

The Price of Revenge is just too High

The death penalty is not an easy issue and deciding to oppose executions is a difficult choice to make. Certainly in the case of gruesome murders our instinct is to get revenge. A person who slaughters another person doesn't deserve to live. But what is best for civilization? Is it better for society as a whole to execute people even if they clearly deserve to be executed? Or is it better for some people to escape what they deserve because the cost to society as a whole is too great? This is an extremely difficult call to make and both sides of the argument have merit. But after careful consideration the Church of Reality comes down on the side of opposing executions because the down side of executing people far exceeds the up side.

How does one make a decision for or against the death penalty? What is the overriding factor that we have to consider as most important in taking this position? When no solution is perfect and each position has merit how do we decide which one is best? How do we decide who wins and who loses? How do we apply our wisdom to this issue?

As we see it, the decision rests on what is best for society as a whole and after a lot of consideration, we have determined that in order to execute the guilty, even if you accept that they clearly deserve to die and you have no moral barriers to killing murderers, that the cost to society to kill those people is far greater than the lesser punishment of life in prison. That the difference in justice between death and life in jail is not sufficient to justify the costs to society of allowing nation-states the power of death. In practice, too many innocent people are unjustly executed and the lives of the innocent people are more important than the justice differential between life in prison and execution. Even if the death penalty were justified, the cost in innocent lives makes it not worth it.