

## Justice Series Suicide, Assisted Suicide and Euthanasia

For none of us lives to himself, and no one dies to himself. If we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. Therefore, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord. - Romans 14:7-8 HCSB



**The appeal to allow suicide, assisted suicide and euthanasia is rarely presented in a logical, rational manner. The arguments are usually very emotional in their character, meant to inflame the pity and compassion to the point that one concedes regardless of the lack of logic or biblical support. However, we must be very careful to not allow our finer emotions to cause us to stumble into sin.**

- Proverbs 14:12 HCSB There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death.

**The supposed right to suicide, whether self-inflicted or assisted, stems from the erroneous idea that one can lay claim to one's own life. The Bible does not agree with this pagan concept. Our bodies do not belong to us.**

- 1 Corinthians 6:15 HCSB Do you not know that your bodies are the members of Christ? So should I take the members of Christ and make them members of a prostitute? Absolutely not!
- 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 HCSB Do you not know that your body is a sanctuary of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body.

**It is a sign of paganism to claim self-mastery.**

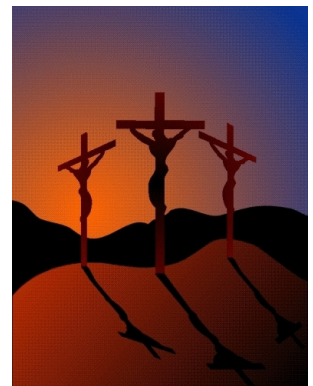
- Psalms 12:1-4 HCSB For the choir director: according to Sheminith. A Davidic psalm. Help, LORD, for no faithful one remains; the loyal have disappeared from the human race. 2 They lie to one another; they speak with flattering lips and deceptive hearts. 3 May the LORD cut off all flattering lips and the tongue that speaks boastfully. 4 They say, "Through our tongues we have power; our lips are our own--who can be our master?"

**We must acknowledge that the Lord God made us. We are His to do with as He sees fit, to lead where He decides is best – even if it is in the very shadow of death!**

- Psalms 100:3 HCSB Acknowledge that the LORD is God. He made us, and we are His--His people, the sheep of His pasture.
- Psalms 23:4 HCSB Even when I go through the darkest valley, I fear no danger, for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff--they comfort me.

**Not only did Hashem make us, He redeemed us when we rebelled and became Satan's slaves. He owns us twice!**

- 2 Corinthians 5:15 HCSB And He died for all so that those who live should no longer live for themselves, but for the One who died for them and was raised.
- Titus 2:14-15 HCSB He gave Himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to cleanse for Himself a special people, eager to do good works. 15 Say these things, and encourage and rebuke with all authority. Let no one disregard you.



**Everything comes from God's hand and there is nothing that we can give Him that did not come from Him in the first place.**

- 1 Chronicles 29:14 HCSB "But who am I, and who are my people, that we should be able to give as generously as this? For everything comes from You, and we have given You only what comes from Your own hand."

**If He should decide that suffering must be part of our fate, who are we to argue with Him?**

- Acts 9:16 HCSB "I will certainly show him how much he must suffer for My name!"
- 2 Timothy 1:11-12 HCSB For this gospel I was appointed a herald, apostle, and teacher, 12 and that is why I suffer these things. But I am not ashamed, because I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to guard what has been entrusted to me until that day.



**Will the creation tell the Creator how it should be used and when its usefulness is ended?**

- Isaiah 64:8 HCSB Yet LORD, You are our Father; we are the clay, and You are our potter; we all are the work of Your hands.
- Romans 9:20-21 HCSB But who are you--anyone who talks back to God? Will what is formed say to the one who formed it, "Why did you make me like this?" 21 Or has the potter no right over His clay, to make from the same lump one

piece of pottery for honor and another for dishonor?

**Should we accept glory at the Master's hand and not suffering?**

- Romans 8:17 HCSB and if children, also heirs--heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ--seeing that we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him.
- Philippians 1:29 HCSB For it has been given to you on Christ's behalf not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for Him,

**Maybe what the world needs is to see how a righteous person handles terrible circumstances with grace. Being able to suffer with Christ, to take on to some degree the sufferings of the world on His behalf is a glorious opportunity.**

- Colossians 1:24 HCSB Now I rejoice in my sufferings for you, and I am completing in my flesh what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for His body, that is, the church.



**Demonstrating the power of the Holy Spirit in pain and suffering elevates the human spirit. God can be glorified in the way an individual suffers or in the way his or her family deals with his death. That is true "death with dignity".**

- 2 Timothy 2:9-10 HCSB For this I suffer, to the point of being bound like a criminal; but God's message is not bound. 10 This is why I endure all things for the elect: so that they also may obtain salvation, which is in Christ Jesus, with eternal glory.

