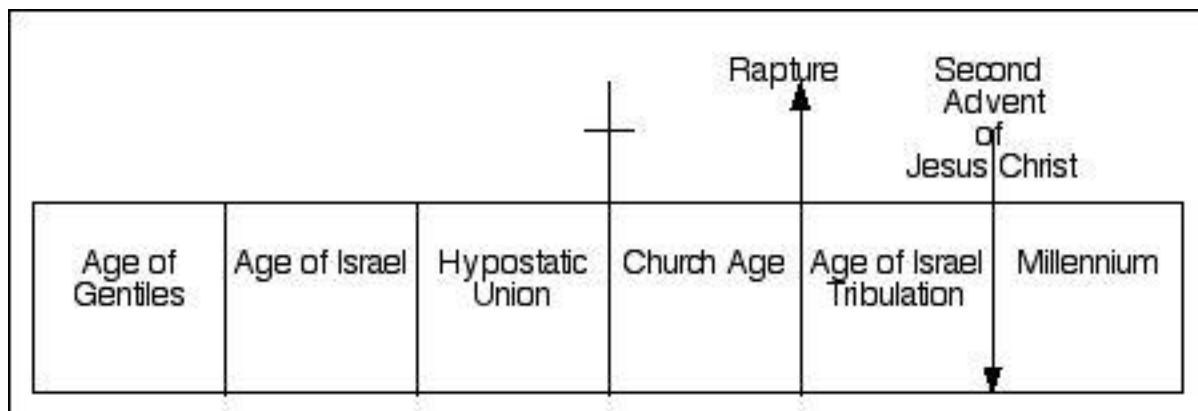


Doctrine of Capital Punishment

Preface:

1. The execution of Karla Faye Tucker got us all to thinking.
2. Is capital punishment proper? or do we need to rethink our position.
3. What does the Bible say cried many from Maine to Waco and how can we justify killing by killing? Do two wrongs make a right?
4. "The New Testament does not teach capital punishment" came the over simplistic answer from many, "We gotta forgive like Christ forgave."
5. Let's take a look at the dispensation chart and see if we can make heads or tails of this dilemma. As you have heard me say so often "without taking into account the dispensation to which the Scripture speaks, the Bible is a "hodge podge" of contradictions."



5.1 In AGE OF THE GENTILES God established capital punishment for the protection of mankind.

Gen 4:9 And the LORD said unto Cain, Where is Abel thy brother? And he said, I know not: Am I my brother's keeper?

Gen 4:10 And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground.

Gen 4:11 And now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother's blood from thy hand;

Gen 4:12 When thou tillest the ground, it shall not henceforth yield unto thee her strength; a fugitive and a vagabond shalt thou be in the earth.

Gen 4:13 And Cain said unto the LORD, My punishment is greater than I can bear.

Gen 4:14 **Behold, thou hast driven me out this day from the face of the earth; and from thy face shall I be hid; and I shall be a fugitive and a vagabond in**

the earth; and it shall come to pass, that every one that findeth me shall slay me.

Gen 4:15 And the LORD said unto him, **Therefore whosoever slayeth Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold.** And the LORD set a mark upon Cain, lest any finding him should kill him.

Gen 9:2 And the fear of you and the dread of you shall be upon every beast of the earth, and upon every fowl of the air, upon all that moveth upon the earth, and upon all the fishes of the sea; into your hand are they delivered.

Gen 9:3 Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things.

Gen 9:4 But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall ye not eat.

Gen 9:5 And surely your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man; at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man.

Gen 9:6 **Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man.**

5.2 In the AGE OF ISRAEL capital punishment was established as a proper protocol to protect life and private property - an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a life for a life. There were some fourteen crimes described in the Mosaic Law for which capital punishment was appropriate. We will list and explain these later.

Num 35:31 "Do not accept a ransom for the life of a murderer, who deserves to die. He must surely be put to death."

