

A Biblical View of Suicide

Probably everyone here has someone in your family or a friend's family that has committed suicide. Several well-known preachers (and many, many not so well known preachers) have had children that committed suicide.

It is a very difficult and sensitive subject, but we don't avoid any subject just because it is difficult to talk about.

Some statistics regarding suicide in the US:

- 10th leading cause of death in the US
- About 50,000 per year commit suicide
- For every suicide there are 25 attempts recorded
- Cost the US 69 Billion each year

The top contributing factors of suicide:

- Major psychiatric illnesses - in particular, mood disorders (e.g., depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia)
- Substance abuse (primarily alcohol abuse)

Note: We can look at illegal drug abuse and say that is the problem, but smoking and drinking are well known to cause major depression. Add to that the very powerful, dangerous, and addictive medications that are prescribed to people with depression and I think we have an answer to the problem.

I'm not minimizing the reality of mental illnesses, but I am begging you to consider other options before filling your body with poisonous substances:

- First of all, we must always seek the Lord before anyone else (**2 Chronicles 16:12**)
- Exercise, proper nutrition, and getting outdoors can work wonders.
- Surrounding yourself with people who care about you and being reminded of your purpose in life can keep you going in any survival situation.

I. What does the Bible say about suicide?

A. Bible examples of people who committed suicide:

1. **(Judges 9:54)** Abimelech – “assisted suicide”
2. **(Judges 16:30)** Samson – “suicide attack”
3. **(1 Sam. 31:4)** Saul – suicide to deal with fear
4. **(1 Sam 31:5)** Saul's armour-bearer – suicide out of loyalty to another...and perhaps fear
5. **(2 Sam. 17:23)** Ahithophel – suicide, perhaps, out of bitterness (see **2 Samuel 11:3** and **23:34**. Ahithophel was Bathsheba's grandfather)
6. **(1 Kings 16:18)** Zimri – suicide out of fear and perhaps jealousy
7. Judas – suicide out of remorse and guilt (**Matt. 27:5**)

B. These cases of suicide seem to all be conscious choices made under some sort of pain, stress, fear, etc.

C. In each of these cases, there seems to be no evidence of substance abuse or other outside influence.

D. Though there seems to be no direct prohibitions against suicide in the Bible, there are some logical assumptions that can be made:

1. Suicide is murder
2. Suicide is a selfish act
 - a. They do not consider the fact that God is in control and may have a plan for their life, however painful and sorrowful it may be at the time.
 - b. They do not consider that there are many others who will suffer from their absence.
3. If substance abuse is involved, either a physician who prescribed the substance is at least partly to blame, or the person who willingly abused a substance is at fault (this is why the Bible clearly states over and over to stay away from substances that would cause you to lose control of your mind and emotions, particularly alcohol).

Note: if you smoke or drink or take any type of drugs, I won't tell you what to do, but I would implore you to consider figuring out a way to get off of them (because of the dangers involved, you might need an expert's help... but

remember, many of the “experts” are responsible for getting you on the substances to begin with)

II. What does religion say?

- A. There is a misunderstanding out there that suicide is the unpardonable sin.
1. The basis for this belief is the idea that one can lose their salvation.
 2. If we must repent of each sin in order to be saved (or stay saved), and if suicide is a sin, we can't repent of it after we are dead.
- B. Interestingly, I couldn't find a source online where this belief is currently taught.
1. The Catholic “church” used to teach this, but in the 80's they changed their stance and have decided that people can be forgiven of this and prayers should be made for them.
 2. The Church of God gives hope to those who have lost a loved one to suicide by claiming that in the 2nd resurrection people will have a second chance to be saved.
 3. This is interesting because many religions teach that you can lose your salvation and that you have to repent of all your sins... but on this issue they make exception by justifying sin, giving second chances, praying for the dead...
 4. Actually, this shows the inconsistency in any belief of a works-based salvation.
- C. Most religions are so worried about losing people (and thereby losing money), that they will flip flop on sensitive issues like this.

Conclusion:

The truth is, we are all sinners, and are all worthy of eternal condemnation in the lake of fire! Is suicide a sin worthy of eternal condemnation? Of course! (Just like murder, and adultery, and idolatry... and lying [**Revelation 21:8**]...)

- However, Jesus has paid the price for ALL sin.
- We don't have to make excuses for the sin, or give second chances to the sinner... sin is sin!
- If you believe what the Bible says about Jesus, and you receive His gift of salvation by calling on Him to save you, your eternity is secure!
- But suicide is still a sin!
- And it is still selfish!

- And if you are going to bring any glory to God in your life, you need not to even let the thought enter into your mind!