

**Serious crime is  
murder**



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

“ You must obey the authorities, not just because of God’s punishment but also as a matter of conscience.” Romans 13: 5 Peace is that calmness or security, which is established by order and harmony. To have peace within a society, there must be laws and regulations, which exist to establish that harmony to bring, maintain and promote peace.

Laws are those principles, which human beings living in society have learned from experience to be essential for the survival and prosperity of the society; without laws, society would dissolve into chaos. One way in which a state promotes law and order is through the punishment of crime. A crime is an offence against a law of the state and a punishment is a suffering inflicted on a person because of a crime, which this person has committed. Murder is a serious crime and can also be considered as a mortal sin.

The individual has turned completely away from the teachings of Christ and has acted against the will and laws of God.” Do not commit murder; anyone who does will be brought to trial” Matthew 5: 21 Christians believe that the state has the right and the duty to punish a person who commits such a crime, but would hope that a criminal should be reformed through a just punishment. Punishment can take a variety of forms, including community service, a fine, probation, a prison sentence and capital punishment. Some forms of punishment have the idea of revenge attached to them. It is as though society wants to retaliate for the crime, which has been committed. These punishments make the offenders “ pay” for what they have done and although this may not necessarily help the offender to give up committing crimes, they make sure the society are satisfied for the time being; particular those who are affected by the crime; in this case murder.

“ If anyone takes the life of a human being, he must be put to death.”

Leviticus 24: 17 In many parts of the world, capital punishment is still allowed. Many Christians would say that the commandment “ You shall not kill” applies equally to the state. It does not allow for reform and they point to the fact that many innocent people have been found guilty but later proved to be innocent.

In the case of terrorists, the death penalty might even encourage people as it makes the executed offender a martyr. Christians would argue that it makes the executioner a murderer and two wrongs do not make a right.” Stop judging that you may not be judged; for with what judgment you are judging, you will be judged.” Matthew 7: 1-2 When we “ criticize” people we “ judge” them and we “ judge” them in the light of certain laws and regulations. We decide that they have not followed this or that accepted way of behaving. What Jesus is teaching in the present part of the Sermon on the Mount is that the disciples should see those principles of behaviour as applying to their own individual lives and not apply them to the lives of others.

We should leave God to be the judge to whom life is taken away from. Christians believe that it is better to prevent crime than to have to punish criminals. Many Christian communities try to set up youth clubs and address the problems of poor housing, unemployment and the problem of drug addiction, which may have caused the criminal to murder. However, once murder has been committed, Christians believe that a suitable form of punishment should be found in order to help the offender reform by

changing their way of life, seeing the error of their ways so that they can repent.

Through reformation, criminals can live a better Christian life with a deeper spiritual insight to the teaching of the gospel." We are being punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve." Luke 23: 41 Jesus taught Christians that murder is often the result of anger for revenge. He preached that the lack of forgiveness in the family of God and the broken relationships make a mockery out of any sincere attempt to worship God."

.. Leave your gift..

. make peace...then come back." Matthew 5: 23-24 In a similar way, those who are affected by the actions of the murderer should "forgive and forget" once the criminal is punished and should not seek revenge and be tempted to retaliate and to respond with the same kind of violence as the offence.

Jesus accepts the "old" commandment but teaches that morally speaking, there is something just as bad as actually killing and that is the bad attitude, which people can have towards one another. In the parable of the unforgiving servant..."..

. You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you besought me; and you should not have had mercy on you fellow servant...

" Matthew 18: 32-33 Jesus is preaching that his followers must forgive their brothers from their hearts without any limit to this forgiveness. This is because God will always forgive you. It is clear to see that if a person is to expect forgiveness then they too must also forgive others. The parable

illustrates that the man who owed a great deal did not cancel the debt of the man who owed a relatively little. This parable also shows that justice must be shown if justice is to be received.