

***Intro:***

Main Point of Text: In some sinful situations a sacred society must show restraint in judging and punishing the poor.

Sermon Point: *Justly Consider the Circumstances.*

***Move 1: Sacred societies must punish sinners, but reconciled redemption is often in order.***

Vs. 22: while both guilty parties are punished, it is to make restitution to socially restore them. Israel's identity: people redeemed by God. Debts paid by God. The "trespass offering": acknowledged, but also paid for. God's society has a system offering substitutionary sacrificial atonement to be "forgiven" in full by Him: Peace. 2 Cor. 5:17-19; 1 Cor. 6:1ff; Ephesians 4:31-32.

***Move 2: While a redeemed society offers redemption, it must also require restitution.***

Vs. 20, 21: violators of Seventh Commandment judged guilty. Punishment required: scourging for the maiden (indentured servant) who has no other means of payment. Her master has to face publicly humiliation and provide the Trespass Offering in the Temple for "him" and "his sin". They owed a debt to God and had to pay a penalty befitting their crime against society (betrothed man/family). *Lex Taliones:* Lev. 24:17-22 (See also Ex. 21:24-26). Notice this principle is *restrictive*. And there must be justice for all citizens and even foreigners.

***Move 3: Though just societies should require punishment it must be reasonably restrained.***

Prov. 6:30-31. Vs. 20: normally, adultery in this "betrothed" situation required death of both parties (Deut. 22:23-24; Lev. 20:10). Here God's Law *requires* reasonable restraint. Because she was a "bondmaid/not redeemed/not free", this must be taken into consideration and the death penalty is forbidden: "not be put to death". She might have been forced or afraid. The focus is on protecting the woman as of the lowliest of society who might have been taken advantage of and thus too severely punished (like Ex. 21). Must be scourged but not slain. Calvin: need mitigation of punishment due to circumstances. God's law is black and white. But some situations could shade just consequences.

***Conclusion:***

Matt. 1:19; John 8:1ff.

***Justly Consider the Circumstances.***