

EUDAIMONIA & EUTHANASIA:

Human Ideals – Good Life & Good Death

By David Lee Burris

Two types of happiness

HEDONIC WELL-BEING

- Pleasure
- Feeling good
- Positive Emotions
- Maximising Enjoyment
- Subjective Well-being
- Peak moments of happiness
- Short term?

EUDAIMONIC WELL-BEING

- Achievement
- Functioning Well
- Meaning - serving a purpose beyond the self
- Engagement - Flow, Playing to Strengths, Realising Potential
- Effort into Meaning = Fulfilment
- Deeper Happiness
- Sustainable?

FULFILLING LIFE

versus

HAPPY MOMENTS

Eudaimonic

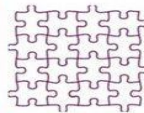


Life

that is satisfying

Holistic

Life as a whole



Feeling your life has meaning / purpose
Your experiences allow you to learn, grow & reach your full potential

Hedonic

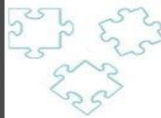
Experiences

that are satisfying



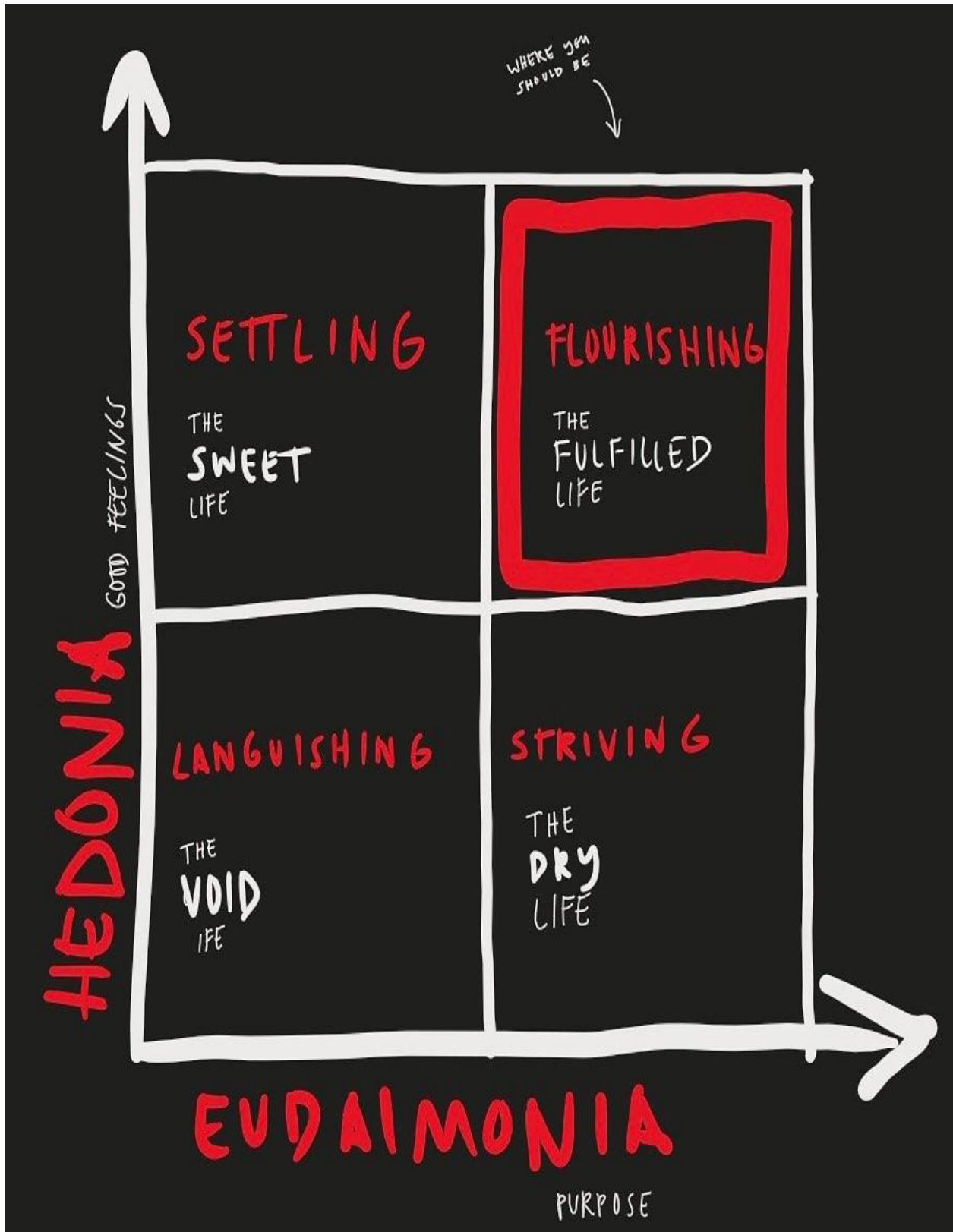
Fragmented

Elements of life



Pleasure or feeling good in the moment,
reaching a goal
feeling temporarily satisfied





Did Aristotle Mean 'Happiness' with 'Eudaimonia'?

Read the [Encyclopedia Britannica entry on Eudaimonia](#)

The Greek word *eudaimonia* means literally “the state of having a good indwelling spirit, a good genius”; and “happiness” is not at all an adequate translation of this word.

Now, substitute ‘living well’ for happiness in the prior quotes and you see the arguments make no sense, since they then devolve into redundancies.

Aristotle seems to be offering an argument for the “real” definition of ‘happiness’; not stipulating his own meaning. The Britannica entry seems to be suggesting Aristotle must be read as talking about something other than happiness, while Aristotle is plainly arguing that we have misunderstood happiness.

What do you think?

Eudaimonia

- ◆ If asked what we want from life, *happiness* is probably the answer most of us would give. The Greek word Aristotle uses is *eudaimonia*, which implies being really alive, rather than merely existing.
- ◆ Aristotle considers whether pleasure or honor are sufficient for happiness, and finds that something more is required, something proper to the person, which cannot be taken away: our ability to reason. *Eudaimonia* – or well being – comes from right action in accordance with reason.
- ◆ So ethics is a practical endeavor, rather than a purely theoretical study, one that should have practical benefits and help us to build a better character – by developing good habits.

Q: What is Eudaimonia? A: Greek Definition of The Good Life

In its simplest (translated) form, *eudaimonia* is often taken to mean **happiness** (Deci & Ryan, 2006; Huta & Waterman, 2014; Heintzelman, 2018). Sometimes it is translated from the original ancient Greek as *welfare*, sometimes **flourishing**, and sometimes as **well-being** (Kraut, 2018). The concept of Eudaimonia comes from Aristotle's discourse on *Nicomachean Ethics*, his philosophical work on the 'science of happiness' (Irwin, 2012).

Eudaimonia is about individual happiness; according to Deci/Ryan (2006: 2), it maintains that:

*"...wellbeing is not so much an outcome or end state as it's a process of fulfilling or realizing one's true nature—that is, of **fulfilling one's virtuous potentials** and living as one was inherently intended to live."*

As there are so many different ways to translate the term into the English language, it may even be helpful to look at the etymology. If it helps to provide more context, *eudaimonia* is a combination of the prefix *eu* (which means good, or well), and *daimon* (which means spirit) (Gåvertsson, n.d.).

A Brief History of Eudaimonia

As previously noted, the concept of Eudaimonia can be traced back to Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*. Prior to this, however, Athenian philosophers such as Socrates and Plato (Aristotle's mentor) were already entertaining similar concepts.

Socrates on Eudaimonia

Socrates, like Plato, believed that *virtue* (or *arête*, the very idea of virtue) was a form of knowledge—specifically, a knowledge of good and evil (Bobonich, 2010). That is, he saw numerous **virtues—justice, piety, courage as united. That is, all were one, and they were all knowledge.**

Socrates viewed this knowledge as required for us as humans to achieve the ‘ultimate good’, which was eudaimonia. And by ‘us’, Socrates meant the individual (Waterman, 1993; Deci & Ryan, 2006).

Plato and Eudaimonism

In a somewhat similar vein, Plato believed that individuals naturally feel unhappiness when they do something they know & acknowledge to be wrong. **Eudaimonia, according to Plato, was the highest and ultimate aim of both moral thought and behavior.**

Nonetheless, while Plato was believed somewhat to have refined the concept, he offered no direct definition for it. As with Socrates, he saw virtue as integral to eudaimonia.

One thing is worth noting at this point. If this idea of an ‘ultimate goal’ for individuals is beginning to sound familiar, rest assured that there is good reason for thinking so. Similarities between eudaimonia and concepts such as **Maslow’s self-actualization** (1968) are indeed widely accepted in the psychological literature (Heintzelman, 2018).

Given that we know Plato mentored Aristotle, let’s look at what the latter believed.

Aristotlean Eudaimonia

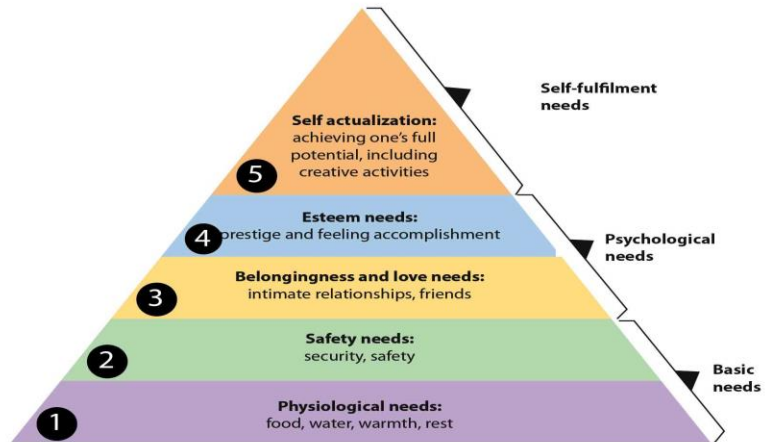
Numerous interpretations have been offered for Aristotle’s eudaimonia, with a general consensus on the idea that eudaimonia reflects “*pursuit of virtue, excellence, and **the best within us***” (Hurta & Waterman, 2014: 1426). That is, he believed eudaimonia was rational activity aimed at pursuing ‘what is worthwhile in life’.

