

SLIDELL CHURCH OF CHRIST

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August 23, 2015

Preacher's Point

By Dan Schillinger



Does the Bible Authorize Capital Punishment?

The short answer is, "Yes, for offenses that involve premeditated murder." The death penalty was instituted by God himself in his covenant with Noah and his family after the worldwide flood, Genesis 9:6, "**Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed, for God made man in his own image.**" Here the LORD speaks of a murderer, one who knowingly and violently takes the life of another person, authorizing capital punishment for any such offender: "**by man shall his blood be shed.**" The reason God gives for this is grounded in the value and sacredness of human life: "**for God made man in his own image.**" Contrary to the misconception of some, nothing that comes later in the Bible ever repeals this or any other provisions (there are only a few) of God's covenant with Noah. Therefore they are still in force today, even under our new covenant of Christ.

There is also explicit authority for capital punishment in the New Testament Scriptures. The clearest passage that is free of any possible objections is found in the words of apostle Paul in Acts 25:11, "**If then I am a wrongdoer and have committed anything for which I deserve to die, I do not seek to escape death.**" Paul knew that there were certain crimes that were worthy of death, and he knew that those guilty of such crimes must be executed. His words here show us that he recognized the right of the Roman authorities to put him to death if he were guilty of any such crime. Of course,

Today's Sermon

a.m. "When is Prophecy Fulfilled?"

Revelation 1:19; 4:1;
Ezekiel 12:25-28

p.m. *Opportunity for discussion and reflection on the morning message*

Paul was in fact innocent, yet tradition tells us that he was eventually unjustly executed under the emperor Nero for preaching the Good News of Jesus.

If capital punishment is practiced, are there not times when an innocent person is pronounced guilty and put to death? Yes, sadly this is true. Our judicial system is far from perfect and there are times when the guilty are unpunished and the innocent condemned. Even without the death penalty, it is true that sometimes the innocent are imprisoned. We must remember that there is in heaven a true and righteous Judge who sees all and who knows all and who someday will make right all that is wrong and will straighten out all that is crooked.

The greatest example of an innocent one being put to death is that of the Lord Jesus himself: **He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth.** (1 Peter 2:22). The only sinless man who ever lived was condemned to death by crucifixion! We are the guilty ones who deserved the death penalty (Romans 6:23), but Jesus paid it all! He died so that we might live (John 5:24).

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Welcome Visitors

We are pleased to have the opportunity to welcome you to our service. We think you will find our congregation family to be one that enthusiastically embraces newcomers and warmly welcomes them into our fellowship. We hope you feel right at home as you join us in worship, praise and thanksgiving.

“REMEMBER IN PRAYER

&

ENCOURAGE”



With Visits, Calls, & Cards

Jesse Fowler - healing from a recent heart attack and subsequent surgical stent implantation.

Dwight Jones - has surgery scheduled at the end of this month to remove his prostate, which is displaying some malignancy.

Angel Mangus (of Houston, TX, niece of Carl Mangus) - afflicted with inoperable stage 4 brain cancer.

Charles Espadron (Claudia's brother, in Atlanta) - diagnosed with cancer in one lung. Because of his weak heart, doctors see no treatment options.

The bereaved family of the late Sean Acer (who was a friend of Kathy Pederson's family) - he suddenly died of a brain aneurism in his Slidell home Thursday at age 38, leaving behind a wife and two children.

Shirley Ervin - healing at home from recent neck surgery.

Joshua Hankins (Cheri's grandson, in Arkansas) - healing from an infection and burst eardrum.

Stephanie Smith (sister of Kevin Cox) - needs surgery for her right shoulder, but a calcium deficiency won't permit this now.

Jeff Vaccaro - for the healing a recent sun-burned blisters on both legs.

Elery Martin (friend of the Caseys, near Montgomery, AL) - five year old girl experiencing seizures, awaiting recent tests results.

Zach Steele - for success and healing through the process of receiving his long-awaited bone marrow transplant.

Cecilia McDonald (Kate's mom, in Pleasanton, Texas) - thanksgiving that her physical condition has improved well enough for her to attend church. Pray that her health continues to improve while she receives in-home care.

Rosa Nuñez (good friend of the Vargas family) - having serious painful health problems.

Jessica Fowler (Jesse and Shirley's granddaughter, a resident of Lockport, LA) - has some vexing problems besetting her.

Terri Jones - pray that she'll come to feel better through her negative phases in her Epstein-Barr disorder.

Dale Epperley - awaiting a new prosthesis to that will relieve the pain and inflammation in his leg.

Gerald Molina - still seeing doctors for spinal stenosis.

Jace Roig (newborn son of Colton Roig) - is home and gaining weight. But he is still afflicted with an arachnoid cyst in his brain, and cardiac openings that have not yet healed.

Sharon Honoré (sister of Anita, and a member at the Crowder Blvd. church) - has advanced breast cancer.

