

What Does The Bible Teach About Suicide?

September 15, 2022 Indepth Bible Class of the
Trilacoochee church of Christ

What Does The Bible Teach About Suicide?

- Where life is cheap and living is expensive, death is not just an option; it is treated by some as an obligation. In the long view of human behavior, we find that an ordinary range of human personalities have, in a supporting poor culture, accepted genocide, slavery, killing of unproductive slaves, killing of unproductive elderly, and killing of unwanted babies and children.

What Does The Bible Teach About Suicide?

- Others believe that the aged who are no longer productive should be disposed of. And, many contend that humankind should have the legal right to dispose of themselves by suicide.
- Is it any wonder in a world that considers death to be a solution to life's problems, that those in despair would be influenced to use the same solution for their own problems?

What Does The Bible Teach About Suicide?

- Almost four times as many men than women commit suicide.
- Seventh leading cause of death among men.
- Fifteenth leading cause of death among women.
- Third leading cause of death for young people ages 15 to 24.

What Does The Bible Teach About Suicide?

- Risk factors for suicide include: (Over 90% of people who die by suicide have these risk factors).
 - Depression and/or other mental/emotional disorders, or substance abuse,
 - Prior suicide attempt,
 - Family history of mental disorders or substance abuse,
 - Family history of suicide,
 - Family violence, including physical or sexual abuse,
 - Firearms in the home; the method used in more than half of suicides,
 - Incarceration,
 - Exposure to the suicidal behavior of others, such as family members, peers, or media figures.

What Does The Bible Teach About Suicide?

- Ex. 20:13 - “You shall not murder.”
- Ez. 18:4 - “Behold, all souls are Mine; the soul of the father as well as the soul of the son is Mine...”
- 1Cor. 6:19-20 - “Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? 20 For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.”

What Does The Bible Teach About Suicide?

- Gen. 1:26-27 - “Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to our likeness...’”
- Matt. 5:21-22 - “You have heard that it was said to those of old, ‘You shall not murder, and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.’ 22 But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. And whoever says to his brother, ‘Raca!’ shall be in danger of the council. But whoever says, ‘You fool!’ shall be in danger of hell fire.”
- Acts 16:27 - “Do yourself no harm.”

Bible Characters Who Committed Suicide

- Saul's act of despair.

- 1Sam. 31:4-5 - “Then Saul said to his armor bearer, Draw your sword, and thrust me through with it, lest these uncircumcised men come and thrust me through and abuse me. But his armor bearer would not, for he was greatly afraid.

- Therefore Saul took a sword and fell on it. 5 And when his armor bearer saw that Saul was dead, he also fell on his sword, and died with him.”

Bible Characters Who Committed Suicide

- Ahithophel: His advice was disregarded, and he did not want to face justice for working with a traitor.
 - 2Sam. 17:23 - “Now when Ahithophel saw that his advice was not followed, he saddled a donkey, and arose and went home to his house, to his city. Then he put his household in order, and hanged himself, and died; and he was buried in his father's tomb.”

Bible Characters Who Committed Suicide

- Zimri faced justice for treason.
 - 1Kings 16:18-19 - “And it happened, when Zimri saw that the city was taken, that he went into the citadel of the king's house and burned the king's house down upon himself with fire, and died, 19 because of the sins which he had committed in doing evil in the sight of the LORD, in walking in the way of Jeroboam, and in his sin which he had committed to make Israel sin.”

Bible Characters Who Committed Suicide

- Samson's base desire for revenge.
 - Judges 16:28-30 - "Then Samson called to the LORD, saying, 'O Lord GOD, remember me, I pray! Strengthen me, I pray, just this once, O God, that I may with one blow take vengeance on the Philistines for my two eyes!' 29 And Samson took hold of the two middle pillars which supported the temple, and he braced himself against them, one on his right and the other on his left. 30 Then Samson said, 'Let me die with the Philistines!' And he pushed with all his might, and the temple fell on the lords and all the people who were in it. So the dead that he killed at his death were more than he had killed in his life."

Bible Characters Who Committed Suicide

- Judas did not want to live with the memory of his betrayal of Jesus.
 - Matt. 27:5 - “Then he threw down the pieces of silver in the temple and departed, and went and hanged himself.”