MASLOW'S HIERARCHY OF NEEDS

THE EDITION targets upwardly mobile, globally minded career professionals who seek to be amongst the best of the breed in whichever profession they choose to engage. In keeping with our mission, which is to provide nuggets of useful information to this target audience, on an on-going basis, we present popular management frameworks of the world's thought leaders to add to the portfolio of discerning professionals.

We also request that you share some of your favourite models with us at: editor@theedition.com. We will be happy to share them with readers.

In this issue we bring you Abraham Maslow's HIERARCHY OF NEEDS.



It would be an interesting exercise to put the leaders aspiring for positions in the March General Elections through the lens of Maslow's Theory.

THE ORIGINATOR

The model was originated by Abraham H. Maslow (1908-70), an American psychologist and leading exponent of humanistic psychology. The model followed on his work for his Ph.D in Psychology at the University of Wisconsin and was first presented in a paper entitled "A Theory of Human Motivation" which published in the Psychological Review in 1943. His later book Motivation and Personality, published in 1954 introduced the Hierarchy of Needs, and he later extended his ideas in another book Toward A Psychology Of Being.

He was the eldest of seven children of Russian immigrant parents and as a young man disappointed his parents by choosing to study psychology rather than law, and by choosing to marry his cousin Bertha Goodman.

THE MODEL

In Maslow's determination to explore why people behave in certain ways, he postulated that human beings are motivated by unsatisfied needs, which appear in a certain hierarchical order – Refer to the diagram- Lower level needs must be satisfied before higher needs can be addressed. Satisfying needs is healthy, while preventing gratification makes us unsettled. After a need is satisfied, it stops acting as a motivator as a higher level needs becomes the focus of our motivation.

It is worth noting that the hierarchy is not absolute and is affected by the general environment in which the individual lives. There have been several and representations of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs in the form of pyramid diagrams. Interestingly in Maslow's book Motivation and Personality, which first introduced the Hierarchy of Needs, there is not a pyramid to be seen.

Self-actualization is the summit of Maslow's motivation theory. It is about the quest of reaching one's full potential as a person. Unlike lower level needs, this need is never fully satisfied; as one grows psychologically there are always new opportunities to continue to grow. According to Maslow, only a small percentage of the population reaches the level of self-actualization.

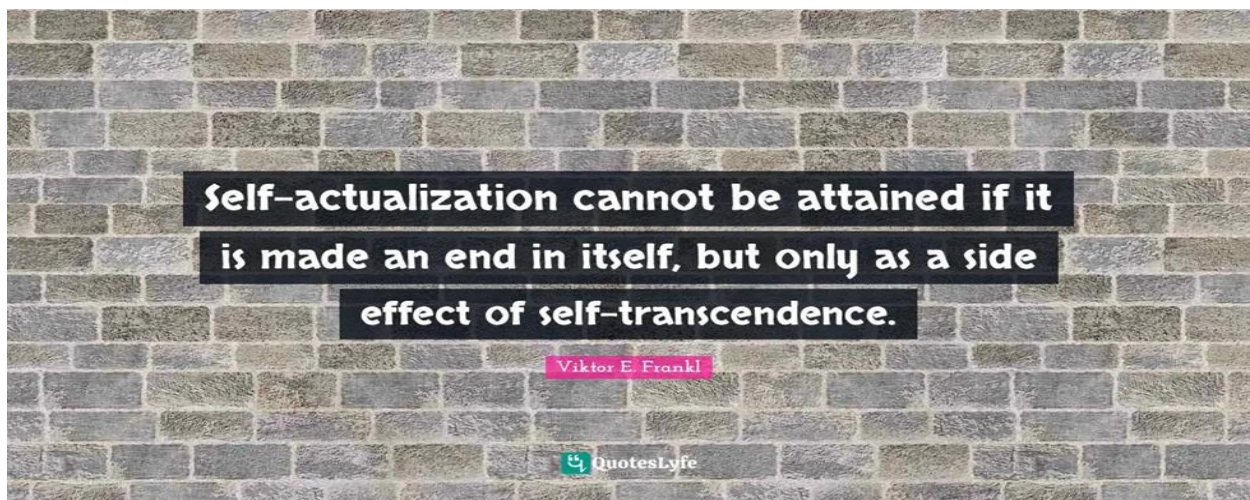
APPLICATIONS OF THE MODEL

Maslow's intention was not that his theory should be applied particularly to the workplace, but there is tremendous relevance to the work environment.

For example: Let us assume that you are a manager who is seeking to motivate a team to higher levels of productivity. You require the team to devote more time to work in the pursuit of certain goals. One of your team members has recently lost his home in a fire. Unless you can help him sought out his pressing need for shelter (Level 1), it is doubtful that he will pay attention to what you require him to deliver (Level 2).

Motivation has become more important in contemporary organizations as a result of the need for increased productivity and the model is typically applied to Compensation; Change Management and the Development. However, there are other day to day applications:

Assume that a political leader is seeking elective public office. While he clothes his language in rhetoric and lofty pronouncements that suggest he is at Level 5, it is a well known fact that he is currently bankrupt and sees a position in government as a sure access to government coffers and the regaining of wealth to meet Level 2 needs. While the electorate might vote him in assuming that he will deliver on his promises and serve the community by driving development initiatives, it is unlikely given his pressing needs for a sizeable income that he will pay attention to his public duties in the short run. As Kenya faces an elective year, it would be an interesting albeit subjective exercise to put the leaders aspiring for positions in the March General Elections through the lens of Maslow's Theory. **E**



Viktor E. Frankl

Where Aristotle diverged from Plato and some other thinkers is in his belief about what is 'enough' (roughly) for eudaimonia. For the latter, virtue was enough for the ultimate good of eudaimonia. For Aristotle, virtue was required, but not sufficient (Annas, 1993). In layperson's terms, we cannot just act with virtuous, but we have also to intend to be virtuous, too.

I will return to this a little later when looking at Aristotle's ethics. But for now, he believes that happiness and well-being come from how we live our lives. And that is not in pursuit of material wealth, power, or honor. Rather, eudaimonic happiness is about lives lived and actions taken in pursuit of eudaimonia.

Where these rational activities include "*pride, wittiness, friendships that are mutually beneficial, pride and honesty among others*", neither do lots of other creatures (Hursthouse, 1999).

A Look at Aristotle's Concept of Happiness and Well-Being

If you could ask Aristotle himself what happiness is, this is exactly what he'd say:

*"...Some identify happiness with virtue, some with practical wisdom, others with a kind of philosophic wisdom, others with these, or one of these, **accompanied by pleasure** or not without pleasure; while others include also **external prosperity**...it is not probable that these should be entirely mistaken, but rather that they should be right in at least some one respect or even in most respects."*

Aristotle, Nichomachean Ethics, Book I, Chapter 8

We have more concise and straightforward excerpts that reveal how we are to go about achieving it.

Happy Life According to Aristotle

To be honest, a lot of Nichomachean Ethics is about what happiness *isn't*. 'Satisfying appetites', Ryan and Singer argue is akin to "life suitable to beasts", according to the philosopher (2006: 16). The pursuit of political power, material wealth, even of fun and leisure, he saw as "laughable things", inferior to "serious things" (Ryff & Singer, 2008: 16).

Instead, happiness is an 'intermediate', or a 'golden mean' between deficiency and excess. One example of virtue as a mean between two extremes is *courage* – as a virtue, it's halfway between recklessness and cowardice (Kings College London, 2012).

Here, we see the 'rational activity' aspect of eudaimonia coming back to the fore. When we are faced with situations, therefore, it can be argued that Aristotle is not giving prescriptive advice. He is, however, telling us how he believes the rational, virtuous pursuit of eudaimonia might look in an everyday setting.

Role of Externalities

So, what if you're very, very unlucky?

Social Honor: Ascribed & Acquired

- Military Historian & Greek Essayist Xenophon Said:
 - “In this man differs from other animals, I mean this craving for honor...”
- In *Nicomachean Ethics*, philosopher Aristotle said:
 - “The greatest of external goods – honor...
 - Being loved seems akin to being honored.
 - ... [we] identify happiness with honor.”
- In his *City Of God*, the theologian Augustine said:
 - “For the glory that the Romans burned to possess, be it noted... the love of praise. This one vice, that is, the love of praise, they overcame the love of money and many other vices.”

Working Within The Ranking System

- Corresponding With The Customs Of Antiquity & Ancient Commentaries By Aristotle – Plutarch – Philo – Josephus
- Christ Said To Seek Station Of Humility
- In Luke 14: Verses 8 & 9 -
 - “When you are invited by anyone to a wedding feast, do not sit down in the best place, lest one more honorable than you be invited by him;
 - “and he who invited you and him come and say to you ‘Give place to this man, and then you begin with shame to take the lowest place.’”

Teachings on Humility

Being Humble 14:7-11

- At dinner, Jesus noticed how the Pharisees were sitting and gave them advice.
- He advised them to sit at a lower place, and they might be moved to a higher place, instead of sitting down at a place of honor and risk being told to move to a lower place.
- He said those who exalt themselves will be humbled; and those who humble themselves will be exalted.



Childhood

Galilee

Judea

Perea

Jerusalem

Teachings on Humility

Being Hospitable 14:12-15

- Jesus advised the one who invited him to the dinner to invite the poor, crippled, lame, and blind instead of his family and friends.
- Jesus said that your family and friends can pay you back, but the poor, crippled, lame, and blind cannot.



Childhood

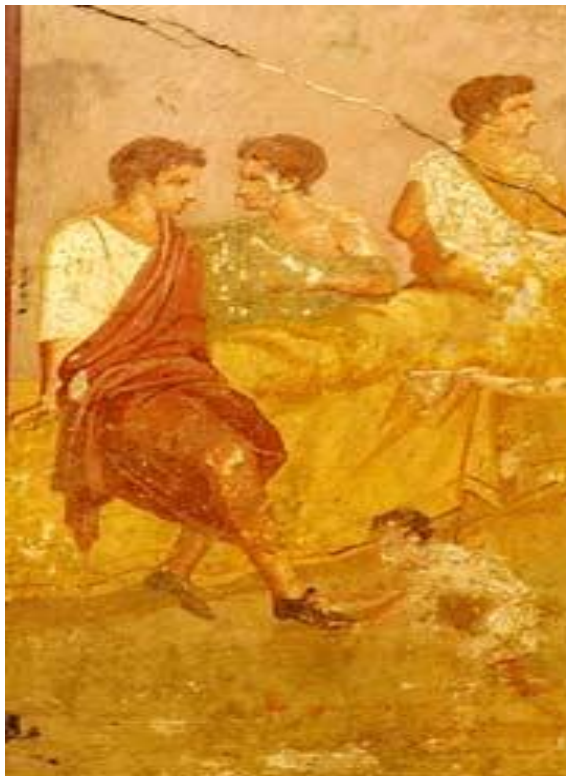
Galilee

Judea

Perea

Jerusalem

LIVING LARGE OR NOT LIVING AT ALL:



According to Seneca, suicide was morally justifiable if you were impoverished, crippled, terminally ill or insane – in other words - obviously no longer in the ancient world - “living the dream” of eudaemonic experiential and situational happiness - the classic Greco-Roman good life. Living in the relentless grip of a tyrant was another justification, allowing one to “burst the bonds of human servitude”.

