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Freedom Requires Responsibility

By: Robert Buckner

Recently, a young mother, accused of murdering her child, was found to be innocent by the jury who considered the evidence brought against her.

I must confess that I had no interest in this case and did not follow the considerable media coverage of the trial. However, even though I did not engage myself with the ongoing and *excessive* media coverage, clearly, the impression that the media put forth was that her guilt was absolute!

I disqualify myself from being able to have a relevant opinion on her *guilt* or *innocence* and believe that only those who served on the jury, and were privilege to all of the evidence, facts and arguments presented, can truly speak to that question.

I would however like to use this trial, and its apparent controversial outcome, as an opportunity to emphasize another obvious weakness within our contemporary *American culture-at-large* - which only exists and is harming our society - because of our failure to accept the "*Responsibilities of Freedom*" and then, obey God's commands!

When we do not follow God's commands - we sin; and when we sin, there are consequences that must and will result! Ironically, sometimes man will take it upon himself to go beyond what God commands and think that, rather than disobeying God, he is actually *enhancing* God's commands!

The unfortunate reality of this kind of perspective is that man is then, literally thinking that he is *wiser* than God - and he then believes that *his* decision is going to turn-out better than *only* obeying God's command.

No example of this *faulty-logic* could be any more apparent today than man's difficulty in administering the "***Death Penalty***" for murders.

Our Founding Fathers rightly identified that our "Freedom" is endowed to us by God. A part of the responsibility of administering and maintaining that freedom, is that we must protect society (ourselves) from the evils of the lawless men who have no regard for the Rights of other's and *their* freedom.

Genesis 9:6 ⁶ *"Whoever sheds human blood, by humans shall their blood be shed; for in the image of God has God made mankind."*

Matthew 5:21 ²¹ *"You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, 'You shall not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.'*

Essentially, God *made* man in His image and no other man has the **Right** to murder another man; "**Murder**" - representing the unlawful taking of life.

In **Genesis 9:6**, God commands "how" we are to deal with the murderer. I will not attempt to expand on ***all*** of the wisdom of God that does underscore the rationale and sensibility of *why* murderers must be executed. For the purpose of this discussion – it "***IS***" **God's command** - that the murderer be put to death which we will focus upon!

Some may actually think that it will be okay to disobey "*this*" command – because in doing so, we are actually being "*nicer*" or, "*more forgiving*," than even God requires. However, the Bible tells us how God feels about those who obey and those who disobey His commands.

For those who truly "**Love**" God, keeping His commands are not burdensome! **1 John 5:3** ³ *In fact, this is love for God: to keep his commands. And his commands are not burdensome...*

How many Christians today would believe that they did not **love** God – if they also, would not, as a member of a jury, do their duty and condemn a murderer to death?

That is what the Bible says: **John 14:15** ¹⁵ *"If you love me, keep my commands."*

In the context of "**Freedom**" - being "*Free*" does have some very weighty responsibilities connected to it! Every man is "*free*" to obey and every man is "*free*" to disobey!

Sadly, I am sure that for *good people*, when they disobey God's command in the context of - **Genesis 9:6** – I am sure that they do not carry the **guilt** normally associated with sin. Also, I am sure that they do not think that they do not *love* God! But – what did Jesus say?

John 14:23-24 ²³ *Jesus replied, "Anyone who loves me will obey my teaching. My Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them. ²⁴ Anyone who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me.*

Matthew 5:21 ²¹ *"You have heard that it was said to the people long ago, 'You shall not murder, and anyone who murders will be subject to judgment.'*

Hebrews 1:8-9 ⁸ *But about the Son he says,*

*"Your throne, O God, will last forever and ever;
a scepter of justice will be the scepter of your kingdom.
⁹ You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness;
therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions
by anointing you with the oil of joy."*

What person; what citizen; indeed, what American Christian; would want to be required to sit on a jury - and as a matter of evidence presented - have to condemn another man to death? ...Not me!

Satan is a very crafty adversary and he knows all of man's weaknesses that he can exploit. In this particular situation he knows he can use a *good* man's *sense-of-goodness* to cause him to sin.

If we were not free, we would not be required to take up this responsibility.

"All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing." Edmund Burke ~ 1729 – July 9, 1797

Everyone in America is Free! Let us strive to be "Free" and "Responsible!"



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