

# DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

These questions are designed to help you talk about God's word and Pastor Brian's message with friends and family. You of course can use your own questions, but we'd like to give you this tool to encourage Biblical fellowship and discipleship in your circle of relationships. **Enjoy discovering more about Him!**

**"EVERYBODY COUNTS OR NOBODY COUNTS" | EXODUS 22 | PASTOR BRIAN**

## **WARM-UP QUESTION:**

What is your favorite movie or story about crime dramas?

### ***"Laws About Restitution" - (Exodus 22: 1-15)***

These laws about theft, loss of property, borrowing and safekeeping all point to the idea people are to restore the lost item and/or its value. How does this system help a community or society? How can people do this today?

### ***"Laws About Social Justice" - (Exodus 22: 16-31)***

There are several laws in this section that have a high price and punishment for worshipping other gods and for impure sexual activity. Why is it hard to stay faithful and pure in our society today? What are ways to be more faithful and pure?

In verses 21-27, God gives laws that are to protect the most vulnerable: the poor, the immigrants, the orphans and the widows because He will see and hear their cries. What does these laws show about God's character?

## **REFLECTION QUESTION:**

Brian connects this passage to the gospels and shows that a heart devoted changed by Jesus will go the extra mile to make restitution and to show mercy to the vulnerable. When was the last time you made things right with someone you wronged? When was the last time you showed mercy to someone in need? Ask God to make you more aware of ways you can follow these guidelines with the people around you.

## ***Everyone Counts or Nobody Counts***

### I. Slide1 **Announce:**

- A. **Slide2-7** Lar: CK. Sun Prayer. Office. Women's Xmas. Xmas Celeb. Video.
- B. **Slide8** Baby Ded: 3rd Tyler & Mical Andrews [Julian Clark]
- C. **Slide9** Free Burma Ranger Doc: Dave on way to help Afghan friends. Mon Sept.13th, 7pm Regal Edwards
- D. **Prayer:** may our motive be mercy.

### II. Slide10 **Intro: Everyone Counts or Nobody Counts**

- A. The law **modifies** behavior **but** it never **rectifies** character.

### III. Slide11 **LAWS ABOUT RESTITUTION (1-15)**

- A. **THEFT** (1-4) - distinction in breaking and entering during the **day** or at **night**. *Intent*
  1. Not Just **kill** them or **jail** them, **but** give them an opportunity to **restore**.
  2. **Story:** 3 guys broke in our house (paid for my front door they broke).
- B. **NEGLIGENCE & LOSS OF PROPERTY** (5,6) *restitution is made.*
- C. **GIVING \$ OR GOODS TO SOMEONE FOR SAFE KEEPING** (7-13) No banks in that day. *If trust is breached, then restitution is made.*
- D. **BORROWED PROPERTY** (14,15) deals with borrowed property. **Full** restitution.
- E. **Slide12 HOW DO WE APPLY THIS TODAY?**
  1. **Note:** these laws are **sensible**, they are **wonderful gifts**, to teach people how to live in community. How to deal with these face-to-face, person-to-person. **And** it was to deter criminals. **And** to **protect the thief** because some countries would just **kill** them. **But** in Israel's case, they didn't because **life** is more **valuable** than **possessions**.

F. Can you think of a NT example that *after they became a Christian*, they went out to make full restitution? (hints) He was involved in *white collar crime*. He was a wee little man. *His name?* the vertically challenged **Zacchaeus!** Lk.19:1-10

1. Slide13 As a chief tax collector, He had *bought the privilege* of collecting Taxes. He lived by *farming taxes* w/many chances for *fleecing*. He was the proverbial *middle-man!*

- a) He ran & climbed up a sycamore tree to *see Jesus*. Jesus stopped at the tree, called him by name, & invited Himself over for lunch.
- b) Zacchaeus was *morally lost* (he was sinful). He was *intellectually lost* (he did not know who *Jesus* was). He was *socially lost* (he was of the despised class *a tax collector*).

2. But when he 1st met Jesus what did he want to do? Make things right.

- a) That's what you do when you become a Christian.
- b) **He made 2 promises:** I give away 1/2 of my goods to the poor. & if I wronged someone, I will pay them back 4-fold (*double* than what was required by law).
- c) Why? Because *The Gospel* creates in us a *heart* to make things right with people. And we also go an extra mile to *love and serve and give* generously.

G. My Zacchaeus Experience (1978-1980). I ran a Valet parking lot for a guy named Gene Selznick @ Dal Rae Rest. (Gene won the pro beach VB world champion title in 1956. His son Dane Selznick was Kerry Walsh & Misty May's coach). Anyways, for this lot, I collected all the tips of the evening & then we'd get paid hourly. But when you ran the evening no one knew how much came in. Myself, & the other couple guys who ran it would steal from \$80-\$100 off the top. Then I got saved! I didn't take ½ of what I stole & give it to the poor, nor did I restore 4-fold to Gene (as a *new bel*. I didn't think of that) ... but *I started turning in all my tips from that point on*. The other guys were pretty upset w/me because it became very noticeable that when I ran it, my nights were always **huge**. Christianity should change **all** of your life, for me, like *Zacchaeus*, it started right there.