In his *Epistles* Seneca gives a working example of such a case, a Germanic slave who took his own life after years of mistreatment. While alone in the lavatory, the slave suicided by shoving a *xylospungium* (a sponge on a stick, used to wipe down toilet seats and soiled backsides) down his own throat:

“In a training academy for gladiators who work with wild beasts, a German slave, while preparing for the morning exhibition, withdrew in order to relieve himself – the only thing he was allowed to do in secret and without the presence of a guard. While so engaged, he seized the stick of wood tipped with a sponge, devoted to the vilest uses, and stuffed it down his throat. Thus, he blocked up his windpipe and choked the breath from his body... What a brave fellow. He surely deserved to be allowed to choose his fate.”

Seneca took his life by slashing his wrists in several places. Though intended to be quick, his death was slow & lingering. Many historians consider Seneca’s suicide taking the pink bath to be the Roman equivalent of the Greek death forced suicide of Socrates drinking the hemlock.



Q: What is Euthanasia? A: Greek Definition of The Good Death



Good Death in the city-state. The Graeco-Roman world never turned its back on the heroic ideal. It modified this ideal to make it fit into the value system of the new community state, the *polis*. The polis stressed the collective element of death by citizens who sacrificed their life for the common cause, for the virtues the *polis* wanted were co-operative rather than competitive in Homeric society.

Pleasant dying. In the fourth century BCE, the city-state no longer constituted the complete world of an individual. This development was due to emergence of great powers like Macedonia that reduced the significance of the polis. Now private life was more valued as well as a private good death - that is the reason why the vocabulary of 'euthanasia' originated in this period. In the Menander fragment, Dionysios, the glutton, ends saying: 'I am rotting away in pleasure.'

Roman death. 'Why should I play the Roman fool?' Shakespeare has Macbeth say, playing upon the concept of 'Roman death', i.e. suicide. This phrase reflects the popular idea that self-killing was permitted and even glorified in the ancient world, especially among Romans - although - there was always an undercurrent of doubt and even rejection of suicide, especially among the Pythagoreans and Neo-Platonists who held to a dualistic view of man's nature.

“Death with Dignity” & Physician-Assisted Suicide

The idea of so-called death with dignity and physician-assisted suicide has provoked a still-ongoing debate. As Kaplan and Sadock note:

Despite the abhorrence that many physicians and medical ethicists express regarding physician-assisted suicide, poll after poll shows that as many as two thirds of Americans favor the legalization of physician-assisted suicide **in certain conditions**, and evidence even indicates that the formerly unified opposition to physician-assisted suicide has eroded.

There is a Latin saying, “Where I am there is no death, and where is death there I am not.” The psychological experience in physician-assisted death with dignity says the opposite “Where I am there is death, and where death is, there I am.”

The dread caused by choosing death is a daily encounter of those seeking physician assisted suicide. The fight between hope and desperation, courage and despondency, guilt and denial, becomes expressed in a protracted self-destructive, suicidal state of mind, a fight between the motives to live and motives to die. Truly sickness may cause life to seem utterly painful, hopeless, and meaningless. One could say, paraphrasing Acts 5:4, that *counting themselves “unworthy of suffering” for the sake of God, their families, friends and neighbors induces in them a feeling of life “unworthy of living.”*

Let us conceptualize the mental functioning of a suicidal person with an illustration. Suicidal individuals perceive pain, suffering, disappointments, financial disasters, unhealable sickness, and other troubles as a slap in the face from destiny.

The first reaction of every subject would be to retaliate. For suicidal people, though, retaliating is impossible because the cause of their frustration (sickness, bankruptcy, a natural disaster, disappointment in love, loneliness, injustice, abuse, incurable sickness, personal mistakes, abandonment, death of a beloved person, loss of a job, financial catastrophe, etc. cannot be simply attacked, beaten or annihilated. When retaliation is unsuccessful, most people would then react with anger. But for those who are suicidal, anger expressed as depression, loneliness, poverty, addiction, or abuse appears day after day, repeating its painful attack and punishing them without giving them the possibility to escape from their frustration. And when anger is unproductive, a helpless rage emerges.

Helpless rage against factors that cause unbearable suffering can be provoked by many different situations, but with one common characteristic: they cannot be rectified, healed, compensated for, or revenged. Humans can endure many feelings but not helpless rage. It is the most destructive emotion, causing the impression that it is better to die, to not exist at all, than to live in such unbearable misery. Because the conflict cannot be resolved by an explosion (aggressive acting out), implosion (introverted aggression) remains the only possible way to get rid of the tormenting, helpless rage. The reasons are many; the healing is one: helping suicidal people to biblically resolve and process their helpless rage.

In every suicidal person, the motive for living and dying is fighting. The suicidal person's discretionary and appreciative judgment makes a fatal mistake when overwhelmed by helpless rage, and he chooses death.

Those who have a **why** to live,
can bear with almost any **how**

– Viktor Frankl

In some ways
SUFFERING CEASES
to be suffering at the moment
IT FINDS A MEANING,
such as the meaning
OF A SACRIFICE.

written
wrinspo
inspiration

VIKTOR E. FRANKL,
MAN'S SEARCH FOR MEANING

Each man is questioned by life,
and he can only answer to life by
answering for his own life; to life
he can only respond by being
responsible.

– VIKTOR FRANKL

QUOTE **▲** AMBITION

The worst part of suffering is its perceived meaninglessness.

It is hard to resolve helpless rage caused by stressors like invalidity, unhealable sickness, loss of a beloved spouse, financial catastrophe, or the perceived senselessness of suffering. In this context, it is beneficial to keep in mind the thoughts of concentration camp prisoner 119104, Viktor E. Frankl.

Any attempt to restore a man's inner strength in the camp had first to succeed in showing him some future goal. Woe to him who saw no more sense in his life, no aim, no purpose, and therefore no point in carrying on. He was soon lost. The typical reply with which such a man rejected all encouraging arguments was "I have nothing to expect from life anymore." What sort of answer can one give to that?

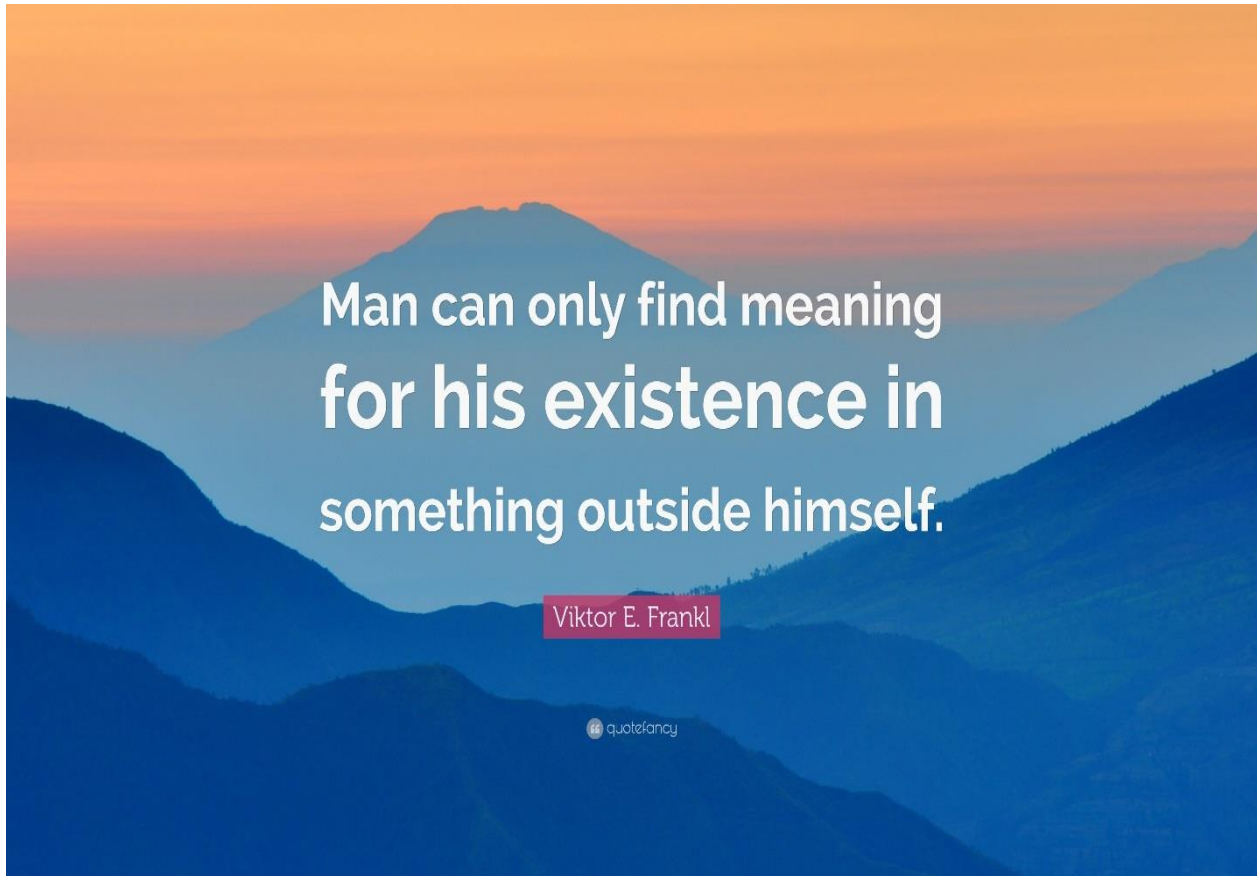
What was really needed was a fundamental change in our attitude towards life. We had to learn ourselves, and furthermore we had to teach the despairing man that it did not matter what we expected from life but rather what life expected from us. We need to stop asking about the meaning of life and instead think of ourselves as those who were being questioned by life—daily and hourly.

