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New book provides in-depth look at the death penalty

Houston, TX—March 2009—In his book, *The Death Penalty on Trial—Taking a Life for a Life Taken* (Nordskog Publishing, 2009), Ron Gleason, *Ph.D.*, offers a balanced and reasonable discussion about the death penalty and provides a compelling response to the ages-old question: *Is the death penalty valid in today's society?*

The death penalty is on trial, yet the argument is not new. For centuries Christians and secular individuals alike have debated whether taking the life of a convicted murderer is fair punishment, with proponents falling on both sides of the issue. Is there a guiding principle to settle the dispute? According to Gleason, the benchmark is the ethical standard found in Holy Scripture and the solution is just.

“Christian ethics is based on a recognition of the authority, wisdom, and goodness of God as Creator over man the creature, based on the Biblical teaching that man is created in the image of God (*imago Dei*),” Gleason says in the introduction to his book. . . . “The crime of murder is heinous precisely because every human being bears the image of God. Someone who strikes down the image-bearer strikes at the holy, almighty Image-Giver, God Himself.”

The Death Penalty on Trial examines the pros and cons of capital punishment and addresses thirteen objections from within both the Christian and secular communities. It also offers thoughtful, good-sense grounds for employing the death penalty as appropriate punishment for murder as determined in a court of law. Written from a Christian worldview and based on both the Westminster Standards and the Belgic Confession as well as the Bible, the book will engage readers regardless of their religious standing.

“Every person has a viewpoint, and generally it is to do what is right in his or her own eyes,” says publisher Gerald Nordskog. “On this particular issue, there must be a best, right-approach solution, since it is too critical for the safety and well-being of society as a whole, which includes the victims and their families as well as the criminal.”

The Death Penalty on Trial delivers that “right-approach” solution and equips readers to defend capital punishment in today’s open market of ideas. Specific topics in Gleason’s book include an historical overview (including church history) of capital punishment; a review of Old Testament and New Testament perspectives; the critical difference between the Biblical terms to kill and to murder; and the importance of debating capital punishment from the position of Christian ethics. An Appendix includes a chapter excerpt from James Kennedy and Jerry Newcombe’s book, *How Would Jesus Vote*, called “Crime and Punishment—Judging the Death Penalty.” The Appendix also contains detailed chapter endnotes, bibliography and a Scripture index.

The Death Penalty on Trial is a must read for lawyers, judges, law officers, anyone of voting age, potential jurors, pastors, Sunday school superintendents and teachers, philosophers and thinkers. An individual sitting on an ethics board or committee would also benefit from reading this book.

Ron Gleason, holds numerous degrees, including B.S. in business administration, M.Div., then his Th.D. in Old and New Testament Systematic Theology and Ethics in the Netherlands, and finally a Ph.D. in Systematic Theology from Westminster Theological Seminary, Philadelphia, PA. Gleason has pastored churches in Holland and Canada as well as the United States. He is currently pastor of Grace Presbyterian Church in Yorba Linda, CA.

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