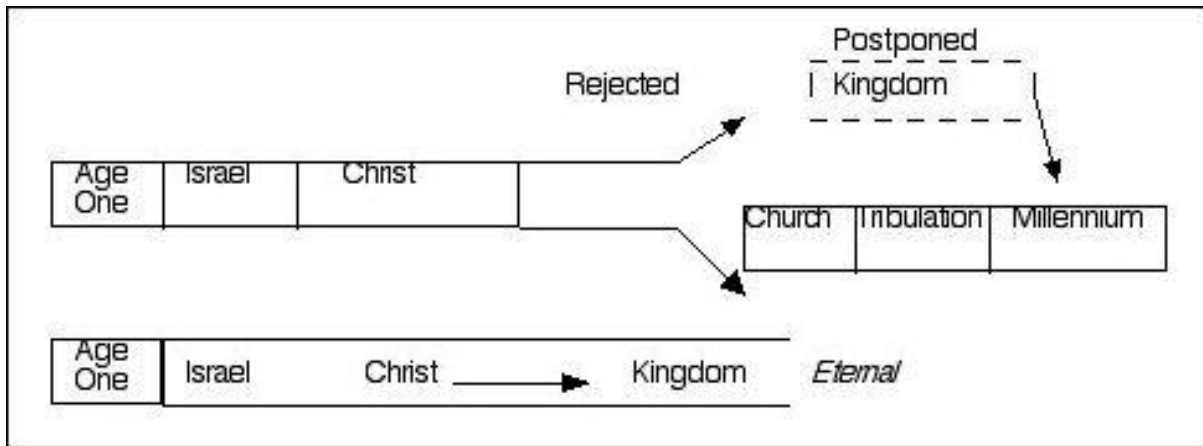
5.3 In the AGE OF THE HYPOSTATIC UNION, where Christ offered His Kingdom to Israel, there was no need of capital punishment for had Israel accepted Christ's offering the New Covenant would have made unnecessary any need for capital punishment. Jer 31:31-34

Jer 31:31 "The time is coming," declares the LORD, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah.

Jer 31:32 It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers when I took them by the hand to lead them out of Egypt, because they broke my covenant, though I was a husband to them," declares the LORD.

Jer 31:33 "This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time," declares the LORD. "I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God, and they will be my people.

Jer 31:34 No longer will a man teach his neighbor, or a man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' because they will all know me, from the least of them to the greatest," declares the LORD. "For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more."



5.3.1 Clearly the many exhortations found in such passages as Mat 5:38-39 and verse 44 assumed Israel's acceptance of Christ's Kingdom offering and the implementation of the New Covenant. The many exhortations found in Christ's platform were designed to be a product of the New Covenant.

Mat 5:38 Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth:
 Mat 5:39 But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.

Mat 5:44 But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;

5.4 In the CHURCH AGE Paul established the need for Governments to use the sword in order to maintain law and order. Church Age Scriptures teach - don't mess with the authorities for they can use the sword quite well. Therefore we must be law abiding citizens!

Rom 13:1 Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.

Rom 13:2 Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.

Rom 13:3 For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same:

Rom 13:4 For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.

Rom 13:5 Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.

5.4.1 There is clearly a place for law and order in the Church Age because there are criminals living in our age. Notice what Paul writes in 1Ti 1:8-10 about the punishment of criminals.

1Ti 1:8 We know that the law is good if one uses it properly.

1Ti 1:9 We also know that law is made not for the righteous but for lawbreakers and rebels, the ungodly and sinful, the unholy and irreligious; for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers,

1Ti 1:10 for adulterers and perverts, for slave traders and liars and perjurers--and for whatever else is contrary to the sound doctrine;

5.5 Since the TRIBULATION is an extension of the Age of Israel proper, the protocol for Israel and the nations will remain the same, not only for capital punishment but for any number of other matters.

5.6 In THE MILLENNIUM the Scriptures teach - the person who attempts to mess up perfect environment dies; it is the Lord Jesus Who speaks their death.

Isa 11:4 but with righteousness he will judge the needy, with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth. He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth; with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked.

6. So much for our preface and the analysis of capital punishment in the light of the dispensation chart. We are now ready for a categorical study of the subject: Capital Punishment

Introduction

1. Man has reacted emotionally to all causes of death as though it is inordinate and something to avoid. Life is worshiped. Death is feared; this fear is sponsored by Satan.

Heb 2:14 Since the children have flesh and blood, Christ too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death--that is, the devil--
Heb 2:15 and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.

2. Mankind overlooks the Omnipotence, Omniscience, Sovereignty, Righteousness and Justice of God in providing opportunity for salvation to everyone born on planet earth. We forget death is the ultimate healing!

Tit 2:11 For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men.

Joh 1:9 The true light, Christ, gives light to every man coming into the world.

3. Before death everyone has maximum opportunity to be saved.

Rom 1:18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;

Rom 1:19 Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath showed it unto them.

Rom 1:20 For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:

Rom 1:21 Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

4. Death is gain to a believer and life is service to Christ.

Phi 1:21 For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

5. The Word of God authorizes killing as in capital punishment, self-defense, war and the protection of private property.

5.1 There are those who contend the Bible prohibits killing in Exo 20:13.

Exo 20:13 Thou shalt not kill.

