

Consensual Murder known as MAID

Ten years ago this year, the Supreme Court of Canada struck down section 14, paragraph 241b of the Criminal Code that forbids consensual murder in order to allow it in medical settings. Since the legal term, "consensual murder", is too descriptive for most people, allowable consensual murder is now commonly referred to as "MAID", or 'Medical Assistance in Dying'.

This study will look at the issues involved from a Christian perspective.

I. The Basics Principles

A. The Commandments

1. Deuteronomy 5:17 This command seems pretty straight forward, and it is. The Hebrew word is most accurately defined as, "you shall not slay a person on purpose." How should this word be interpreted by us today?
2. Matthew 5:21 How does Jesus interpret this commandment for us?
3. Romans 13:8-10 Is it possible to justify the killing of another person or even killing yourself using love as a motive?

B. The Reason Why

1. Genesis 9:5-6 Why is it a particularly bad thing to take the life of another human being?
2. Romans 13:3-5 Who are the only people who should fear anyone's right to kill?
3. John 8:12-24 What does this say about people who challenge God's authority when it comes to judgments that belong to God alone?
4. Deuteronomy 29:29 What are the boundaries of both our rights and our limitations when it comes to making important life decisions?

II. The False Justifications

A. An End to Suffering

1. Romans 5:3 What is the purpose of suffering in the life of a Christian?
2. Isaiah 53:3-4 What was the purpose of our Lord's own suffering?
3. Job 36:15 What is God able to do with us in our times of suffering?
4. Matthew 4:23-25 What was our Lord's response when suffering people came to Him?
5. Ecclesiastes 8:6-8 What does this have to say to people who think that they can know for sure what will happen to someone in the future?

B. An End to Inconveniencing Others

1. Galatians 6:2 How does God's Word help us respond the person who doesn't want to inconvenience their family and friends by their illness?
2. 2 Corinthians 1:3-7 What blessings do we gain personally in holding onto the hands of people who are suffering?
3. 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 How does genuine love reveal itself?

III. Responsibilities

A. Personal Responsibilities

1. 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 What must we keep in mind any time that we make decisions in regard to the care of our own bodies?
2. John 10:10 What does this say about the person who takes their own life or the life of another person?

B. Responsibilities Toward Others

1. Proverbs 31:8-9 What important responsibility are we ignoring when we give people the right to judge between life and death?
2. Ezekiel 33:6 What are the responsibilities of people who are in positions of leadership and how does God hold them accountable?

IV. Further Considerations:

A. St Augustine -- "Is it honourable?"

If you look at the matter more closely, you will scarcely call it greatness of soul, which prompts a man to kill himself rather than bear up against some hardships of fortune, or sins in which he is not implicated. Is it not rather proof of a feeble mind, to be unable to bear either the pains of bodily servitude or the foolish opinion of the vulgar? And is not that to be pronounced the greater mind, which rather faces than flees the ills of life, and which, in comparison of the light and purity of conscience, holds in small esteem the judgment of men, and specially of the vulgar, which is frequently involved in a mist of error? ... For suicide we cannot cite the example of patriarchs, prophets, or apostles; though our Lord Jesus Christ, when He admonished them to flee from city to city if they were persecuted, might very well have taken that occasion to advise them to lay violent hands on themselves, and so escape their persecutors. But seeing He did not do this, nor proposed this mode of departing this life, though He were addressing His own friends for whom He had promised to prepare everlasting mansions, it is obvious that such examples as are produced from the "nations that forget God," give no warrant of imitation to the worshippers of the one true God.

B. Thomas Aquinas -- Does freedom of the will give us the right to kill ourselves?

The passage from this life to another and happier one is subject not to man's free will but to the power of God. Hence it is not lawful for man to take his own life that he may pass to a happier life, nor that he may escape any unhappiness whatsoever of the present life, because the ultimate and most fearsome evil of this life is death. Therefore to bring death upon oneself in order to escape the other afflictions of this life, is to adopt a greater evil in order to avoid a lesser. In like manner it is unlawful to take one's

own life on account of one's having committed a sin, both because by so doing one does oneself a very great injury, by depriving oneself of the time needful for repentance, and because it is not lawful to slay an evildoer except by the sentence of the public authority. Again it is unlawful for a woman to kill herself lest she be violated, because she ought not to commit on herself the very great sin of suicide, to avoid the lesser sin of another. For she commits no sin in being violated by force, provided she does not consent, since "without consent of the mind there is no stain on the body," as the Blessed Lucy declared. Now it is evident that fornication and adultery are less grievous sins than taking a man's, especially one's own, life: since the latter is most grievous, because one injures oneself, to whom one owes the greatest love. Moreover it is most dangerous since no time is left wherein to expiate it by repentance. Again it is not lawful for anyone to take his own life for fear he should consent to sin, because "evil must not be done that good may come" (Romans 3:8) or that evil may be avoided especially if the evil be of small account and an uncertain event, for it is uncertain whether one will at some future time consent to a sin, since God is able to deliver man from sin under any temptation whatever.