The healing of suicidal people rests in discerning what life is asking from them. For Christians, unselfish and self-sacrificing suffering is a corollary of following Jesus changes one's attitude toward suffering. For example, Jesus' apostles were handed the greatest slap in the face by life, but their reaction to frustration, humiliation, abuse, pain, and persecution are reflected in the words of Peter.

Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal that is taking place among you, as though something strange were happening to you. But rejoice that you participate in the sufferings of Christ, so that you may be overjoyed when his glory is revealed.” (1st Peter 4:13–14)

The main tool in Christian healing and prevention of suicide is what we call discipleship. As previously noted, discipleship enables one to become worthy of suffering. Those worthy of suffering are not raging helplessly because of injustices, pain, and suffering; rather, as Acts 5:41 describes, they grasp abuse, abandonment, loneliness, sickness, tragedies, and catastrophes as normal, expected, and unavoidable parts of their worldly pilgrimage. Identified with the abused and glorified Jesus, they are resilient (1 Peter 4:13–14). Resilience means the ability to bounce back, like a compressed spring. Those blessed with a biblical hope that supersedes desperation and enables them to process their helpless rage and forgive seven times seventy-seven times are resilient. **In short, while helpless rage kills God in worldly people’s hearts, in resilient disciples it deepens their union with Jesus.**

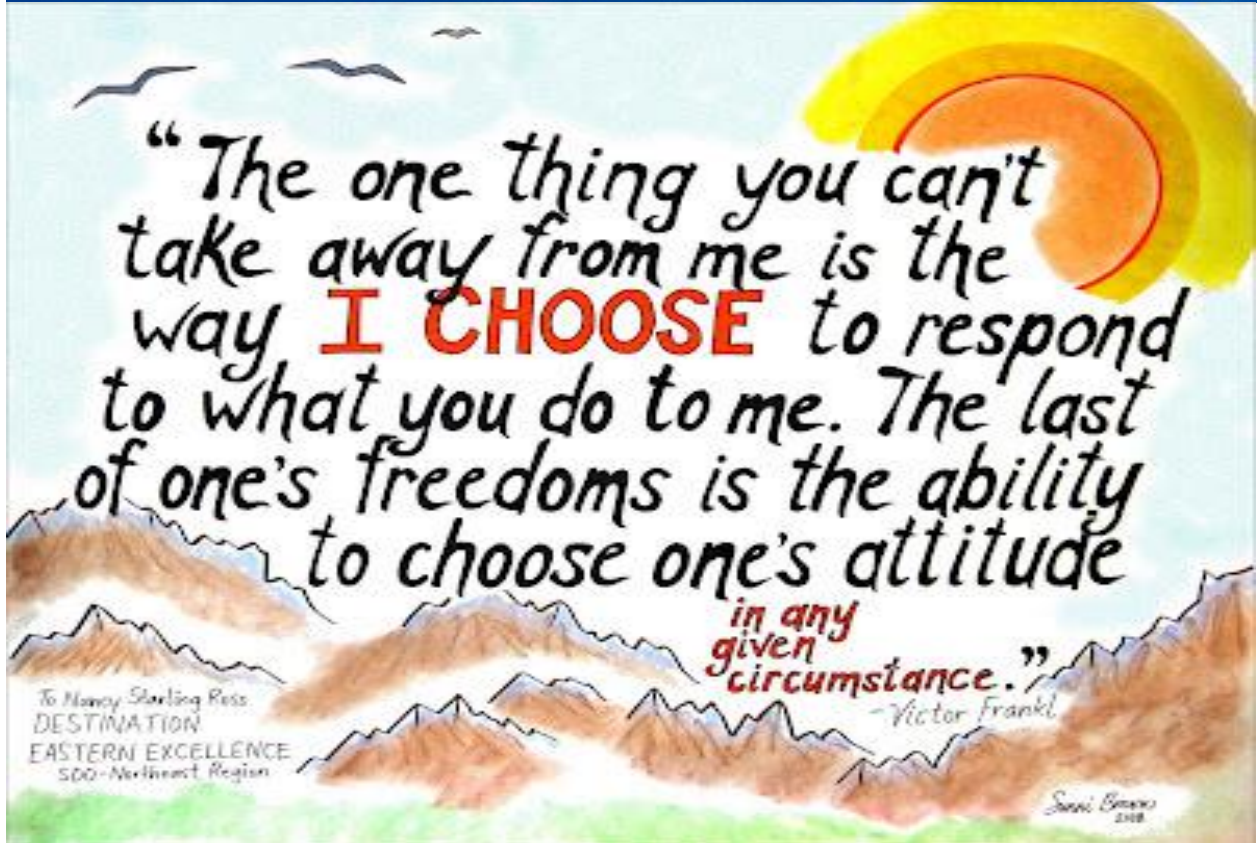
Faith, or surrendering to Jesus, is the panacea for healing all suicidal behaviors. No psychiatrist or psychologist, and no medical, psychotherapeutic, psychoanalytical, or cognitive behavioral treatment can imitate what genuine faith can do in preventing and healing suicidal behaviors. Jesus mentioned the power of faith 111 times in the four gospels. All of his references to belief put faith in the context of a deep, powerful, life-affirming context that superseded all worldly approaches. The world will only know and appreciate this fact if Christians bear witness to it.



Man can only find meaning
for his existence in
something outside himself.

Viktor E. Frankl

quote fancy



“The one thing you can't
take away from me is the
way **I CHOOSE** to respond
to what you do to me. The last
of one's freedoms is the ability
to choose one's attitude
in any
given
circumstance.”

-Victor Frankl

To Nancy Starling Reis
DESTINATION
EASTERN EXCELLENCE
SDO - Northwest Region

Susan Brown
2018

We must never forget that we may also find meaning in life even when confronted with a hopeless situation, when facing a fate that cannot be changed. For what then matters is to bear witness to the uniquely human potential at its best, which is to transform a personal tragedy into a triumph, to turn one's predicament into a human achievement. When we are no longer able to change a situation...we are challenged to change ourselves.

Viktor E. Frankl

In general, the culture of death is gradually penetrating Western culture and societies. The legalizing of euthanasia or physician-assisted suicide is a sideshow of this zeitgeist. Factually, there is nothing stranger to humans than living an ultimately meaningless life, and hence the need for a dependence on an almighty and ultimately loving deity.

In their transition from worldliness into eternity, terminally ill people need to be helped to discern a purpose. For some, it is the last opportunity to turn to Jesus. To others strongly connected to Jesus, witnessing their faith, optimism and courage to their loved ones and neighbors is the last, and probably most important act of love they can provide.

The other contemporary phenomenon that is hard to define as more of a sickness or sin is that of so-called murder-suicide. In contrast to people of faith who seek peace, forgiveness, joy, empathy, mercy, and the love of God's kingdom despite all injustices, inequities, and abuse, those unwilling or unable to process and forgive real or imagined insults, humiliation, and frustrations experience intense anger and hatred. The pain and suffering caused by the experience that they or their loved ones have repeatedly been slapped in the face gradually escalate, reaching a level of almost insatiable, helpless rage. Such helpless rage forces them to metaphorically explode and implode at the same time. Their suicidal and homicidal revenge helps to decrease their helpless rage. Since suicidal-homicidal behaviors are facilitated by an unbearable impulsivity, the struggle against them can be won only in the hearts, souls, consciences, and minds of the affected people.¹

¹ Ungar, P. (2020). [*Sin and Mental Ailments: Pastoral Psychiatry and Psychology for Healing Professionals, Pastors and Inquiring Christians*](#). Nashville, TN: Elm Hill.

The Biblical View of Suicide by Wayne Jackson

The Bible, both Old and New Testaments, contains laws and principles that identify suicide as a morally reprehensible act on the part of a rational person.

There are several cases of suicide mentioned in the Scriptures, and all of them are viewed in an unfavorable light (1 Sam 31:4,5; 2 Samuel 17:23; 1 Kings 16:18; Matthew 27:5). Self-destruction is a violation of the following biblical truths:

First, suicide asserts that man is **autonomous**; that he is his own source of law. Seneca, the Greek Stoic, defended suicide as an aspect of man's lordship over his own being.

The Bible, however, teaches that it is Jehovah who made us, and not we ourselves (Psalm 100:3). All people belong to the Creator (Ezekiel 18:4), and He has the "right" over them (cf. Genesis 2:7; Romans 9:21). Humanity is responsible to God.

Second, the Scriptures make it abundantly clear that life is a **gift from God**. It is He who gives life to all (Acts 17:25; 1st Timothy 6:13). No person has the intrinsic right to destroy that given by the eternal Source of life, unless authorized to do so by the Lord (cf. Leviticus 20:2).

Third, suicide is a violation of the divine law prohibiting **murder**. The unauthorized shedding of human blood is an assault upon the image of God in man (Genesis 9:6). [Note: The Jewish rabbis felt that this passage specifically forbade suicide (Gen. *Rabbah* 34.21b).]

Murder is condemned (Exodus 20:13; Romans 13:9), and suicide is self-murder when perpetrated by an accountable person.

Though some who take their own lives doubtless are mentally disturbed, thus would not be responsible for the act itself, it is estimated that 90% or more of suicide victims are considered to be normal, sane persons.

Fourth, suicide is an act of **selfishness**. Human beings have been given the responsibility of serving God (Ecclesiastes 12:13). As our Maker (Psalm 95:6), he is worthy of our service (Psalm 18:3); man was created to glorify Jehovah (Isaiah 43:7).

Moreover, it is our duty to help others. Just as our Lord went about doing good (Acts 10:38), so he would have us benevolent towards all men (Galatians 6:10). None of us lives “to himself” (Romans 14:7).

Fifth, suicide violates the principle of **self-value** that is so clearly enjoined in a multitude of Bible passages. When Paul admonishes everyone not to think “of himself more highly than he ought” (Romans 12:3), he certainly implied a proper level of self-worth.