5.2 The Hebrew here is better "thou shall not commit homicide."

5.3 **Ratsach** in the Hebrew means "to murder or commit homicide" whereas **Qatal** means "to kill."

5.4 In Exo 20:13 we have **Ratsach** as opposed to **Qatal**.

6. The principles of the Mosaic Law are valid for implementation by national entities says the Epistle to Timothy. We have already made this point in the Preface but it deserves repeating.

1Ti 1:8 But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully;

1Ti 1:9 Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers,

1Ti 1:10 For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine;

6.1 All Scripture has been provided for our benefit but only when analyzed under the concepts of ICE, an acronym for Isagogics, Categories and Exegesis. The Scripture must also be interpreted in the light of its dispensation. This certainly includes the Old Testament.

Isagogics is a theological term for that which is taught before the exegesis and analysis of the Scripture; it could refer to such things as: the study of who wrote the book, why the book was written, in what dispensation it was written, to whom the book was written, when the book was written and any number of other things deemed important by the teacher.

Categories refer to how the entire Bible treats a given subject matter. In 2Pe 1:19-21 a categorical study is demanded. Verse 20 by way of an expanded translation says "know and understand no verse should be read and interpreted alone i.e. it must not be isolated from what the Scripture says elsewhere."

Exegesis refers to the analysis of each word as found in the best manuscript and will include parsing of verbs, declining of nouns and pronouns, determining the significance of syntax etc. The interpretation of metaphors and idioms is also part of proper exegesis.

Dispensation: The serious student of the Word must study Scripture in the light of the Dispensation or epoch of time to which the Scripture applies.

6.1.1 All Scripture is inspired but must be read in its proper dispensational setting and all subjects must be studied categorically and not eclectically.

Heb 1:1 God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets,
Heb 1:2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds;

The Doctrine of Capital Punishment

1. The penalties for crime in Israel were of great variety and related to every type of crime and violation of ecclesiastical regulation.

2. The capital offenses were: blasphemy, murder, sabbath breaking, witchcraft, bestiality, cheating the widow or orphan, adultery, unchaste status, incest, homosexuality, rape, kidnapping, striking a parent, and incorrigible teenagers.

3. Blasphemy:

Lev 24:14 "Take the blasphemer outside the camp. All those who heard him are to lay their hands on his head, and the entire assembly is to **stone him**.

Lev 24:15 Say to the Israelites: 'If anyone curses his God, he will be held responsible;

Lev 24:16 anyone who blasphemes the name of the LORD must be put to death ...

3.1 More will be said later of the method of stoning but let me comment about the violent, ensanguined and public nature of the capital punishment demanded by our Lord: the more violent the execution the greater the deterrence.

4. Murder:

Lev 24:17 "If anyone murders, he must be put to death.

5. Breaking the Sabbath:

Num 15:32 While the Israelites were in the desert, a man was found gathering wood on the Sabbath day.

Num 15:33 Those who found him gathering wood brought him to Moses and Aaron and the whole assembly,

Num 15:34 and they kept him in custody, because it was not clear what should be done to him.

Num 15:35 Then the LORD said to Moses, "The man must die. The whole assembly must stone him outside the camp."

6. Witchcraft:

Exo 22:18 "Do not allow a sorceress to live.

Lev 20:27 A man also or woman that hath a familiar spirit, or that is a wizard, shall surely be put to death: they shall stone them with stones: their blood shall be upon them.

7. Bestiality:

Exo 22:19 "Anyone who has sexual relations with an animal must be put to death.

8. Cheating a widow or an orphan:

Exo 22:22 "Do not take advantage of a widow or an orphan.

Exo 22:23 If you do and they cry out to me, I will certainly hear their cry.

Exo 22:24 My anger will be aroused, and I will kill you with the sword ...

9. Adultery, Unchaste Status or Incest:

Adultery

Lev 20:10 "If a man commits adultery with another man's wife--with the wife of his neighbor--both the adulterer and the adulteress must be put to death.

Unchaste Status

Deu 22:20 But if this thing be true, and the tokens of virginity be not found for the damsel:

Deu 22:21 Then they shall bring out the damsel to the door of her father's house, and the men of her city shall stone her with stones that she die: because she hath wrought folly in Israel, to play the whore in her father's house: so shalt thou put evil away from among you.

Incest

Lev 20:11 And the man that lieth with his father's wife hath uncovered his father's nakedness: both of them shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them.

Lev 20:12 And if a man lie with his daughter in law, both of them shall surely be put to death: they have wrought confusion; their blood shall be upon them.