Bible Characters Who Committed Suicide

- What seems to be a common theme?
 - It isn't fearing that God won't forgive, but it's having to face those hurt or other consequences.
 - Most suicides recorded in the Bible were carried out in response to severe loss, sorrow, fear, and hopelessness.
 - One thing appears to be clear. Persons who attempt to end themselves view themselves to be in some sort of extreme circumstance.
 - For many with suicidal thoughts, whether adolescents or adults, circumstances or situations are at the heart of their desire to put an end to their lives.

Bible Characters Who Committed Suicide

- Suicide has much to do with hopelessness. The circumstances of one's personal predicament can seem overwhelming. The pain can seem unrelenting.
- Since God has commanded us not to take our own lives, how does He expect us to handle the circumstances and feelings that led some to consider suicide?

What God Offers To Those In Despair

- Jer. 33:8 - “I will cleanse them from all their iniquity by which they have sinned against Me, and I will pardon all their iniquities by which they have sinned and by which they have transgressed against Me.”
- 1John 1:8-9 - “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

Psalm 107:10-21 - "Those who sat in darkness and in the shadow of death, Bound in affliction and irons- 11 Because they rebelled against the words of God, And despised the counsel of the Most High, 12 Therefore He brought down their heart with labor; They fell down, and there was none to help. 13 Then they cried out to the LORD in their trouble, And He saved them out of their distresses. 14 He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death, And broke their chains in pieces. 15 Oh, that men would give thanks to the LORD for His goodness, And for His wonderful works to the children of men! 16 For He has broken the gates of bronze, And cut the bars of iron in two. 17 Fools, because of their transgression, And because of their iniquities, were afflicted. 18 Their soul abhorred all manner of food, And they drew near to the gates of death. 19 Then they cried out to the LORD in their trouble, And He saved them out of their distresses. 20 He sent His word and healed them, And delivered them from their destructions. 21 Oh, that men would give thanks to the LORD for His goodness, And for His wonderful works to the children of men! 22 Let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, And declare His works with rejoicing."

What God Offers To Those In Despair

- Heb. 13:5 - “Let your conduct be without covetousness; be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, I will never leave you nor forsake you.”
- John 3:16 - “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”
- 1John 4:16 - “And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him.”

What God Offers To Those In Despair

- How despised was Jesus?
 - Isa. 53:3 - “He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him.”
- How was He able to endure?
 - Heb. 12:2-3 - “Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. 3 For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls.”

What God Offers To Those In Despair

- Will He offer comfort and aid to those so suffering?
 - Heb. 2:10, 18 - “For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings... 18 For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted.”
 - Heb. 4:15-16 - “For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. 16 Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”

What God Offers To Those In Despair

- Will He take care of you?
 - 1Peter 5:7 - “Casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.”
 - Mark 14:36 - “And He said, Abba, Father, all things are possible for You. Take this cup away from Me; nevertheless, not what I will, but what You will.”

What God Offers To Those In Despair

- Will He take care of you?
 - Matt. 10:29-31 - “Are not two sparrows sold for a copper coin? And not one of them falls to the ground apart from your Father's will. 30 But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. 31 Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows.”

What God Offers To Those In Despair

- Will He give you what you need to face life?
 - Phil. 4:13 - “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”
 - 1Cor. 10:13 - “No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it.”

What God Offers To Those In Despair

- What is waiting for you if you persevere?
 - 1Cor. 2:9 - “But as it is written: Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him.”
 - Rev. 21:4 - “And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.”

What Does The Bible Teach About Suicide?

- Suicide doesn't solve one's difficulties. It actually compounds them. In the next split second of your thoughts, you will once again be aware as was the rich man and Lazarus. You will be the same person with the same thoughts, but now you will also have to deal with your own murder.
- In addition, suicide inflicts tremendous, permanent pain on the surviving family and friends.
- There are much better options. Choose to fight the battle and seek out others who can help you fight when you are not strong. Many people do care and will help you through these low points. It may be hard to ask for help, but it is harder to ask them to deal with your suicide.
- It is a permanent solution to a temporary problem.
- "If you know enough to question that what you're doing is wrong, you are accountable." (Coral Blake, ASN, MSW)