Jesus taught: “Love your neighbor as yourself” (Matthew 22:39); and the Scriptures suggest that: “Love does no wrong to a neighbor” (Romans 13:10). Would not a consideration of these two verses in concert lead to the conclusion that one should place a proper value upon his own life?

When Paul exhorts man to love his wife as “his own body” (Ephesians 5:28), there is the presumption of a legitimate obligation towards one’s body.

From Guardian of Truth Magazine on The Topic of Suicide

Job opened his mouth and cursed the day of his birth. And Job spoke, and said: 'May the day perish on which I was born, and the night in which it was said, "A male child is conceived. . ." Why did I not die at birth? Why did it not perish when I came from the womb? . . . Why is light given to him who is in misery, and life to the bitter of soul, who long for death, but it does not come?' (Job 3)

At the beginning of Job's story, he had been healthy and wealthy with seven sons, three daughters, servants, flocks, herds, and possessions in abundance. But in rapid succession, he lost them all. His wife advised him, "Curse God and die" (Job 2:9).

His friends gathered to console him, but their suggestions and advice only wearied him the more. He wished he had never been born. He longed for death to release him from his adversity. He complained bitterly about the misery that befell him. What was happening to him was beyond his comprehension.

But he didn't commit suicide. He didn't throw away the life God had given him and thrust himself into eternity. Job reasoned, "Shall we indeed accept good from God, and shall we not accept adversity?" (Job 2:10)

Job opted to complete life's course and to keep his faith. His story has a bright ending. "Now the Lord blessed the latter days of Job more than his beginning, for he had 14,000 sheep, 6,000 camels, 1,000 yoke of oxen, and 1,000 female donkeys. He also had seven sons and three daughters. . . In all the land were found no daughters so beautiful as the daughters of Job" (Job 42:12ff).

What a loss it would have been what a waste what a sin, if Job had lost patience with God and ended his life prematurely.

Suicide Is Sinful

Suicide is sinful. It violates every passage of Scripture that tells us not to kill (Romans 3:19, etc.).

And while it is true that a few who commit suicide are mentally incompetent and not morally or spiritually accountable (James 4:17), this is certainly not the case with many. In fact, “innocent by reason of insanity” pleads better in a human court than it will when we stand before the Lord in the final judgment.

Not only does suicide violate all the passages that tells us not to kill, it is almost always an act of extreme selfishness & often an act of retaliation against family members, friends, or unresponsive lovers for wrongs or supposed wrongs they have done. As such it violates Romans 12:17-21 and many similar passages.

There are several cases of suicide recorded in the Scriptures, with no hint that the perpetrators might somehow escape God’s judgment.

The first case of suicide is that of Abimelech. Some might deny that his death is suicide, since Abimelech didn’t wield the sword himself, but rather commanded his armor-bearer to do it. Technically, this may be so, but for general purposes, Abimelech committed suicide. He was the son of Gideon. He killed his seventy brothers (except for one who hid & escaped unnoticed) in an attempt to become the first king of Israel. A woman dropped a millstone on his head from a tower as he passed by, critically injuring him. He ordered his armor-bearer to kill him so that it would not be said that a woman had killed him. Perhaps, he thought in this way he could die a hero.

2. King Saul, the first legitimate king of Israel also committed suicide. Saul’s case is similar in many ways. He had been severely wounded in battle, and he too commanded his armor-bearer to commit the act. In Saul’s case the armor-bearer refused to co-operate, so Saul fell on his own sword (1 Samuel 31:4).

Seeing that his master was dead, Saul’s armor-bearer then drew his own sword and likewise killed himself (1 Samuel 31:5-6).

Ahithophel had been a trusted adviser to King David, but became a traitor and joined in the rebellion of David’s wayward son Absalom. When Absalom heeded the advice of Hushai instead of Ahithophel, Ahithophel foresaw the disaster that would befall the rebellion. When he saw that his counsel was not followed, “he saddled his 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” (2 Samuel 17:23).

Zimri was a servant of King Elah of Israel & commander of half of his chariots. He murdered Elah and his entire family, took over the palace and ruled for seven days. As Omri, commander of the army closed in to take the kingdom away from him, "Zimri saw that the city was taken. . . He went into the citadel of the king's house and burned the king's house down upon himself with fire, and died" (1 Kings 16:18).

6. The case of Judas Iscariot is so well known as to need little comment. When Judas realized the full nature of his betrayal of Jesus, he sought to correct his error. Seeing that his evil deed could not be undone, he hanged himself in remorse and despair (Matthew 27:4-5). Judas could have been forgiven for his betrayal of Jesus, just as Peter was forgiven for denying him. But Judas lost his faith, and flung himself into an eternity apart from God.

To these six cases of suicide, some would perhaps add the name of Samson. Samson is more properly viewed as a casualty of war. He would, no doubt, have spared himself if there had been a way to do so and still accomplish the victory over the Philistia (Judges 16:30).

Scriptures also record a case of near suicide. Paul and Silas had been arrested, beaten, chained and imprisoned. In their cell, they were singing and praising God when an earthquake occurred. "And the keeper of the prison, awaking from asleep, seeing the prison doors open, and supposing the prisoners had fled, drew his sword and was about to kill himself. But Paul called with a loud voice, saying, 'Do yourself no harm, for we are all here'" (Acts 16:27-28).

Suicide Does Not "End It All"

Some think, when life becomes unpleasant, that suicide is the way to "end it all." This is a sad and serious mistake. Physical death does not really end it all. The Bible clearly indicates that **both consciousness and memory survive the grave.** In Luke 16, Jesus tells of the life and death of two men, Lazarus and an un-named rich man. "So it was the beggar died, and was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died and was buried. And being in torments in Hades, he lifted up his eyes and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. Then he cried and said, 'Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame.' But Abraham said, 'Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and you are tormented'" (Luke 16:22-25).

Physical death did not end it all for Lazarus. Physical death didn't end it all for Abraham. And physical death didn't end it all for the "rich man." Physical death does not "end it all."

Perhaps when Judas flung himself into eternity, he hoped he would erase the memory of the betrayal. But memory survives death (Luke 16:25). Perhaps he was simply carrying out the penalty he believed he deserved for his crime. **Perhaps. But he could have had forgiveness instead.**

Not Heroic

Some misguided souls embrace suicide as the way to become a hero. Abimelech didn't want to be known as the ruler who was killed by a woman but suicide did not make him anyone's hero. In the short term, one might think suicide will help a person to make his mark, to be truly noticed, talked about and remembered, but as we look back over all of recorded history, we do not see anyone who became a hero by suicide, or who has been any longer remembered as a result of that act than he would otherwise have been. Suicide simply is not the way to a hero's death.

Not A Highway to Heaven

Throughout history, some have turned to suicide as the route to be re-united with a friend or loved one who has died. This too, is a great mistake. Since the Bible indicates two distinct destinies after death, it is not certain you would be re-united with your friend, even in death. In fact, **if your friend is in the place of comfort, suicide is not the path that will lead you there.** Willful sin does not lead a person to heaven.

If, on the other hand, your friend is not in the place of comfort, he does not want you to be where he is and you don't want to be there (Luke 16:27-28).

False Doctrine Takes Its Toll

There are numerous false doctrines and philosophies that have been promoted over the past several decades that have paved way for a multitude of suicides.

Materialism is the idea that the here and now is all there is, that there is no hereafter, that spiritual values are not real. This philosophy is diametrically opposed to the teaching of Jesus: "One's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses" (Luke 12:15). When the stock market crashes, many of those who emphasize only the material things in life crash along with it. Many fail to find real meaning in life because they are trying to find it in earthly possessions and worldly relationships. The false doctrine of materialism has led many to commit the ultimate crime against themselves.

Another outgrowth of our materialistic society is the concept that suicide is not wrong that "I have a right to do anything I want to my own body." This too is in opposition to the teachings of the Scriptures. Paul would remind us, "You are not your own. You were bought at a price; therefore, glorify God in your body and in your spirit which are God's" (1 Cor. 6:19-20). While it is true that what Paul said applies especially to Christians, in a sense it is true of all since Jesus tasted death for everyone (Hebrews 2:9). Jesus bought me, body and soul. I do not have a right to do anything with my body or to my body that violates his will.

Some well-meaning religious teachers have twisted passages of Scripture to support their theory of "once saved, always saved." One such teacher a few years ago was counseling a person who was depressed and suicidal. The teacher did indeed attempt to persuade his "patient" not to commit suicide, but at the same time, he continued to assure him that suicide would in no way jeopardize the welfare of his soul. Needless to say, the "patient" committed suicide. The false teacher and his false doctrine were partly responsible. The Bible does not teach that the sins of any accountable person will be forgiven automatic. Christians are taught the necessity of repentance and confession of their sins to God, in order that they may be forgiven (Acts 8:22; 1 In. 1:9). **Suicide forever closes the door to such repentance and confession, and thus thwarts the plan of salvation God has given for the erring Christian.**

Many preachers and religious leaders in our modern-day society are too "kind and merciful" to preach about hell. In fact, in the denominational seminaries all the passages teaching about hell and its horror have been "explained away." He who believes what Jesus taught about hell is not likely to commit suicide.

"Do Yourself No Harm" (Acts 16:28)

Now, let us return to Paul's admonition to the Philippian jailer, "Do yourself no harm."

The jailer perceived that Paul and Silas had something he lacked. They had been beaten, bound and imprisoned, but instead of cursing and grumbling, they were singing praises to God. The earthquake shook open the prison doors. They could have escaped, but they did not. The jailer “called for light, ran in, and fell down trembling before Paul and Silas. And he brought them out and said, ‘Sirs, what must I do to be saved?’”

He knew they had a contentment he had never known. Their response: “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved.” But how could he believe on one he knew nothing about (Romans 10:14)? “Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house.” Upon hearing what Paul and Silas preached about Jesus, the jailer repented of his sins and obeyed the gospel Paul preached. “And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes. And immediately he and all his family were baptized. Now when he had brought them into his house, he set food before them; and he rejoiced, having believed in God with all his household” (Acts 16:28-34).

