

What Does The Bible Teach Us About Suicide?

Let us begin by stating that this is a complex, multi-faceted issue because God has made us whole (body, soul, mind, etc.), interconnected beings. This is trying to simply state some basic biblical truths and is not a comprehensive treatment of the subject by any means.

1. Life is a wonderful gift from God. We are made in His image with intrinsic value. Genesis 1:27 says, “So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.” Psalm 139:14 says that we are “fearfully and wonderfully made.” Acts 17:26 says, “And He has made from one blood every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined their preappointed times and the boundaries of their dwellings.” This means that every person is born when they are born, where they are born, and to whom they are born by the plan of God.

2. God created us with a purpose and has great plans for our lives. Psalm 139:16-17 says, “Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed. And in Your book they all were written, the days fashioned for me, when as yet there were none of them. How precious also are Your thoughts to me, O God! How great is the sum of them!”

3. Suicide is a grievous sin that causes great destruction and pain. It is the sin of self-murder (Exodus 20:13) with probably some other sins included (assuming the person is in her right mind enough to be morally culpable for what she is doing).

4. Suicide, however, is not the unpardonable sin. A lot of people think it is the unpardonable sin, but the Bible does not say that. It seems to stem from a defective understanding of grace and salvation (see #7).

5. No one is responsible for this action other than the person who does it. One of the toughest issues to deal with in the aftermath of a suicide is loved ones blaming themselves for not stopping it and questioning what they could have done differently. However, this is a decision the person made that he alone will answer to God for (Romans 14:12). Ezekiel 18:1-17 teaches us that we are personally responsible for our actions, cannot blame them on others, and can choose to go in a different direction.

6. The doctrine of justification means that we are permanently and completely declared to be righteous in Christ. The primary message of Romans is that

sinner are justly justified by faith in the finished work of Jesus on the cross. This is the grace of God, which is so mind-boggling that Paul had to emphatically declare that we are not to go on in sin because of grace (Romans 6:2) and that we are set free from sin (Romans 6:7). Positionally, God does not see our sin, but He sees us as righteous in Christ. Forgiveness can only happen after we sin. Justification means that we have been given the righteousness of Christ as a gift so that is always our standing before God and that the cross dealt with all of our sins past, present, and future. This is how a true Christian can still be saved even after taking her own life. It would not be any different if a godly man, in a rare moment, got really mad at his wife during an argument, stormed out of the house, got in his car and in his anger was driving crazy at a high rate of speed, and had a wreck killing himself and someone else. It is a sin but does not mean that he is not saved. If this doctrine is not true, any unconfessed sin at death would keep us out of heaven. While it is true that godly fruit flows out of the genuine believer, we are saved only by the perfection of what Jesus has done for us and not the perfection of our confession or performance.

7. The genuine believer is eternally secure in Christ. Verses that teach this include: John 5:24, 6:39-40, 10:28; Jude 24; Ephesians 4:30; Romans 8:16, Romans 8:29-30; Hebrews 7:25, 10:14.

8. We are not totally defined by our worst moment even if it is taking our own life. A tragic decision, while never justifiable, does not eradicate the good a person has done or the love they have shown. While we should not sugar coat this action, it is not the only criteria to use when thinking about a person. There are people in Hebrews 11 who are listed as examples of faith that did grievous, ungodly things. All of us are a complex conundrum of good and bad. However, Christians are ultimately defined by being “in Christ.” That is our identity.

9. While God forgives, we reap what we sow (Galatians 6:7-8), meaning that justification does not erase earthly consequences. However, in this case, those you love are the ones reaping what you have sown. If you stop and think about it, you do not want to do that to them. Suicide is a permanent solution to a temporary problem. I am sorry if you are in pain, but please reach out and get help in dealing with that pain instead of transferring it to your loved ones. Contact the church office (865-471-5530, info@thetruelifechurch.com) or contact one of our pastors, staff, or counselors directly if you need to talk to someone.