, but actually that which removes terror, a conscience regard for and awe of men in whose hands God has placed governmental authority, whether police, magistrates, judges, governors, presidents, or kings. **Fear is respect, reverence, which we are commanded to give to the Lord Jesus Christ.** Fear of the Lord, which is occupation with Christ. And because constituted

authority is of Divine origin, we give them the same respect, as from the Lord, for our benefit.

This ideal of the apostle Paul neither confounds Church and state, nor places them in antagonism, but properly co-ordinates them in Christian practice and ethics. **Romanism and religion subordinate state to Church.** Erastianism, as today Fascism and Communism, also confound them, but with more of an acknowledged theocratic principle.

We may add that the Reformation did not fully escape, in this respect, from Romanism and Judaism. Calvin established a theocratic state at Geneva, holding fast in the civil powers in religious things, which led to the burning of Servetus. While Zwingli, in Switzerland, took the sword and perished by it.

We may further add that in our own day the perpetual meddling with governmental affairs carried on at various government centers by the church lobbies, reveals that ignorance of the Church's heavenly calling, and that vain hope to mend this present world, which so darkens the counsels of government itself. And increases daily that deep seated resentment by the powers that be against those who claim spiritual directive authority over government. **The upshot has always been and will always be disastrous, for the state finally rises up and wades to independence of religious interference through rivers of blood.**

"Honor to whom honor." Honor is our attitude of reverence for persons of those who have authority over us, and also toward those who stand in any place of earthly dignity. As Peter says so beautifully, "Honor all men, for they are made in the image of God. Love the brotherhood of believers. Fear God, which whom you have constantly to do. Honor the king, whom you may never see, but whom you hold in due regard in your heart," 1 Peter 2:17.

Not only law officers, but those men to whom God has committed wealth, or outstanding ability, or who have risen honorably among their fellows, should receive the honor due them. **Let the believer in the Lord Jesus Christ be the first to give "honor to**

whom honor is due. Leave it to those who are base, to be despising others.

CONCERNING CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

1. God has His own reasons for human hands to execute Cain, the first murderer. Iniquity increased and God brought the flood.

2. After the flood, God announced a complete change of Earth's governmental affairs. In the words of Genesis 9:5, 6, "Surely your blood, the blood of your lives, will I require, at the hand of every beast will I require it. And at the hand of every man, even at the hand of every man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed, for in the image of God made He man." God here puts the sword at the magistrate into man's hand as not before. Furthermore, the "everlasting covenant" with Noah, of which the above words quoted were a part, God said would last, "while the Earth remaineth." Genesis 8:20-9:7.

3. **Under the Law of Moses, 1000 years later, God reaffirmed the governmental duty of punishing murderers with death.** "Ye shall take no ransom for the life of a murderer that is guilty of death. For blood, it polluteth the land, and no expiation can be made for the land for the blood that is shed therein, but by the blood of him that shed it." Numbers 35:31, 33.

4. Note that in the above quotation the crime of murder is said by God so TO POLLUTE THE LAND, THAT THERE CAN BE "NO EXPIATION MADE FOR A LAND," for this crime, save by the execution of the murderer. What murderer goes unpunished then our land is polluted and will not be expiated. Now this is much more serious pollution than that of the so-called "sweet smell of industry" now silenced by the government.

5. **It is said that upwards of 200,000 known man killers are alive in America.** Stated in 1976, TO REALIZE JUDGE KAVANAGH OF CHICAGO, "THE PREVALENCY OF THIS INVISIBLE CLASS, MURDERERS, AT LARGE IN THE UNITED STATES, IT IS ONLY NECESSARY TO CONSIDER THAT THEY ARE MORE THAN WE HAVE OF CLERGYMEN OF ALL DE-

NOMINATIONS, OR MALE TEACHERS IN OUR SCHOOLS, OR ALL LAWYERS, JUDGES, AND MAGISTRATES, PUT TOGETHER, AND THREE TIMES THE NUMBER OF OUR EDITORS, REPORTERS, AND WRITERS, AND 52,000 MORE UNCONFINED KILLERS THAN WE HAVE POLICEMEN."

Only by stern carrying out of the command of God regarding the murderer can this crime be checked. In England, where more than 90% of murderers are executed after a fair but speedy trial, even the police do not carry revolvers except by special license.

6. **To claim that is "not Christian" to execute murderers is to deny directly Paul's plain word here in Romans 13** that the magistrate "beareth not the sword in vain." Being a "minister of wrath to him that doeth evil." And one of whom evil-doers are commanded to be afraid.

7. It is therefore an appalling disservice to home, state and nation to call that "murder," which God has commanded to be done, the execution of shedders of human blood. **It is a libel on Christianity to claim that the current anti-capital punishment cry is Christian.** IT IS NOT CHRISTIAN, BUT RELIGIOUS. There is a difference. **And it is not Christian but religious rebellion against God.**

"We suffer" said the thief on the cross beside the Lord Jesus Christ, "the due reward of our deeds." And then he said, "But not this Man," Christ. He is innocent. And then that thief on the cross said, "Lord remember me." And the Lord said to the one under the penalty of capital punishment, Roman style crucifixion, "Today thou shalt be with Me in Paradise." That day he lost his head, as it were, but he gained his soul. **He lost his physical life, but he received eternal life.**

"Today thou shalt be with Me in Paradise" shows us anew the great truth that government in this world, and salvation in the next, are two absolutely different things. Only those who are ignorant confound them. "Render unto Caesar the things of Caesar, and unto God the things of God."

Now it is interesting that while the Lord was on this Earth two great systems of law met, the Jewish system of law and the Roman system of law. And just as Jesus Christ came in the fullness of time, the right time, under maximum government of law, there were two modes of capital punishment in existence at that time. **The Lord recognized both of them and never ever tried to abolish capital punishment, but actually endorsed it on the cross.** The Jewish method of execution was stoning. The first martyr was stoned to death, capital punishment, and his name was Stephen. And Paul, the Jew of Jews, was watching and more than likely had a hand in it.

And then the Roman method of execution was crucifixion. The Lord carried the cross and was executed as a criminal on the cross, once again recognizing the true Biblical meaning of capital punishment. When a woman was supposedly taken in adultery and the religious people brought her to the Lord Jesus Christ, He said, "Ye who are without sin pick up the first stone." That was capital punishment. And Jesus Christ used a figure of speech with capital punishment as its background and He said, "Pick up your cross and follow Me."

Christ lived on the principle of capital punishment. He endorsed it and was crucified under that principle. But He was sinless and He said, "Father, they know not what they do."

But He died, went to the cross and died for your sins, and you are free to accept Him as your personal Saviour and have eternal life.

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved."

Every time you see someone wearing a cross, it says, "I believe in capital punishment." And the fact that **here was a sign that Jesus Christ is the Messiah of Israel because the Messiah would be put to death on a cross, not Jewish style, stoning like Stephen, but Roman style, like Christ.**

Years ago Isaiah foretold this great message of salvation under the principle of Roman style capital punishment.

I believe in capital punishment because I believe that Jesus Christ died for my sins on the cross and I have eternal life simply by accepting Him as my personal Saviour.

"He beareth not the sword in vain."

Buddy Dano, Pastor
Anderson Bible Church
Anderson, Indiana 46012