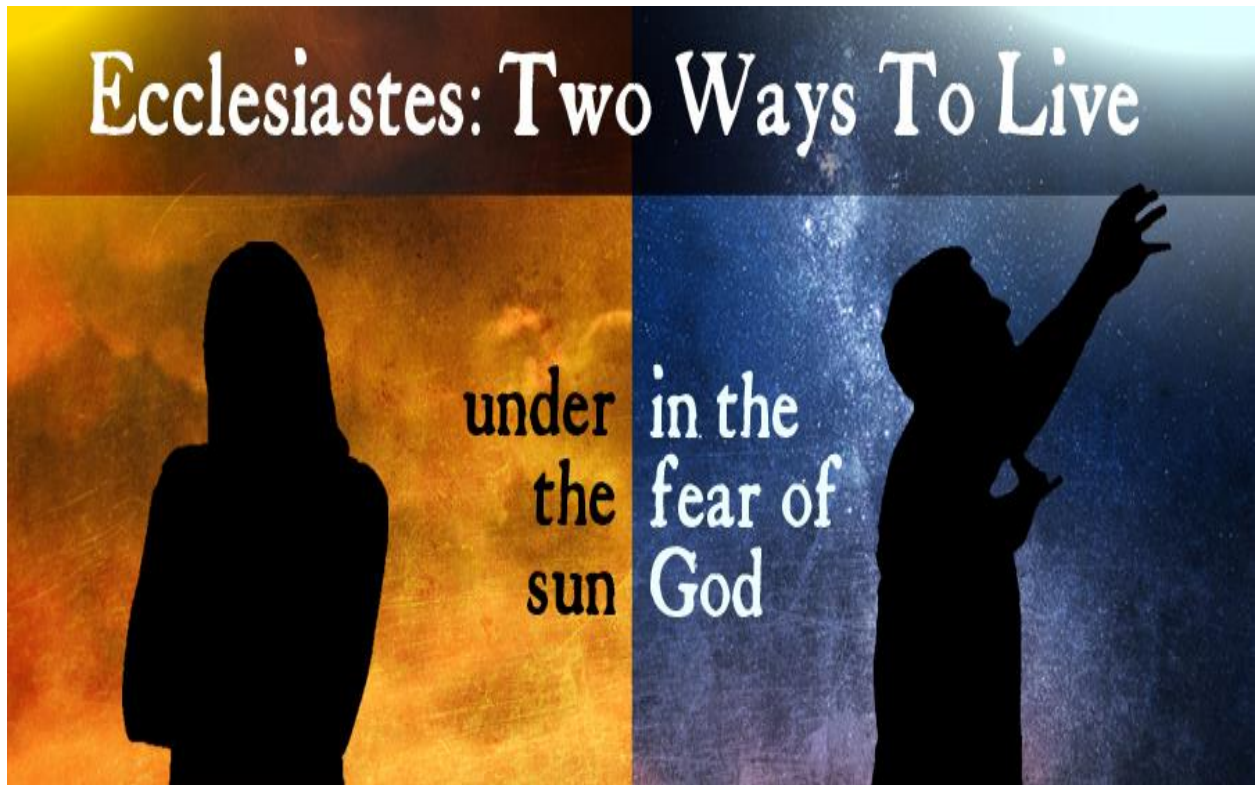
An hour before, he had been in despair. He had been about to take his own life. Hearing the good news of Jesus, believing that gospel, and obeying it brought salvation and rejoicing to the jailer’s house in the same hour of the night.

Of course, being a Christian does not magically dissolve all problems. But God has promised to supply the strength necessary to bear up under whatever tests, temptations and problems life may bring (1 Cor. 10:13). Jesus has invited us to cast our cares upon him, with the assurance that he cares for us (1 Peter 5:7).

He has also given us the responsibility to help our brothers and sisters in Christ as they bear life’s burdens, with a realization that they will also help us in bearing our own burdens as we go through life (Galatians 6:2).

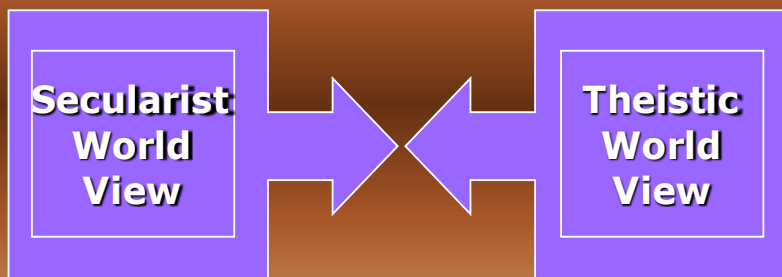
Finally, the Apostle Paul assures the faithful Christians that life’s greatest problems are temporary and relatively insignificant in view of eternity: “Therefore we do not lose heart . . . for our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we do not look at the things which are seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal” (2nd Corinthians 4:16-18).

Godly Ideals – Good Life & Good Death



Secular-Humanist Instrumental-Utilitarian

TWO VIEWS OF THE WORLD



SECULARIST WORLDVIEW

- ♦ A World view without God
- ♦ Autonomous man
- ♦ Pursuit of the earthly



Fully Alive In Christ!

The Theistic WORLDVIEW

- ♦ A world under God's control
- ♦ A trusting relationship with the Creator
- ♦ Pursuit of the spiritual purposes of God



ELUSIVE EUDAIMONIA:

Book Of Ecclesiastes: The Preacher General Providence: The Lot Of Man

GOD'S NATURAL & NORMAL LAW OF IMPARTIALITY

- Total Vanity (Vapor) Or Ephemeral Emptiness Of Mankind's Every Ambition & Pursuit
- Determining Role Of Random Chance In Large Majority Of Human Success Stories & Failures Of Endeavor
- No Denying That Luck & Time Happen To All Of Us & This Is Called "The Human Condition"
- Nature Repeats Itself In Endless Cycles (Chapter 1) Or In Amoral Alternation Of Opposites (Chapter 3) - Always At Work But Nothing Is Achieved
- Beasts Of Field Know No Difference But Humans Require Meaningful Objectives & Purposeful Existence
- The Creatures Of Intelligence Throughout Human History Have Searched For Answers As To The Positively Purposed End To Man On Earth - Teleological Study Of History

ETERNAL EUDAIMONIA:

Godly Goal – Heaven Happiness

Book Of Ecclesiastes: The Preacher
General Providence: The Lot Of Man

GOD'S NATURAL & NORMAL LAW OF IMPARTIALITY

- Successive Generations Of Humans On The Earth Compare In Impact To That Of Goalless Nature
- Aging Man Is Metaphorically Compared To An Old House
- Then The Lone & Inevitable Certainty Of Each Man's Death
- We Will Not Even Be Remembered By Those That Survive Us
- Thus, We Find In (12: 9 - 13) He States We Must Be Prepared To Go To Our Long Home
- Chapters One Thru Eight Written In First Person - That Person Claimed As Being King Solomon
- His Conclusion - Man Alone Is Not Merely A Number But Neither Are Men Together The Measure
- After - Chapter 8: Verse 12 - Written In Third Person & Centers On Advice For Living In The Duration Or That Interval Between House & Home
- Recommends "Seizing The Day" & Enjoying Small Pleasures Of This Life & The Three-Fold Chord Of Family.

POPULAR CULTURE VERSUS GOD'S CHILD

Pro

- Right to Die**
Activists supporting euthanasia believe that the choice of death is an intrinsic human right
- No Harm Caused**
May act in the best interests of the state, family and the patient
- Regulation of Euthanasia**
Could lead to effective control
- Scarcity of Medical Aid**
Consumption of scarce medical resources depriving those who may live healthy lives if provided the same opportunities

Anti

- The Sanctity of Life**
By agreeing to administer euthanasia, we agree that some lives are worth less than others
- Scientific Arguments**
Proper palliative care makes assisted dying unnecessary
- Religious arguments**
Most opposing religious views hold that only God has the right take a life
- Slippery Slope & Medical Decline**
Euthanasia may be misused



Seven in 10 Americans Back Euthanasia

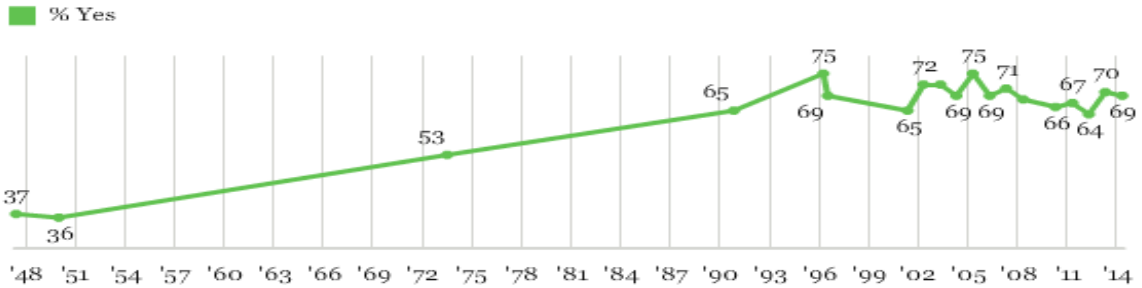
Support strong for past two decades

by Justin McCarthy

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Most Americans continue to support euthanasia when asked whether they believe physicians should be able to legally “end [a] patient’s life by some painless means.” Strong majorities have supported this for more than 20 years.