**The sufficiency of God's grace is not a hollow promise. Its significance can only be fully realized in the midst of hardship.**

- 2 Corinthians 12:9 HCSB But He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is

perfected in weakness." Therefore, I will most gladly boast all the more about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may reside in me.

### **We must strengthen ourselves and take our brother Job as our example in suffering.**

- Job 1:20-22 HCSB Then Job stood up, tore his robe and shaved his head. He fell to the ground and worshiped, 21 saying: Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked I will leave this life. The LORD gives, and the LORD takes away. Praise the name of the LORD. 22 Throughout all this Job did not sin or blame God for anything.
- Job 13:15 HCSB Even if He kills me, I will hope in Him. I will still defend my ways before Him.

### **God maintains sovereignty over the timing of death**

- 1 Samuel 2:6 HCSB The LORD brings death and gives life; He sends some to Sheol, and He raises others up.
- Job 14:5 HCSB Since man's days are determined and the number of his months depends on You, and since You have set limits he cannot pass,
- John 21:22-23 HCSB "If I want him to remain until I come," Jesus answered, "what is that to you? As for you, follow Me." 23 So this report spread to the brothers that this disciple would not die. Yet Jesus did not tell him that he would not die, but, "If I want him to remain until I come, what is that to you?"
- Philippians 1:22-24 HCSB Now if I live on in the flesh, this means fruitful work for me; and I don't know which one I should choose. 23 I am pressured by both. I have the desire to depart and be with Christ--which is far better-- 24 but to remain in the flesh is more necessary for you.

### **There's nothing wrong with desiring independence and a self-sufficient life, but our lives are not our own. Our deaths are not ours to command.**

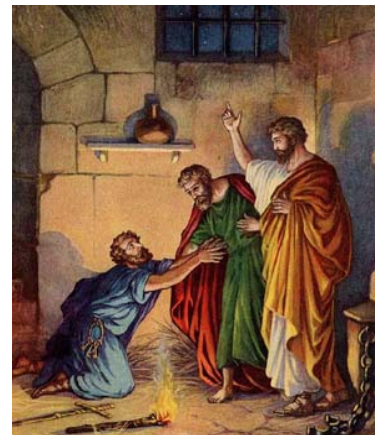
- Romans 14:7-8 HCSB For none of us lives to himself, and no one dies to himself. 8 If we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. Therefore, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord.

**The Roman jailer tried to escape what he thought were going to be the consequences of his failure by throwing himself onto his sword. Fortunately a Christian was there to help him through the crisis and what could have been a great tragedy instead became a turning point in his life.**

- Acts 16:27 When the jailer awoke and saw the prison doors opened, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped.

**Finally, every person whose suicide (assisted or not) was recorded in the Bible – King Saul, Abimelech, Ahithophel, Zimri, and Judas Iscariot - are shown to be living outside of fellowship with God at the time of their deaths, and are clearly not meant to be our examples.**

- **Abimelech (assisted)** Judges 9:52-56 HCSB When Abimelech came to attack the tower, he approached its entrance to set it on fire. 53 But a woman threw the upper portion of a millstone on Abimelech's head and fractured his skull. 54 He quickly called his armor-bearer and said to him, "Draw your sword and kill me, or they'll say about me, 'A woman killed him.'" So his armor-bearer thrust him through, and he died. 55 When the Israelites



saw that Abimelech was dead, they all went home. 56 In this way, the evil that Abimelech had done against his father, by killing his 70 brothers, God turned back on him.

- **King Saul (sought assisted, but ended with self inflicted)** 1 Chronicles 10:3-4, 13 HCSB When the battle intensified against Saul, the archers found him and severely wounded him. 4 Then Saul said to his armor-bearer, "Draw your sword and run me through with it, or these uncircumcised men will come and torture me!" But his armor-bearer wouldn't do it because he was terrified. Then Saul took his sword and fell on it...Saul died for his unfaithfulness to the LORD because he did not keep the LORD's word. He even consulted a medium for guidance,
- **Ahithophel (self-inflicted)** 2 Samuel 17:23 When Ahithophel saw that his counsel was not followed, he...set his house in order, and hanged himself...
- **Zimri (self-inflicted)** 1 Kings 16:16-19 The people who were camped heard it said, "Zimri has conspired and has also struck down the king." Therefore all Israel made Omri, the commander of the army, king over Israel that day in the camp. 17 Then Omri and all Israel with him went up from Gibbethon and besieged Tirzah. 18 When Zimri saw that the city was taken, he went into the citadel of the king's house and burned the king's house over him with fire, and died, 19 because of his sins which he sinned, doing evil in the sight of

the LORD, walking in the way of Jeroboam, and in his sin which he did, making Israel sin.

