

“EXECUTED SPEEDILY”

Bryan Matthew Dockens

Wise Solomon penned, *“Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil”* (Ecclesiastes 8:11). Predictably, delaying punishment for crimes increases criminal behavior.

When a perpetrator is not incarcerated, executed, or otherwise penalized for his wrongdoing, he is emboldened to continue offending. Indeed, his misbehavior is very likely to worsen as he senses he can get away with whatever he wants to do. Some corporate loss prevention professionals depend on this to build a case against thieves, using facial recognition software to document shoplifters, but not apprehend them until their cumulative stealing crosses the threshold from petty larceny to grand larceny. Worse than property crimes, violent offenders who are not prosecuted or who are inadequately sentenced, may very well increase in their brutality moving from street fights or domestic battery up to rape and murder.

Besides the assailants, uninvolved observers also become brazen to commit wrong when criminals are not dealt with according to the severity of their actions. If a person commits murder, multiple witnesses testify, jurors convict him and sentence him to death, but he lives in prison for decades before expiring of natural causes, then the deterrent effect is altogether lost. Others who are tempted to commit similar acts might be dissuaded if the news was regularly reporting that the electric chair, gas chamber, lethal injection needle, noose, or firing squad were in high demand and in consistent use for killers and rapists. That does not happen, though.

Not only criminals and wannabes, but victims and their aggrieved relatives are also tempted to evil when the authorities are delinquent with regard to prosecution and sentencing. Paul set down some serious teaching against vengeance, saying, *“Do not avenge yourselves”* (Romans 12:19), *“repay no one evil for evil”* (12:17), and *“overcome evil with good”* (12:21). He assured the vengeful they need not pursue a vendetta because they could *“give place to wrath”* (12:19). That place lies with *“the governing authorities”* (13:1) who are *“God’s minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil”* (13:4). When civil powers decline to fulfill their divinely ordained duty to punish evildoers, then victims and their loved ones will want vigilante justice. God does not want them taking the law

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WHERE ARE THE BODIES?

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Since relocating to New Mexico, a State far less populous than Nevada, where we moved from, I have noticed a plethora of cemeteries. It seems nearly every neighborhood has one. Even little San Acacia, where we have settled, which our postmistress estimates to have only about 120 souls, has two cemeteries in it. The Las Vegas Valley, with almost three million people, has fewer, albeit much larger, cemeteries than does Valencia County, New Mexico, with about 78,000 people living here. Cemeteries are so numerous in this area that, while waiting for my daughters’ orthodontist appointments on Wednesday, we took a walk and found one that isn’t even on the map and does not appear to have a name.

The contrast between the Silver State and the Land of Enchantment is perfectly sensible. Westerners began settling Nevada in 1851, but have been in New Mexico since 1598. Bodies have been buried in marked graves here for over 250 years longer than where we came from.

According to evolutionary reckoning, homo sapiens have existed for 200,000-300,000 years. If that was true, there would be a staggeringly larger number of humans buried in the ground than there are – either in visible cemeteries or awaiting exhumation by archaeologists. If evolution, with its exaggerated timetable, is at all accurate, then **where are the bodies?!**

As it is, though, the earth and humanity are only a bit more than 6,200 years old, and about 4,500 years ago a global flood permanently altered the landscape, thereby destroying all previous burial grounds while simultaneously sweeping the current population into the sediment to be fossilized. Therefore, not counting fossils from Noah’s generation, there ought to be about 45 centuries worth of buried human remains within the surface of the planet.

The numbers reconcile with the Scriptural narrative, but will never match the imagination of evolutionists.

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into their own hands; that’s why he authorized rulers among men.

Law enforcement agents, probation officers, prosecutors, judges, juries, parole boards, attorneys general, governors, legislators, and voters need to remember why God established government (Romans 13:1-7). They have a very specific purpose to accomplish.

**"WHAT MUST I DO
TO BE SAVED?"**

ACTS 16:30

LEARN THE GOSPEL

John 6:45; Romans 10:17

BELIEVE IN CHRIST

Hebrews 11:6; John 3:16

CONFESS CHRIST

Matthew 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10

REPENT OF SIN

Acts 3:19; 17:30

BE BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST

Mark 16:16; Romans 6:3-6

REMAIN STEADFAST

1st Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10

**"THE ASSEMBLING OF
OURSELVES TOGETHER"**

HEBREWS 10:24-25

SUNDAY

Worship @ 10:00 a.m.

Studies @ 11:45 a.m.

WEDNESDAY

Studies & Worship @ 7:00 p.m.

THURSDAY

Ladies' Study @ 6:00 p.m.

75 Sherrod Boulevard
Belén, New Mexico

**Seekers Welcome.
Members Expected.**

**"IF A MAN IS OVERTAKEN IN
ANY TRESPASS...
RESTORE SUCH A ONE"**

GALATIANS 6:1

CONFESS TRESPASSES

James 5:16; 1st John 1:9

REPENT OF SIN

Acts 8:22

PRAY FOR FORGIVENESS

Acts 8:22

REMAIN STEADFAST

1st Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10

**"A WORD FITLY SPOKEN IS
LIKE APPLES OF GOLD IN
SETTINGS OF SILVER"**

PROVERBS 25:11

"Correction is only seen as judgment to those who still love their sin."

"WHOLE COUNSEL"

ACTS 20:27

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"KEEP YOUR HEART"

Bryan Matthew Dockens

Whether Christians should visibly display and verbally communicate all emotions all the time or should stifle emotions to the point of Stoicism is a worthy consideration.

Solomon warned *"a fool vents all his feelings, but a wise man holds them back"* (Proverbs 29:11). Emotions proceed from the heart (Mark 7:21), but *"the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?"* (Jeremiah 17:9). Emotionalism is wrong because the heart and the feelings it produces must be restrained.

The converse is not good either. Paul warned of those who are *"past feeling"* (Ephesians 4:19). There is good in feeling which must not be overlooked. The unemotional cannot answer Peter's call to *"Be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted"* (1st Peter 3:8). Nor can they *"Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep"* (Romans 12:15). Emotionlessness is unhelpful to those in need.

As in most matters, both extremes are faulty. Emotions are not meant to be bottled up, never to be released, but neither are they meant to be poured forth without a filter. The balance is to have feelings, but to control them: *"Keep your heart with all diligence, for out of it spring the issues of life"* (Proverbs 4:23). To contain one's emotions is to exercise *"self-control,"* which is to *"live in the Spirit"* and to *"walk in the Spirit"* (Galatians 5:22-25).

RIO GRANDE VALLEY CHURCH OF CHRIST

505-864-0282

rgvcoc@gmail.com

Box 989, Belén, NM 87002

www.RGVChurchOfChrist.org

75 Sherrod Boulevard

Facebook.com/RGVChurchOfChrist