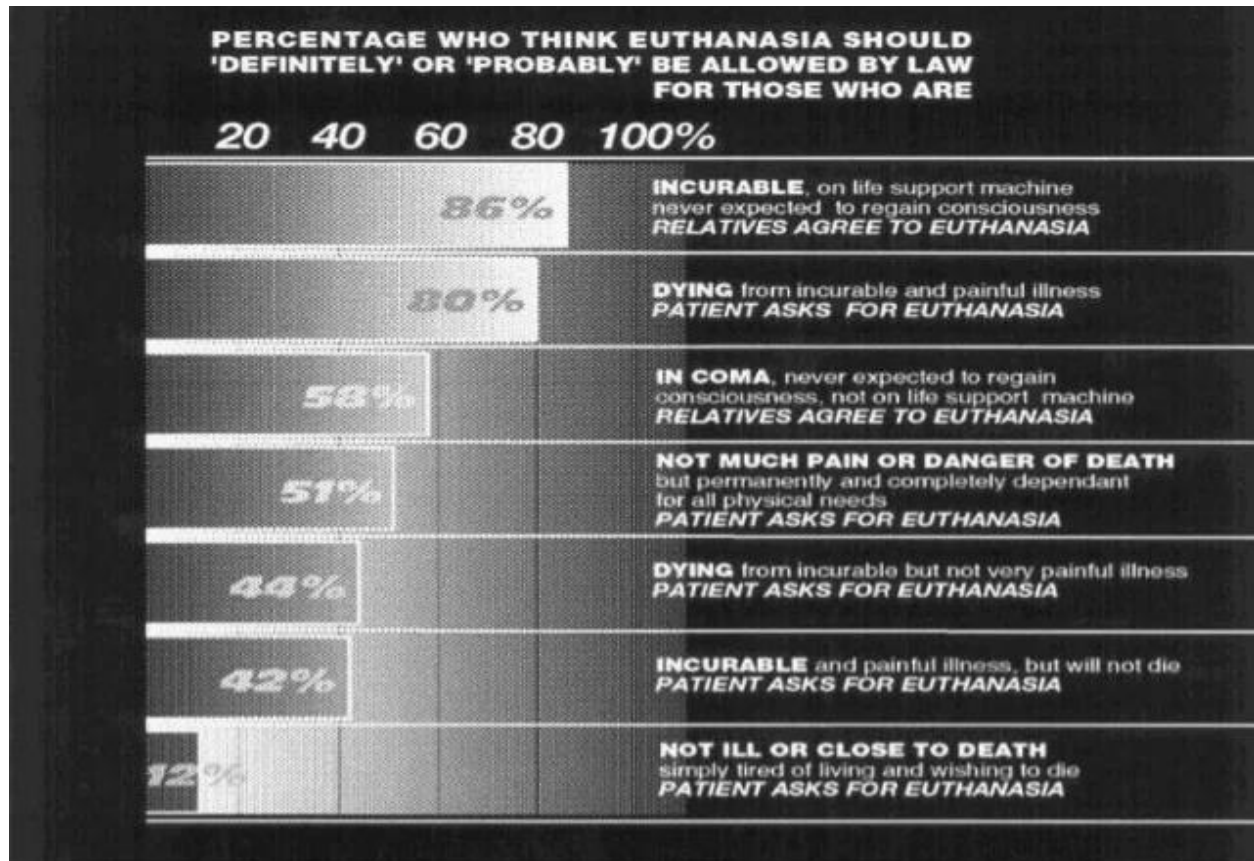
Support for Physician-Assisted Euthanasia

When a person has a disease that cannot be cured, do you think doctors should be allowed by law to end the patient’s life by some painless means if the patient and his or her family request it?



GALLUP®

Although these are largely private family matters, controversy about euthanasia and other end-of-life situations has often become public — most recently, regarding the death of iconic radio host Casey Kasem. His children and his wife fought in court over what to do in the final stages of Kasem’s battle with Lewy body disease, a form of dementia. Ultimately, a judge granted his daughter the authority to have doctors remove his infusions of water, food, and medicine.



- In a poll taken by Princeton Survey Research Associates for the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press and the Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life, it was found that support for euthanasia is lower when the word "suicide" is used to describe the actions.

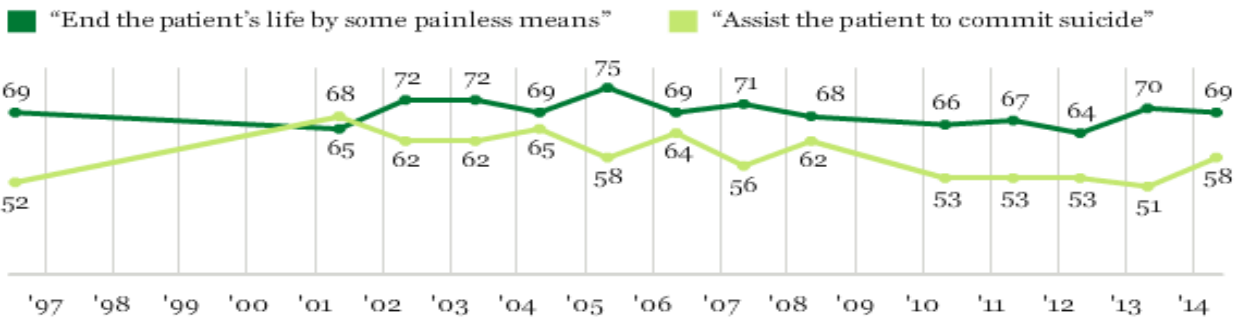
Respondents were 51 per cent in favour making it legal for doctors to give terminally ill patients the means to end their lives.

When the wording in the question was changed, only 44 per cent of respondents were in favour of making it legal for doctors to assist terminally ill patients in committing suicide.

Support for Physician-Assisted Suicide -- Two Question Wordings

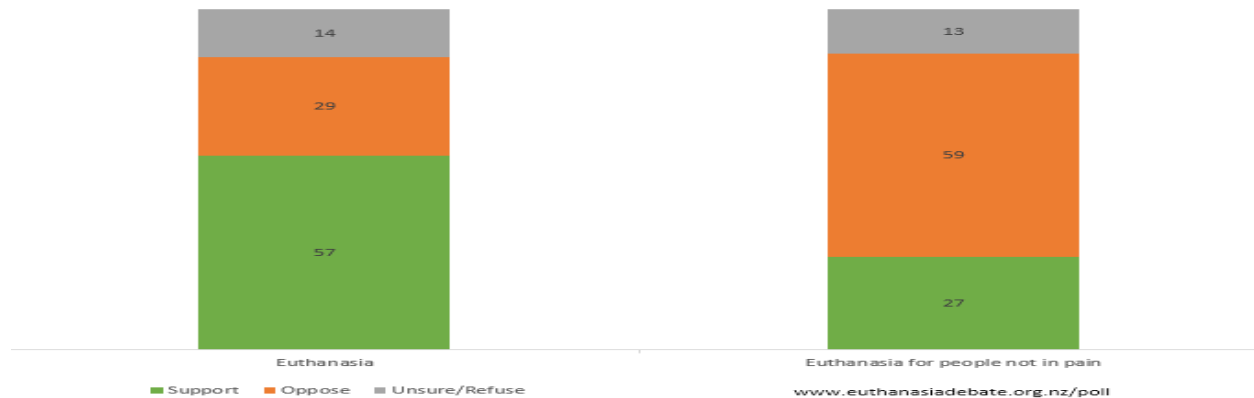
(Form A) When a person has a disease that cannot be cured, do you think doctors should be allowed by law to end the patient's life by some painless means if the patient and his or her family request it?

(Form B) When a person has a disease that cannot be cured and is living in severe pain, do you think doctors should or should not be allowed by law to assist the patient to commit suicide if the patient requests it?



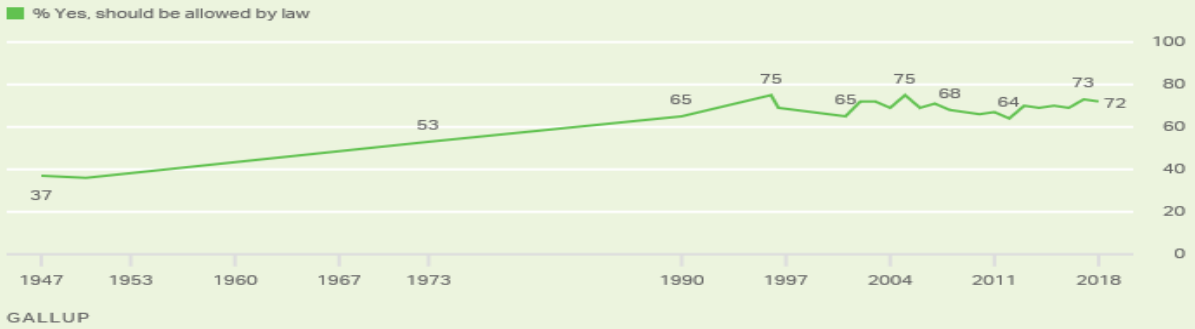
GALLUP

Euthanasia Support Halves for People Not in Pain



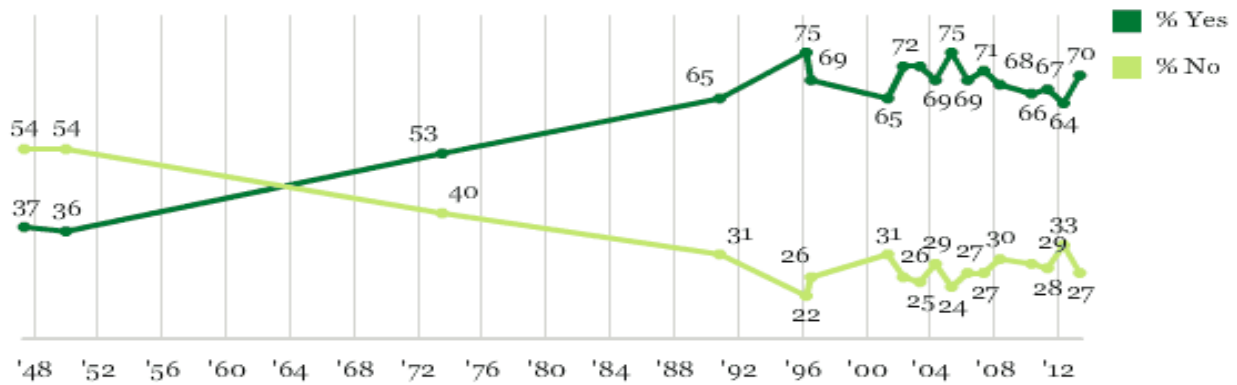
Americans' Support for Euthanasia

When a person has a disease that cannot be cured, do you think doctors should be allowed by law to end the patient's life by some painless means if the patient and his or her family request it?



