

# What the Bible Teaches about Suicide

Sermon by Andy Sochor

Text: Matthew 27:3-5

Suicide is the act in which one intentionally kills himself – not an accident, not sacrificing one's life, not ending treatment for a terminal illness. Sadly, this is a growing problem in the U.S. There is not a specific passage in the Bible that explicitly states that suicide is either wrong or justifiable. We need to consider principles that relate to this issue. It is a sensitive topic, but we need to understand what the Bible says that relates to this.

## Principles to Consider

- Every human life is precious – man has been made in the image of God (Genesis 1:26-27); therefore, we are not to shed man's blood (Genesis 9:6); Jesus died to save each one (John 3:16; Romans 5:8); this applies to each person individually
- Implications of the command to love our neighbor – love your neighbor AS yourself (Romans 13:9); God designed us with a natural sense of our own self-worth (Ephesians 5:28-29); this must be kept in check through humility (Philippians 2:3-4); but we cannot properly love our neighbor if we do not recognize our own inherent worth and willingly put others first
- Our bodies are not our own – a temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19); we have been bought with a price (1 Corinthians 6:20; 1 Peter 1:18-19) and are to glorify God in our bodies; this includes fulfilling God-given responsibilities (to spouse, children, parents, church, work, etc.); suicide means we don't fulfill these obligations
- Murder is condemned in the OT and NT (Genesis 9:6; Exodus 20:13; Revelation 21:8) – this would apply to self-murder (suicide) by implication; the only examples of suicide in the Bible are negative (1 Samuel 31:1-4; Matthew 27:3-5)
- The desire to be with Christ / escape this life does not justify suicide – we will face hardships (Acts 14:22); if we have faith, we should want to be with Christ above all else (Philippians 3:7-11), but not by suicide; consider the example of righteous men like Job (Job 2:9-10), Elijah (1 Kings 19:4), and Paul (Philippians 1:21-25) who suffered greatly but did not end their own lives

## Questions to Be Answered

- Is every human life precious? – yes... then suicide is wrong
- Are we to value our own lives? – yes... then suicide is wrong
- Do our bodies belong to God? – yes... then suicide is wrong
- Is murder condemned? – yes... then suicide is wrong
- Should we desire to be with Christ? – yes... but that does not make suicide right

## **Follow-up Concerns**

- What about those who suffer from depression/mental illness and commit suicide? – it is possible that someone, because of certain mental conditions, is unaccountable for his actions; this does not mean the action is not wrong, it just means they are unaccountable
- If suicide is a sin, does that mean that those who commit suicide have no chance to be forgiven? – if suicide is a sin, the sin is in the attempt (self-inflicted harm); many attempted suicides are not successful; however, many times one is killed as a consequence of sin (someone drives drunk and dies in a car accident, someone commits adultery and is caught and killed by a jealous husband, etc.); the actions are still sinful, even if there is no opportunity to repent and seek forgiveness
- If we say suicide is a sin, aren't we judging one who committed suicide and condemning them to hell? – we are to teach/warn about sin; this is not judging anyone, it is explaining God's judgments; it is possible that one who committed suicide is unaccountable; we cannot judge them on that

## **How to Help Someone with Thoughts of Suicide**

- Encourage them to seek professional help – sometimes this needs to be done, especially if they are dealing with clinical depression, chemical imbalance, drug side effects, etc.
- Make it clear that you are willing and available to help – bear one another's burdens (Galatians 6:2)
- Help them see that God loves them and is concerned for them (Romans 5:8; 2 Peter 3:9)
- Remind them of the hope that exists in Christ – because we have hope in heaven (Philippians 3:20), we endure all things (Philippians 4:11-13)

## **Conclusion**

- Suicide is becoming a bigger problem in our society – we need to try to understand it
- Ultimately, the only true hope and joy is found in Christ – we must follow Him and lead others to also