Exodus Chapter 21 Verses 12 – 14

* There are at least three places in the Bible, two in the Old Testament and one in the New Testament that essentially **commands capital punishment** but it’s interesting to me that God instructs the judges of Israel to ***seek out circumstance.*** If there was *malice, intent, premeditation, treachery*…that is to be dealt with one way…if there is a circumstance of accident, that is to be dealt with in another way.
* I think this is important and applicable at the most extreme level (murder) but also at even the offense level. We have to remember that many times when offense occurs, ***the offender isn’t even aware of their sin.*** This is why Matthew 18 is so **critically important**. ***Give folks the benefit of the doubt. It will protect your heart***…and when offense occurs, may I ask you to be courageous…don’t sit on it, don’t wonder about it…**talk to the person.** I have found that folks often did not mean to offend.
* Now I have found that many times folks **do** mean to offend…in that case, you handle that differently…capital punishment for offense is ***rebuke.*** And perhaps that’s why folks don’t confront others so readily when they are offended, the fear of rebuking someone…listen, ***live your own life in such a way that your rebuke isn’t shadowed by your own sin***…that nixes the fear right there.

Exodus Chapter 21 Verses 15 – 17

* Ok obviously this is the Law of Moses and not the Law of God. I’ve said this before that the Law of God is relevant to us, applicable to everyone but the Law of Moses was ***specific to the Jewish people*** BUT we can ***observe the heart of God through these commandments!*** These are the words of the Lord and oh my, the importance that God places on obedience, respect and reverence to your father and mother!! ***Can you imagine the immediate purity that would be infused into a society if the kids obeyed their parents?*** WOW!!!
* The punishments are severe but **the goal is not the punishment**…***the goal is the avoidance of the sin!*** Do you see that? If that is the punishment and it is sure…I mean *you can track them down and take them from anywhere* it says in the previous verses…then the likelihood of the offense occurring, ***knowing*** the **surety** of the consequence…see what I’m saying!? If you’re getting *hung up* on the punishment or consequence to the point where you are beginning to disagree…then may I suggest that you’re *looking at it wrongly?*
* What if every sin, every disgruntle, every poor attitude, what if it all had on it a **price tag**. We use the word *cost* and we use the word *consequence* all the time…but just lately I’ve been thinking about the flesh in terms of the **price tag**. That’s the thing you look at ***before you buy***…***I wonder if we knew the price and considered that if we’d spend so much of our potential, our joy, our love, our peace on trinkets of the flesh…?***
* You keep buying stuff you can’t afford (which is spending life in the flesh) and your life can turn into **nothing but debt…a rut…that** looks like un-involvement, no love, no joy, nothing good enough…that’s a debt laden life! Start buying stuff that is free! Turn over to Isaiah 55 which is an entire chapter on this subject!

Exodus Chapter 21 Verses 18 – 23

* ***The answers to every life issue, you can find it in the Word of God.*** Here we have *God’s perspective* on essentially unborn babies being killed in the womb. If the mother is harmed and yet the baby doesn’t die, her husband decides the offender’s fate. If the baby dies…you die. If that perspective of God was respected, in this country alone, 55 million lives would have already been saved. ***Perspective.*** If we took 10 seconds of silence for every one of those lives…**we’d be silent for seventeen and a half years…**
* Notice here also we read that **just punishment** is ***life for life***…that’s interesting because that introduces the concept of ***righteousness and justice that is satisfied in substitutionary atonement.***

Exodus Chapter 21 Verses 24 – 36

* Notice, the price of a servant…***thirty pieces of silver***. Significant… Matthew 26:14-15. The price paid for Jesus…thirty pieces of silver.