

Loving Christ in All of Life  
Week 17 - Protecting Life  
Genesis 9:5-7, Numbers 35:30-31, 33

- God's law is intended to protect God's image
  - Rebellion against God leads to disregard of His image
- Every person is under God and so has personal responsibility to protect life under His law
  - We naturally want to avoid this responsibility
  - Deut. 22:8, Ex. 21:28-34 - we are responsible to do what is reasonably necessary to protect life on our property and in our households - natural extension of 6th commandment
  - Deut. 22:1-4 - obligates us to aid our neighbors when necessary
    - Minimum application of the broad principle
    - Prov. 24:10-12 - principle extends to courageously intervene when our neighbors are threatened
  - Common law tradition upholds these requirements
    - Citizens arrest, obstruction of justice, testifying as a witness
- Capital punishment - how does this reconcile with the law's concern to protect life?
  - Restitution - the just consequence, according to God, for destroying His image, is death
  - Protecting foundations of God's law order
  - Deterrence (third use of the law)
  - First degree murder requires the death penalty - no other form of restitution available
- Self-defense - are Christians always required to "turn the other cheek?"
  - Ex. 22:2 - permission to use deadly violence to protect property
  - Just war is an extension of this principle to the national sphere
    - Essential to recognize legitimate spheres of authority
    - War is to be defensive, not conquest (Deut. 17:16)
    - Mandatory conscription is unlawful (Deut. 20:5-8, 24:5)
    - War must be last resort and must have a reasonable chance at success (Deut. 20:10-11, Luke 14:31-32)
    - Must discriminate between combatants and non-combatants (Deut. 20:13-14)
    - No total war, scorched earth, etc. (20:17-20)
    - War must ultimately be to the end of preserving life and promoting flourishing - wantonly destroying the means of life is counterproductive and unjust