10. Homosexual experience:

Lev 20:13 "If a man lies with a man as one lies with a woman, both of them have done what is detestable. They must be put to death; their blood will be on their own heads.

10.1 Homosexuality, so glorified today as an acceptable alternative life style, is a sin like any other sin; one difference, this sin in the OT was a capital offense.

Rom 1:18 The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness ...

Rom 1:22 Although they claimed to be wise, they became fools

Rom 1:23 and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images made to look like mortal man and birds and animals and reptiles.

Rom 1:24 Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another...

Rom 1:26 Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones.

Rom 1:27 In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion.

11. Rape:

Deu 22:25 But if out in the country a man happens to meet a girl pledged to be married and rapes her, only the man who has done this shall die.

12. Kidnapping:

Exo 21:16 "Anyone who kidnaps another and either sells him or still has him when he is caught must be put to death.

13. Striking a parent:

Exo 21:15 And he that smiteth his father, or his mother, shall be surely put to death.

14. The Incurable Teen:

Deu 21:18 If a man has a stubborn and rebellious son who does not obey his father and mother and will not listen to them when they discipline him,

Deu 21:19 his father and mother shall take hold of him and bring him to the elders at the gate of his town.

Deu 21:20 They shall say to the elders, "This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious. He will not obey us. He is a profligate and a drunkard."

Deu 21:21 Then all the men of his town shall stone him to death. You must purge the evil from among you. All Israel will hear of it and be afraid.

Conclusion

1. There were other types of punishment for lesser crimes to either compensate, retaliate or deter future such crimes and this certainly included capital punishment.

2. There was the general principle of reciprocation known as an "eye for an eye."

Exo 21:25 Burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe.

Exo 21:26 And if a man smite the eye of his servant, or the eye of his maid, that it perish; he shall let him go free for his eye's sake.

Exo 21:27 And if he smite out his manservant's tooth, or his maidservant's tooth; he shall let him go free for his tooth's sake.

Deu 19:20 The rest of the people will hear of this and be afraid, and never again will such an evil thing be done among you.

Deu 19:21 Show no pity: life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot.

Lev 24:19 If anyone injures his neighbor, whatever he has done must be done to him:

Lev 24:20 fracture for fracture, eye for eye, tooth for tooth. As he has injured the other, so he is to be injured.

3. If you damaged or took property from another you restored it.

Lev 24:21 And he that killeth a beast, he shall restore it: and he that killeth a man, he shall be put to death.

4. If you kill a thief while he is breaking in your home you are not guilty of manslaughter.

Exo 22:2 If a thief be found breaking up, and be smitten that he die, there shall no blood be shed for him.

5. Since many felons could not make restitution, the indigent was sold into slavery to the harmed party.

Exo 22:3 "... for he shall make full restitution: if he have nothing, then he shall be sold for his theft."

6. The reason for the punishment of crime was to deter future offenses says Deu 19:20-21.

Deu 19:20 The rest of the people will hear of this and be afraid, and never again will such an evil thing be done among you.

Deu 19:21 Show no pity: life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot.

7. The severity of Old Testament punishment has been the subject of a great deal of criticism but there is no doubt it worked to minimize crime.

8. The Kingdom teachings of our Lord have often been used to appeal to the "kinder and gentler" and yet even in perfect environment when Christ returns there is judgment from God and capital punishment for certain unbelievers born into the Kingdom of Christ - The Millennium.

8.1 Capital punishment is implemented when unbelievers cause trouble - after all it has to be perfect and even perfect ambiance is defiled when imperfect people inhabit.

Isa 11:1 A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse; from his roots a Branch will bear fruit.

Isa 11:2 The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him--the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD--

Isa 11:3 and he will delight in the fear of the LORD. He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes, or decide by what he hears with his ears;

8.1.1 Notice verse 4:

Isa 11:4 but with righteousness he will judge the needy, with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth. He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth; with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked.

9. When nations refuse to come to worship in the Millennium as the Lord commands - even in perfect environment there is punishment.

Zec 14:16 Then the survivors from all the nations that have attacked Jerusalem will go up year after year to worship the King, the LORD Almighty, and to celebrate the Feast of Tabernacles.

Zec 14:17 If any of the peoples of the earth do not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD Almighty, they will have no rain.

10. New Testament Comments:

10.1 With respect to temporal penalties we find in the New Testament no relaxing of the severity or incidence of implementation.

10.2 The sanctity of human life and private property according to the Mind of Christ (as has been revealed in both the Old and New Testaments) demands safeguarding.

