

Sermon Reflections

Life for Life (Exodus 21:12-36)

Summary: Value life like God does. Seek justice for others and extend mercy yourself.

What is a life worth? Do you value life?

1. Seek Justice for Others (Exodus:12-36)

- This passage outlines the Law of Proportional Justice for the nation of Israel. Not to encourage personal revenge, but to discourage it and fully regulate it. This was so the punishment would fit the crime, and vengeance did not take over.
- If you take a life, your life should be taken (vv. 12-17). The value of human life is prized in this section, as each person is an image bearer of God, and that image should be respected. How do crimes against parents insult the value of life? What is the danger of individuals taking justice into their own hands?
- If you injure life, your life should be injured (vv. 18-27). If you cause injury to another person, you should be responsible for lost work or medical payments. There are different degrees of harm that could be done to another and all intersect with the value of life. What kind of value does God place on a life in a womb? How does this differ from survival of the fittest?
- If you neglect life, your life should be neglected (vv. 28-32). The fine should fit the crime. What's the just consequence for wrong done against God? Paul says wages of sin is death, so not just physical consequences. There are spiritual consequences. How can the act of Jesus dying on the cross and taking the wrath for us, help us turn our thoughts about justice for others (and ourselves)?

2. Extend Mercy Yourself (Matthew 5:38-42)

- Jesus corrected the misconception about going to get vengeance. Eye for eye and tooth for tooth was a great principle to guide Israel's judges overseeing justice for the nation, but this was not to be used as a law in your personal life to seek out vengeance.
- What actions can you take to exhibit Christ-likeness to those who do you wrong? What thought about God's interaction with you, His former enemy, can help guide your responses in difficult relationships? How can you be showing mercy to your enemies this week?
- What kind of person are you? When people interact with you, what do your responses teach them about God's mercy?