

Civics: A Christian Worldview.
“Evil” for Government to Handle—Yes or No? (10-15 minutes)

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS/KEY

Instructions

1. **Objective:** Students see examples of how governments should/should not punish certain behaviors/acts, based on if they meet the biblical standard of evil/harm.
2. Print copies of Page 2 for each student, and hand out.
3. Tell students (give them 5-7 minutes!) to read the handout and fill in the blanks, then discuss as a class.

Answer Key

- (A) It means (a) to make people afraid of its power/ability to punish those who harm/steal from others, so they’re less likely to do it, and (b) to actually punish those who commit those crimes, via jail or forced compensation to victims or even the death penalty.
- (B) It makes crime less likely to happen, by making potential criminals afraid of the consequences. And at the very least, when governments lock up and/or execute criminals (depending on the circumstances of their crimes), those criminals are not able to harm society when they’re in jail or receive the death penalty.

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|-------|-------|
| 1. Y | 11. N |
| 2. Y | 12. Y |
| 3. N | 13. N |
| 4. Y | 14. Y |
| 5. N | 15. N |
| 6. N | 16. N |
| 7. Y | 17. Y |
| 8. N | 18. N |
| 9. Y | 19. N |
| 10. N | 20. Y |

Note: Number 20 is a tricky one. I’d lean more toward “Yes,” because you could *harm* someone’s reputation by doing so. This is why it’s good to have righteous judges who can rule on tough/gray area cases like this, but it’s likely that a fair judge—if it can be proved that a person was harmed (although not physically) by someone’s lies—would rule in favor of that person and against the liar and harmer of that person’s reputation.

Key Concept

Make sure students understand that the Bible (and Bastiat’s *The Law*, for that matter) instructs governments to punish and get revenge upon **only those who harm and/or steal from others**. Violating life, liberty, and property are matters for the law, and sins that aren’t crimes are not.

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(A) What does it mean for government to be a “terror” to and “revenger” of *evil* (Romans 13:3-4)?

(B) What happens in society when government punishes evil/harm and makes individuals think twice about doing evil/harm because they’re afraid of what government might do?

Are the following actions/behaviors ones that government should threaten/punish/be a “terror” to, according to the Bible’s standard? Beside each example, write “Y” or “N” (“Yes” or “No”).

1. Murder
2. Stealing from another person
3. Lying to make yourself look better
4. Assaulting someone in anger
5. Hatred toward another person
6. Committing adultery
7. Kidnapping
8. Coveting your neighbor’s possessions
9. Vandalizing someone’s car
10. Refusing to forgive someone who wronged you
11. Drunkenness in private
12. Hitting someone’s mailbox while driving drunk
13. Blasphemy
14. Lying to take someone’s money
15. Refusing to attend church
16. Angry jealousy toward a family member
17. Breaking into someone’s home
18. Calling someone offensive names
19. Refusing to allow someone of a certain ethnicity into your store
20. Publicly accusing someone falsely of theft