

Justice at last, 45 years too late

AGAINST THE

"I am completely against any form of violence...And in the case of the death penalty we are actually faced with killing that is decided and carried out by a country's justice system. I think this quite immoral and wrong."

Dalai Lama



One core issue for Christians is the sanctity of life. A murderer's life is no less sacred than the life of any other human being. According to Christians, God gives life and only God has the right to take it away.



"Do not judge or you will be judged... Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye?" Matthew 7 1-3

To help the criminal change

Reform:

If a criminal is sentenced to death, there is no chance to change!

A Prayer to Abolish the Death Penalty

*God of Compassion,
You let your rain fall on the just and the unjust.
Expand and deepen our hearts
so that we may love as You love,
even those among us
who have caused the greatest pain by taking life.
For there is in our land a great cry for vengeance
as we fill up death rows and kill the killers
in the name of justice, in the name of peace.
Jesus, our brother,
you suffered execution at the hands of the state
but you did not let hatred overcome you.
Help us to reach out to victims of violence
so that our enduring love may help them heal.
Holy Spirit of God,
You strengthen us in the struggle for justice.
Help us to work tirelessly
for the abolition of state-sanctioned death
and to renew our society in its very heart
so that violence will be no more. Amen.*

--Sister Helen Prejean, C.S.J.

Medieval forms of the death penalty were inhumane and break basic human rights.



DEATH PENALTY

"[the death penalty] is both cruel and unnecessary", "...the dignity of human life must never be taken away, even in the case of someone who has done great evil."

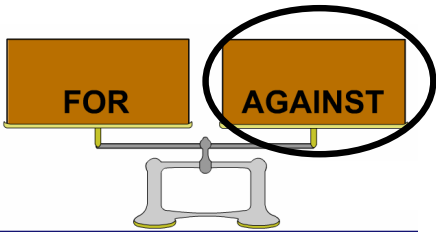
"Do not judge others, so that God will not judge you"

John Paul II - former leader of the Catholic Church Pope



In the New Testament, Jesus taught that the law of retribution should no longer apply: "You have heard that it was said "Eye for eye, tooth for tooth". But I tell you, Do not resist an evil person. If someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also." Matthew 5:38

At the heart of Jesus' teachings was that we have all done things wrong, and so we should not judge people. We should therefore be loving and compassionate to others.



Derek Bentley had the mental age of an 11 year old, and many believe he was innocent!



The New Testament

Reparation:

A criminal can 'pay' for their crimes by being punished in different ways.

To make the criminal pay for what he/she has done

Innocent man put to death!

Can you ever be sure that a man is guilty? All of the evidence can point to a person's guilt, but how can you really be certain. If you can't, then surely the death sentence can never be justified.

In the New Testament, Jesus taught that the law of retribution should no longer apply: "You have heard that it was said "Eye for eye, tooth for tooth". But I tell you, Do not resist an evil person. If someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also." Matthew 5:38



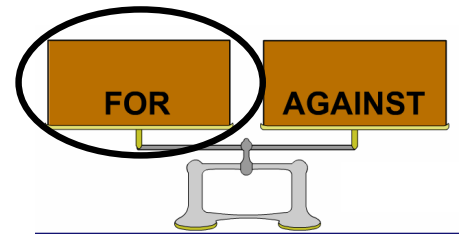


Some people deserve to be severely punished!



SUPPORTING THE

The death penalty is the only punishment that reflects society's horror at certain types of crime. This seems to be supported by the book of Genesis, which states: **“Whoever sheds the blood of a man, by man shall his blood be shed; for God made man in his own image.”**



The Old Testament teaches retribution- a man should pay for a crime he has committed: **“If anyone injures his neighbour, whatever he had done to him: fracture for fracture, eye for eye, tooth for tooth.”** (Leviticus 24:19-20)

Deterrence:

If the public knows that criminals will be punished by death, they will be deterred!

To stop other people from committing the same crime.

Leslie Chapman talking about Ian Huntley:

To make the criminal pay for what he/she has done

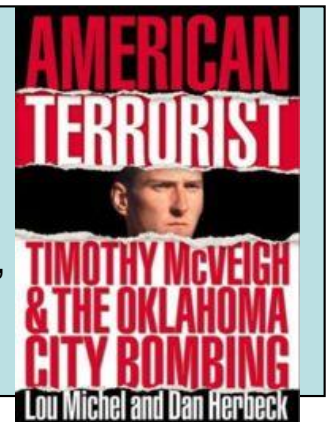
Reparation:

Victims need to feel they have received justice.

“The next time I'd like to see him was how we last saw our daughters and that was in a coffin”

Timothy McVeigh was responsible for the Oklahoma bombing, which killed 168 people. He was executed by lethal injection on June 11th 2001.

McVeigh was an ex-soldier, and had a long history of violence, if he had been sent to prison and released, many people believe he would have re-offended.



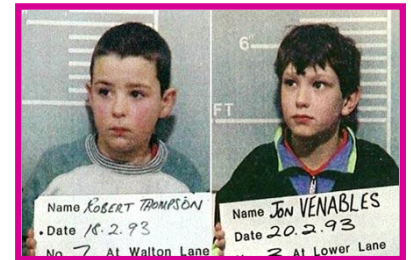
DEATH PENALTY

“Anyone who commits murder shall be put to death.”



James Bulger’s murderers were sent to prison for life, but were released by the time they turned 18. A crime like murder cannot be forgiven; therefore these criminals justify the death penalty.

Rules for when to use and when not to use capital punishment are spelled out clearly in the Old Testament (Exodus 21). The underlying principle is “an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth”, which means a life for a life; no more, no less! God is seen as a fair judge who wants the punishment to fit the crime.



A Christian in favour of capital punishment must be sure that this is God’s will. In deciding this, Christians are faced with conflicting advice.

To protect society.

Protection:

Over 75% of criminals re-offend when released from prison. If a criminal is killed, society is protected from them.

Society needs to be protected from violent men!

The death Penalty acts as a deterrent to murder. Since its abolition, the number of murders and violent crimes in Britain has increased significantly.

Retribution:

Victims deserve to have revenge on criminals because they deserve to feel better.

For revenge.

When somebody takes the life of another human being, their life should suffer. Criminals given a life sentence, normally serve between 10- 25 years in prison. Life should mean life, and therefore people should be put to death!