- **Judas (self-inflicted)** Matthew 27:4-5 'I have sinned by betraying innocent blood.' But they said, 'What is that to us? See to it yourself.' Throwing down the pieces of silver in the temple, he departed; and he went and hanged himself.



**One of the arguments commonly used to support euthanasia is that it may relieve suffering. However, the Ransomed know that death is the *beginning* of suffering for the unbeliever, not its end.**

- Hebrews 9:27 HCSB And just as it is appointed for people to die once--and after this, judgment--
- Matthew 25:46 HCSB "And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."
- Revelation 20:15 HCSB And anyone not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire.

**Those who support assisted suicide or euthanasia attempt to assert the victim's "right to die" along with the associated "right" to "death with dignity". As we have seen that "right" does not exist. Therefore we are left with the fact that they are simply taking a life out of season. The Bible does not grant such an act the euphemism of "mercy killing" or compassion in dying." It calls it murder and that is a capital crime.**

- Exodus 20:13 HCSB *Do not murder.*

**Note:** Some try to equate assisted suicide or euthanasia with the humane act of putting an animal out of its misery. However, I must ask, isn't it telling that the first step in justifying assisted suicide is to equate human and animal life?

**The underlying problem with assisted suicide or euthanasia is the worth of a human soul. The human soul was created in God's image. To sin against the human soul is thus to act treasonously toward God who created it in His image and continues to own it.**

- Genesis 1:26-27 HCSB Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness. They will rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, the animals, all the earth, and the creatures that crawl on the earth." 27 So God created man in His own image; He created him in the image of God; He created them male and female.
- Genesis 5:1-2 HCSB These are the family records of the descendants of Adam. On the day that God created man, He made him in the likeness of God; 2 He created them male and female. When they were created, He blessed them and called them man.
- Genesis 9:6 HCSB Whoever sheds man's blood, his blood will be shed by man, for God made man in His image.
- 1 Corinthians 11:7 HCSB A man, in fact, should not cover his head, because he is God's image and glory, but woman is man's glory.
- James 3:9 HCSB With it we bless our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men who are made in God's likeness.

**This essential image of God that exists in every human, regardless of their physical, mental or spiritual condition is why the greatest command has two parts: 1) Love the Lord your God with all your heart soul, mind and strength and 2) love your neighbor as yourself.**

- Matthew 22:36-40 HCSB "Teacher, which commandment in the law is the greatest?" 37 He said to him, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. 38 This is the greatest and most important commandment. 39 The second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself. 40 All the Law and the Prophets depend on these two commandments."
- Mark 12:28-31 HCSB One of the scribes approached. When he heard them debating and saw that Jesus answered them well, he asked Him, "Which commandment is the most important of all?" 29 "This is the most important," Jesus answered: Listen, Israel! The Lord our God, The Lord is One. 30 Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. 31 "The second is: Love your neighbor as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these."
- Luke 10:25-28 HCSB Just then an expert in the law stood up to test Him, saying, "Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" 26 "What is written in the law?" He asked him. "How do you read it?" 27 He answered: Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself. 28 "You've answered correctly," He told him. "Do this and you will live."



**The process of death can be lengthy, and both emotionally and financially draining. However inconvenience is not a sufficient argument to euthanize someone. To do so brings us dangerously close to creating a "duty to die" as was done in Nazi Germany. Instead of simply killing them, the victim's families should help them bear their burdens.**

- Galatians 6:2 HCSB Carry one another's burdens; in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.

**In both Old and New Testaments, the family is to be the primary source of charity and compassion toward its members.**

- 1 Timothy 5:8 HCSB Now if anyone does not provide for his own relatives, and especially for his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever.

**We can weaken the attraction of euthanasia and assisted suicide by making (and keeping) three promises to the dying:**

1. **You will never be a burden.** The person who is gradually slipping into dependence on others must be made to believe his or her most basic needs will never become burdensome to caregivers. We must joyfully and generously meet our biblical obligation to care for one another at the end of life. We show mercy because God is merciful (Luke 6:36). Circumstances may be inconvenient, but people? Never!
2. **You will not die in pain.** We should take a person's pain seriously, and make every effort to alleviate it (Proverbs 31:6-7). Alert non-professionals can observe a patient's verbal and non-verbal expressions of pain, report them to those in a position to provide relief, and offer comfort.
3. **You will not die alone.** Solomon wrote, "It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting: for that is the end of all men; and the living will lay it to heart" (Ecclesiastes 7:2). Critically ill people have obvious physical needs, but spiritual and emotional ones as well. Rather than withdraw at such times - expecting professionals to take over - Christians must be on hand to offer patients and loved ones encouragement, continued friendship, and practical support.

These three promises come from Mark B. Blocher, *The Right to Die? Caring Alternatives to Euthanasia* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1999), p. 193.