

Connect timeless truths with today's news.

SAVED FROM DEATH

An Alaska man named John Pearl Smith II is accused of murdering two people and wounding a third in 2016. When the case neared a court date, the U.S. Attorney's office announced its intention to pursue the death penalty. However, earlier this month, Attorney General Merrick Garland announced that federal executions would halt, pending a review. The motion to seek Smith's execution has now been *withdrawn*. A spokesperson for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Alaska cautioned that, just because execution has been taken off the table, Smith's alleged guilt remains. "This decision does not change our intent," she said, "to pursue justice for the victims and their family members."

SAVED FROM WRATH

In our passage today, Paul teaches that Christ's blood covers our guilt. Through the cross, we are justified and reconciled to God. We ourselves have not become more righteous—but the wrath of God has been *withdrawn* because of Jesus' atonement. Condemnation has been taken off the table. We stand to gain even more at the judgment because of the resurrection of Jesus. Justice for our sins was obtained at the cross, and now we have peace with God.

1. What arguments would you give for or against the death penalty?
2. When have you been saved from a punishment you expected?
3. What does it mean that God paid such a high price to achieve peace with humanity?

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Additional Resources

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Music Video, Traditional: ["I'm a Pilgrim and I'm a Stranger"](#)

Music Video, Multicultural: ["God Is Fighting for Us" by Trinity Anderson & John Dreher](#)

Music Video, Contemporary: ["Here Is My Heart" by ICF Worship](#)

[Guzik's Commentary on Romans 5](#)

[Gill's Exposition of Romans 5](#)

[Clarke's Commentary on Romans 5](#)