

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS/KEY

Goal

Students apply the Biblical teaching that a ruler's role is to execute judgment and justice by deciding appropriate punishment or restitution in real-world scenarios.

Instructions

- This activity may be done individually, or in pairs/small groups.
- Students complete the questions (give them 8–10 minutes); discuss as a class.

Suggested Answer Key

1. Students should distinguish between protected opinion and knowingly false factual accusations. If the host knowingly lied or acted with reckless disregard for the truth, restitution may be appropriate. If he honestly reported what he reasonably believed, punishment may be inappropriate despite the harm, although it might still be!
2. Harm clearly occurred, but determining each party's responsibility is challenging. Students should discuss whether partial restitution is appropriate and how fault should be apportioned.
3. If the owner acted honestly and reasonably, he may not deserve punishment. If he knowingly lied or recklessly ignored evidence, restitution may be appropriate.
4. Students should examine whether the company adequately disclosed the risks. Concealing known dangers may require restitution; openly disclosed risks may change the analysis.
5. This is a breach of agreement. Students should discuss whether restitution should cover only the contract price or also the owner's lost business income.

Wrap-Up/Final Direction

Ask students any of these questions you think are appropriate:

- Which cases were hardest to judge?
- How can you use Biblical guidelines to judge cases justly?

American Government & Politics: A Christian Worldview: You're the Judge, Part 3

You are the judge.¹ For each case: decide what happened (the crime/possible crime), decide what justice requires (the punishment and/or penalty for wrongdoing), and decide on possible restitution (repaying or restoring what was taken/damaged). Be ready to explain your reasoning!

Case #1 – The Radio Host's Accusation

A popular radio host repeatedly claims that a local businessman is secretly involved in organized crime. The accusations attract many listeners, and the businessman loses customers. Later, investigators find no evidence supporting the claims. The radio host insists he was merely exercising free speech and discussing matters of public concern.

Your Judgment:

Case #2 – The Polluted Lake

A manufacturing company and several farms operate near a lake. Over many years, pollution from multiple sources enters the water. Property values fall, fish die, and tourism declines. Residents sue one factory, but experts disagree about how much of the damage that particular factory caused.

Your Judgment:

Case #3 – The Mistaken Arrest

A store owner identifies a man as the person who robbed his business. Based largely on the owner's testimony, the man is arrested and spends several months in jail before evidence proves he was innocent.

Your Judgment:

Case #4 – The Injurious Injection

A pharmaceutical company sells a vaccine even after learning that a percentage of users experience serious side effects and even death. The company argues that the drug also provides major benefits to many patients and that all products involve some risk.

Your Judgment:

Case #5 – The Contractor's Delay

A contractor agrees to complete a commercial building by June 1. He falls months behind schedule due to poor planning. The building owner loses several profitable business opportunities as a result.

Your Judgment:

¹ You are also the taxidermist, but that has nothing to do with this activity.