Support for a Doctor's Ending a Patient's Life "by Some Painless Means"

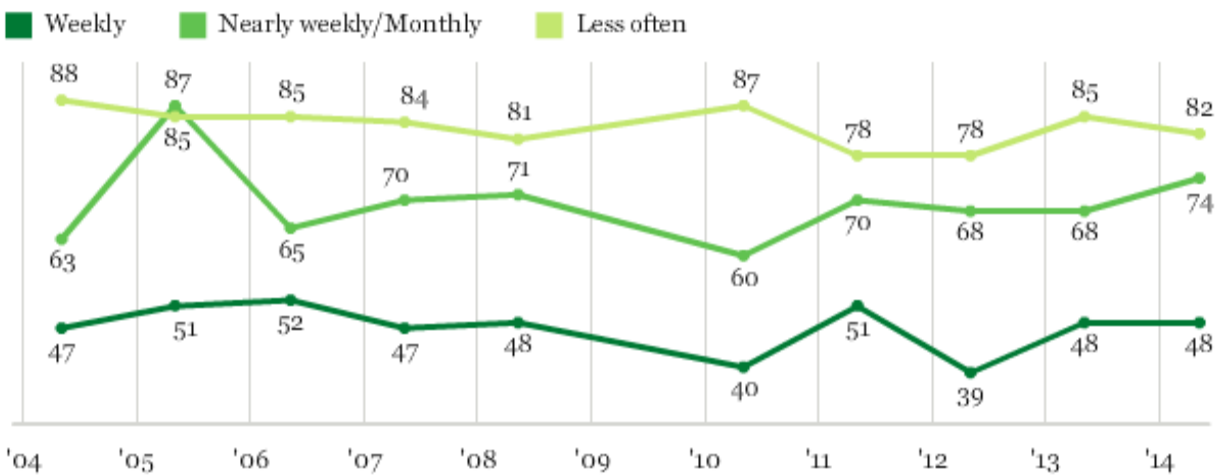
When a person has a disease that cannot be cured, do you think doctors should be allowed by law to end the patient's life by some painless means if the patient and his or her family request it?



GALLUP

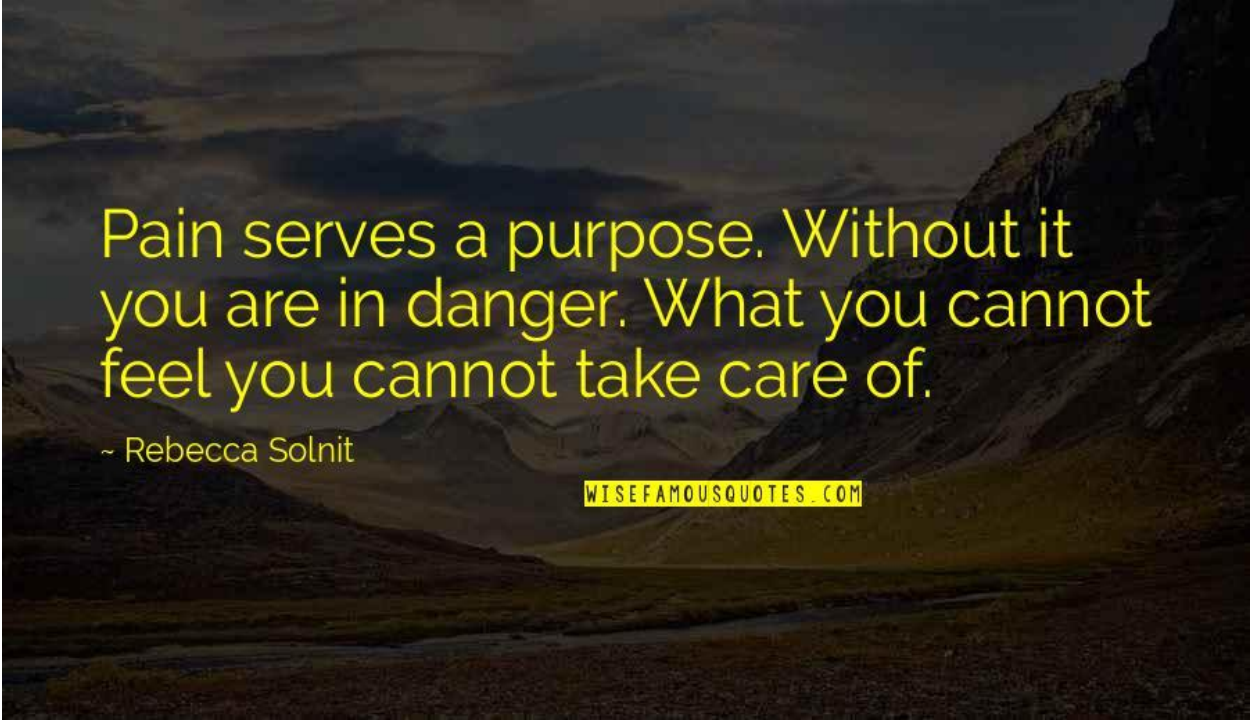
Support for a Doctor to End a Patient's Life Through "Painless Means," by Church Attendance

% Yes, should be allowed by law to end the patient's life



GALLUP





Pain serves a purpose. Without it you are in danger. What you cannot feel you cannot take care of.

~ Rebecca Solnit

WISEFAMOUSQUOTES.COM

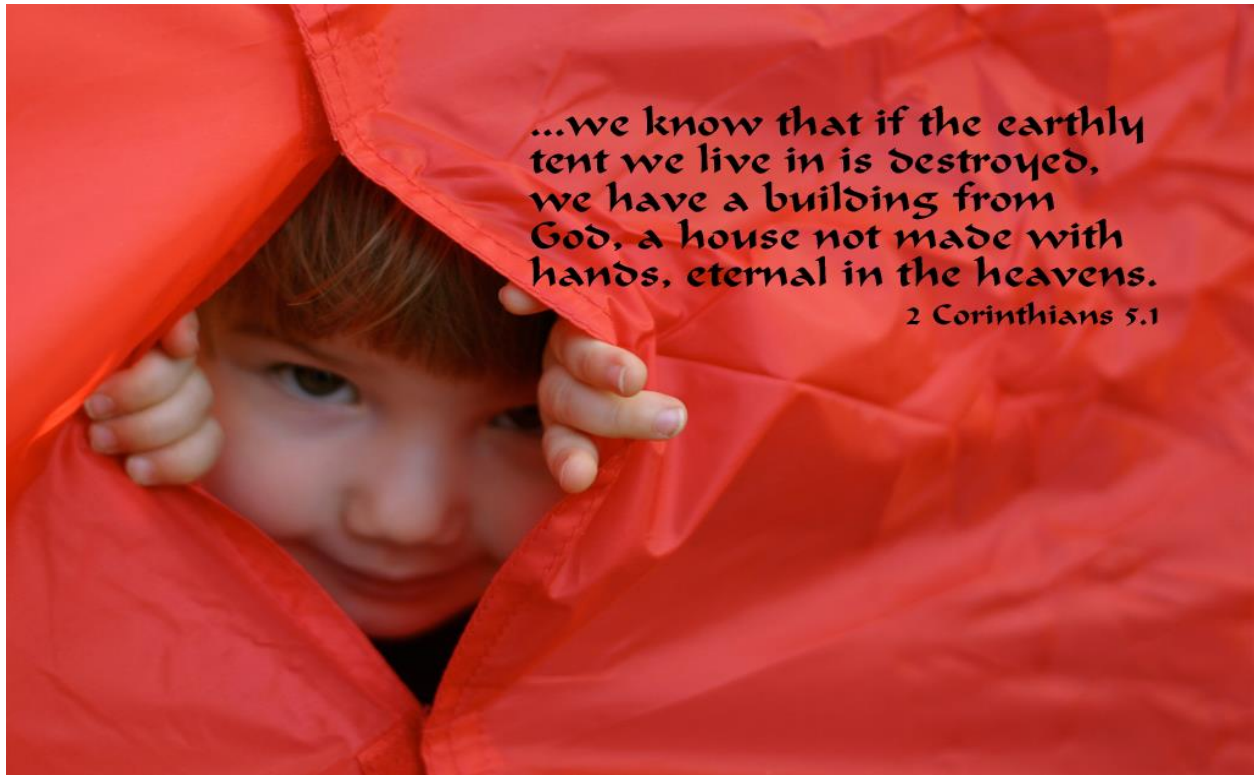


The
PURPOSE
exceeds the
PAIN.

- Beth Moore

Question: What If Pain Has Exceeded Its Purpose?
Physical Pain's Gratuitous - Inevitably Terminal?
None Argue Secondary Service To A Greater Good?
Answer: Patient & Physician Both Will Before God!

NEW BODIES WITHOUT PAIN AWAIT:



...we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

2 Corinthians 5:1



He will

Transform
our lowly body to be like His
Glorious body

Philippians 3:21

thevoiceoftruthblog.weebly.com

alittleperspective.com



EYE
HAS NOT
SEEN

nor EAR
HEARD

nor HAVE
ENTERED into
the HEART
of man

THE THINGS
WHICH GOD

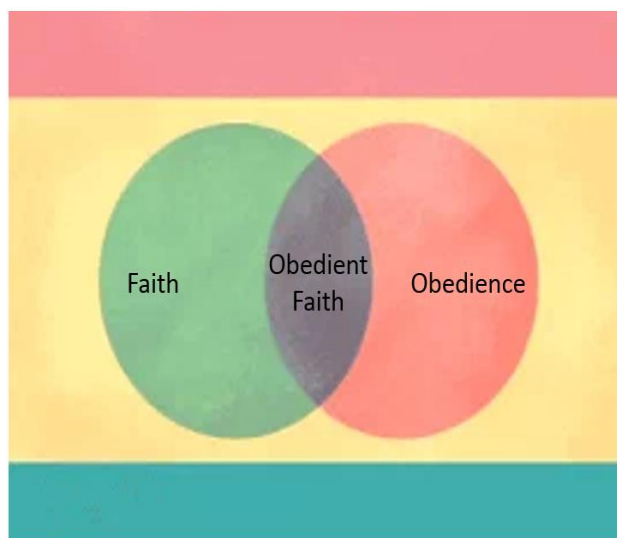
has
prepared

¹ CORINTHIANS
2:9 for THOSE WHO
LOVE HIM.

AT THE NEXUS OF GRACE & GLORY

Five Steps For Saving:

- HEARING:
- Romans 10: 17; Matthew 7: 24 - 27
- BELIEVING:
- Hebrews 11: 6; Mark 16: 15, 16
- REPENTING:
- Acts 2: 38; 17: 30; Luke 13: 3
- CONFESSING:
- Matthew 10: 32, 33; Acts 8: 36, 37
- BAPTISM:
- Romans 6: 3 – 5; Acts 8: 36 – 38



O That Will Be Glory

2. *Wh* O that will be glory for me, e grace,

I an Glory for me, glory for me; ce,

When by His grace I shall look on His face, e

That will be glory, be glory for me. me.