Maria Aurelia Alsaro (Marisol's mother, in Costa Rica) - afflicted with kidney problems.

Clara Leonard - overall pain continues to subside somewhat, though her ankle bothers her now.

Mildred Tymkiw - trying to schedule outpatient heart-valve surgery soon, at Ochsner Hospital in Metairie.

Bobby Leonard - awaiting test results from his recent appointment with a kidney specialist.

Micah Casey - healing from a finger cut.

Chad Michael - a recent visitor who is undergoing hardships.

Pray for all who are travelling.

Pray for Latino evangelism in our area.

Pray for our elders: Courtney Cheri, Dwight Jones and Gerald Molina.

Pray for President Obama and all our elected officials.

Pray for our men and women in our armed forces, both here and abroad!

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The Epistles: Applying Them Today

Adapted from Fee & Stuart, *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth* (3rd edition)

We have been discussing the subject of how to apply the New Testament epistles to our lives today. The area of application of any sort of literature to our lives today is called *hermeneutics*. What is the hermeneutics of the New Testament epistles, that is, what do these texts mean to us?

The Problem of Particulars that Are Not comparable

The problem here has to do with two kinds of texts in the Epistles:

- 1) Those that speak to First Century issues that for the most part are without any Twenty-First Century counterparts, and
- 2) Those texts that speak to problems that could *possibly* happen also in Twenty-First Century but are highly unlikely to do so.

What does one do with such texts, and how do they address us? Or do they?

An example of the first kind of text is to be found in 1 Corinthians 8-10, where Paul speaks to three kinds of issues:

- (1) Christians who are arguing for the privilege of

- continuing to join their pagan neighbors at their feasts in the idol temples (see 8:10; 10:14-22),
- (2) The Corinthians' calling into question Paul's apostolic authority (see 9:1-23),
- (3) Food sacrificed to idols that was sold in the open market (10:23-11:1).

Sound exegesis of these passages indicates that Paul answers these problems as follows:

- (1) They are absolutely forbidden to attend the idol feasts because of the stumbling-block principle (8:7-13), because such eating is incompatible with life in Christ as it is experienced at his table (10:16, 17), and because it means to participate in the demonic (10:19-22).
- (2) Paul defends his right to financial support as an apostle, even though he has given it up; he also defends his actions (9:19-23) in matters of indifference.
- (3) Idol food sold in the marketplace may be purchased and eaten; and it may also be freely eaten in someone else's home. In the latter context it may also be refused if it might create a problem for someone else. One may eat anything to the glory of God; but one should not do something that leads a fellow Christian to sin.

Our problem is that this kind of idolatry is virtually unknown in Western cultures, so that problems (1) and (3) simply do not exist. Moreover, we no longer have apostles who have actually encountered the Risen Lord (9:1; cf. 15:8) and who have founded and have authority over new churches (9:1, 2; cf. 2 Corinthians 10:16).

The second kind of text may be illustrated by the incestuous man in 1 Corinthians 5:1-11, or by people getting drunk at a meal in conjunction with the Lord's Table (1 Corinthians 11:17-22), or by people wanting to force circumcision on noncircumcised Christians (Galatians 5:2). These things could happen but are *highly improbable* in our culture.

The question is, how do the answers to these non-Twenty-First Century problems speak to Twenty-First Century Christians? Proper hermeneutics here must take two steps.

First, we must do our exegesis with particular care so that we hear what God's word to them really

was. In most such cases a clear *principle* has been articulated, which usually will transcend the historical particularity to which it was being applied. Second, and here is the important point, “principle” does not now become timeless to be applied at random or whim to any and every kind of situation. It must be applied to genuinely comparable situations.

To illustrate both of these points: First, Paul forbids participation in the temple meals on the basis of the stumbling-block principle. But note that this does not refer to something that *merely offends* another Christian. The stumbling-block principle refers to something one Christian feels he can do in good conscience, and which, by his action or persuasion, he induces another Christian to do, who

cannot do so in good conscience, so that the second Christian thereby sins. After all, the brother or sister is “*destroyed*” by emulating another’s action; he or she is *not* merely offended by it. The principle would seem to apply, therefore, only to truly comparable situations.

Second, Paul absolutely forbids participation in the temple meals because it means to participate in the demonic. Christians have often been confused as to what constitutes demonic activity. Nonetheless this seems to be a normative prohibition for Christians against all forms of spiritism, witchcraft, astrology, etc.

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Our Leaders!

Elders

Dwight Jones
Courtney Cheri
Gerald Molina

Preacher

Dan Schillinger

Deacons

Jesse Fowler
James Richardson
Hector Urbina

Our Services

Sunday Morning Bible Class 9:30 a.m.
Sunday Morning Worship 10:30 a.m.

Sunday Evening Worship 5:00 p.m.

Wednesday Evening Bible Class 7:00 p.m.

Stitches of Love Tuesday 9:30 a.m.