#### IV. Slide14a LAWS ABOUT SOCIAL JUSTICE (16-31)

A. PREMARITAL SEX (16,17) *not rape, mutual consent.*

B. But if this happens, you don't just move on in the society.

1. Though mutual consent, the weight falls on the man. He is a **seducer**, just like Satan.
2. If you take away her **purity** this is the cost. It was expensive, it was the bride price, the price to take her as your wife. As it would be difficult to find a husband now, not being a virgin.
3. Pre-marital sex is a blatant disregard for **her worth**. This is about the value of a lady.
4. We live in such an over sexualize culture today. Where more money is spent on pornography than on *pro football, pro basketball, and pro baseball* combined. (globally \$97 bill yr. \$12 bill in US alone)
  - a) In **2019** alone, the equivalent of nearly **6,650 centuries** of porn was consumed on **1** of the world's largest porn sites. [that's 665,000 years watching it 24/7]
  - b) According to a recent report by the BBFC, **75% of parents** believed their child had never encountered porn, but of those children, **53%** reported that they had in fact seen porn. [BBFC: *British Board of Film Classification*]
5. God calls us to **holiness and honor and self-control**.
6. We are told to **flee sexual immorality**. And to **glorify God with your body**.
7. 1 Thes.4:3,4 **God's will is for you to be holy, so stay away from all sexual sin.** 4 **Then each of you will control his own body & live in holiness & honor.**

C. Slide14b SORCERY, BESTIALITY, WORSHIP FALSE GODS (18-20)

D. Since **sorcery** and worshiping **false gods** violate the highest commandment (to worship only Yahweh) thus the highest punishment.

E. **Bestiality** in Leviticus let us know it was part of *the abominable practices of the Canaanites* (thus a problem in the land that they are heading to).

1. Maybe this is sandwiched in between the other two, because it was tied to a religious connection in neighboring communities?

F. Slide14c PROTECTING CERTAIN SOCIAL GROUPS (21-27)

- These next laws pertain to *foreign born residence, widows, orphans, and the poor*, was to protect them from *exploitation*, as they are *the most vulnerable groups* in society.

#### G. SOJOURNERS (21) *foreign born residents*

- Israel, you know better than anyone what this is like. So show mercy because you were shown mercy. Identify with them and care for them.
- In 2021: you and I helping *Afghan refugees* that are coming our way.

#### H. Slide14d WIDOWS AND FATHERLESS (22-24) *i.e. the most vulnerable in society*

- 1 Story: A woman named Grace from Uganda. Grace had 5 children when her husband died. Her property was taken away from her. She hiked 24 miles, 2 days a week, to meet with gov officials to get her property rights. She did this for 3 to 4 years. It was a broken system in a broken government, but she finally got the property rights. She then built a brick house *by yourself*. She carried every brick 3 miles, through a jungle.
  - Mistreatment of widows is still a systemic problem in most all developing countries. [There are 245 million widows worldwide. 115 million of whom live in poverty and suffer from social stigmatization and economic deprivation *purely because* they have lost their husbands. *2010 stat*<sup>1</sup>]
- Fatherless - there are 150 million orphans in our world.
  - The orphan is not a cause. The orphan is not an issue. The orphan has a human face, and that face is Galilean. Jesus tells us that when we see the poor, the weak, the vulnerable, the tossed aside, we see Him there.*<sup>2</sup> Intro Book: *Orphanology*
- God tells them, you are to be different! You are to care for them, welcome them, pray for them, help provide for them. [June 23rd Int Widows Day]
- And we noticed that God takes this on Himself, saying this won't be coming from *the authorities*, *I will bring down the punishment Myself*.

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<sup>1</sup> Invisible, Forgotten Sufferers: The Plight of Widows Around the World info, dnaindia.com; accessed 31 May 2015.

<sup>2</sup> Russel Moore, president, Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission. Intro to Book: *Orphanology*.

- a) We notice that when we were **widowed** from this world, Christ became our **groom**. When we were **fatherless**, God adopted us into his family. When we were **strangers** to his grace, He welcomed us into his kingdom.

#### I. Slide14e LENDING MONEY TO THE POOR (25-27)

1. God is not against lending or borrowing, **but** charging exorbitant rates. **Also**, so they could help them not go into **slavery**, debt bondage. [ancient near East Law codes put interest at 25%]
2. **Cloak** - he's poor, does have anything to give you as collateral except **the shirt off his back**.
3. Slide14f Jesus refers to this in Luke 6:27-32,36 *But I say to you who hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, 28 bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. 29 To one who strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also, and from one who takes away your cloak* (outer) **do not withhold your tunic either** (undergarment). *30 Give to everyone who begs from you, and from one who takes away your goods do not demand them back. 31 And as you wish that others would do to you, do so to them. 32 If you love those who love you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them ...*  
*36 Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful.*

- a) So Jesus takes us a step further to be **merciful** towards a **poor** borrower.

#### J. Slide14g DON'T CURSE GOD OR YOUR RULER (28)

1. How would our government be different today if the church **prayed** even **half as much** as we criticize **our leaders?** [show me 1 Scripture that supports criticizing your ruler, & I'll show you 10 that say to **pray for them**]

#### K. Slide14h OFFERINGS, FIRSTBORN, & ROADKILL (29-31)

1. **Firstborn** - 8th day, physically marked as belonging to God.
2. Wild predatory animals, such as lions, roamed the Levant until recent times. Additionally, **touching a dead carcass**, let alone one torn by a wild beast, rendered a person ritually unclean.

- L. Slide15 Ch.22 reminder to us in Murrieta today - our Motive should be **Mercy**. These laws are *sensible*, they are *wonderful gifts*, & teach us how to live in community. Laws deter criminals, and cause us to look at intent & making sure the *punishment fits the crime*. Remembering, **life** is more valuable than *possessions*. And that, **Everyone** counts or nobody counts.

M. Communion:

1. Bread -
2. Cup -

N. Keywords: restitution, theft, negligence, laws, property, Zacchaeus, justice, premarital sex, social groups, widows, fatherless, orphans, foreign born residents, poor.