11. In the Book of Romans Paul emphasizes our job is to comply with the authorities or else suffer the consequences of "the sword which establishment Rome wielded so well."

Rom 13:3 For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and he will commend you.

Rom 13:4 For he is God's servant to do you good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword for nothing. He is God's servant, an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer.

Rom 13:5 Therefore, it is necessary to submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment but also because of conscience.

12. In summary then it is evident that punishment in time is recognized in Scripture as a means to deter crime and is solely the responsibility of duly constituted authority.

12.1 The law is now only applicable to national entities who desire to have stability and peace in their land.

12.2 To completely implement the Scriptures relating to capital punishment in the United States would be somewhat problematic.

12.3 Capital crimes listed in Scripture such as blasphemy, sabbath breaking, fornication/adultery and the stoning of the incorrigible teenager might be difficult to administer under our form of government.

12.4 Israel in their day as a Priest Nation had Jesus Christ as their Theophany and He communicated directly with the High Priest who passed the Lord's decisions to the family heads, thus facilitating the adjudication and execution of high crimes for which capital punishment was demanded.

13. I would like to conclude this categorical study with a few comments.

Editorial Comments:

On more than one occasion I have been asked about what the Bible teaches of war and capital punishment? In most cases the one questioning already has his mind made-up thinking Christ's teachings would prohibit capital punishment.

Usually their position is based on the commands of Christ Who said "love your enemies, do good to them who despitefully use you, when struck turn the other cheek etc." Loving your enemies," like "turning the other cheek," is a command for individuals in personal relationships. It is not a command for governments. As individuals we should pray for our enemies and "turn the other cheek" instead of returning insult for insult.

Such behavior demonstrates supernatural love aimed at securing the offenders conversion to Christ. But those commands do not mean that we have no right to personal self defense, nor do they mean that a nation should not protect its people from other hostile nations or incorrigible criminals like Charles Manson or any number of serial killers who prey on the weak and the "innocent."

With regard to self defense, not only does the Old Testament affirm the right to self defense (Exo 22:2), Jesus himself told his disciples to sell their cloak and buy a sword (Luk 22:36).

Exo 22:2 If a thief be found breaking up, and be smitten that he die, there shall no blood be shed for him.

Luk 22:36 Then said he unto them, But now, he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip: and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one.

Jesus later told Peter "put your sword away" so Christ's sacrifice would go forward and the Scriptures would be fulfilled (Mat 26:54).

Mat 26:52 Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.

Mat 26:53 Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?

Mat 26:54 But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?

But the very fact that Jesus told Peter and the other disciples to buy a sword shows that its use at times is appropriate. (By the way, Jesus never condoned the use of the sword as a means of religious conversion, a practiced Muslim belief. It's impossible anyway. Genuine conversion, by definition, is freely accepted. It cannot be coerced.) In Romans 13, governments are said to have a God given responsibility to use "the sword" to protect their people from harm. This protection certainly extends to capital punishment as a deterrent; to argue it does not deter is specious indeed. A dead man cannot kill again and when Biblical capital punishment is implemented (something no longer done in this country), it does in fact deter.

Rom 13:1 Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.

Rom 13:2 Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.

Rom 13:3 For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same:

Rom 13:4 For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; **for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.**

Paul himself accepted establishment protection when he was in danger (Acts 22:22-25), and Jesus affirmed the right of governments to impose capital punishment, saying that such a right was given by God (Joh 19:11).

Acts 22:22 And they gave him audience unto this word, and then lifted up their voices, and said, Away with such a fellow from the earth: for it is not fit that he should live.

Acts 22:23 And as they cried out, and cast off their clothes, and threw dust into the air,

Acts 22:24 The chief captain commanded him to be brought into the castle, and bade that he should be examined by scourging; that he might know wherefore they cried so against him.

Acts 22:25 And as they bound him with thongs, Paul said unto the centurion that stood by, Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman, and uncondemned?

Joh 19:10 Then saith Pilate unto him, Speakest thou not unto me? knowest thou not that I have power to crucify thee, and have power to release thee?

Joh 19:11 Jesus answered, **Thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above:** therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin.

Joh 19:12 And from thenceforth Pilate sought to release him: but the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar's friend: whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar.

One thing for certain: Christians contradict Scripture when they say no war or use of force by establishment can ever be justified. In a fallen state this world has only one chance and that is to support the four divine institutions listed in the scriptures and these are "volition, marriage, family and nationalism." To protect these institutions often requires force and that force must include capital punishment.