

Suicide Is Not Part of God's Plan for Your Life – Please Reconsider

Last week I received a call from a friend I have not seen in years. His message was one we never want to hear—especially when it concerns someone who was an old friend. He told me a mutual friend who goes back to my high school days, and that struggled with alcoholism for many years, finally gave up the fight and committed suicide. Such a constant battle was exacerbated I am sure by this environment of isolation we have been in for months. It has contributed to too many people making that decision.

There is no more tragic end to a life than suicide. The day after I received the news, I began praying and studying to prepare this message for you. I sought the Lord for clear truth, wrapped in His love, generously sprinkled with His grace. After a lot of hours in this, today I am going to be honest, compassionate, and the most important thing I can do, speak the truth according to God's Word. If my words, at times, seem insensitive, please forgive me for that is not my heart. Sometimes the truth is painful. This may be one of those times.

We are going to examine this in three parts:

- *What we know about suicide*
- *What we do not know about those who take their own lives*
- *What we know with certainty about God and you*

What we know about suicide...

The word comes from two Latin words that mean exactly what it is—self-kill. Some people do not like the bluntness it conveys, but the fact remains that is what a person does when

they follow through on this tragic act.

These facts are more disturbing than the meaning of the word itself. **Every 40 seconds someone in the world commits suicide—in the US, every 11 minutes.** The same people who publish these stats report as many as twenty people attempt suicide for every one who does so. It is the second leading cause of death among 15-29 year-olds. It is the 10th leading cause of death in the US. Up 35% over the last two decades. It is a

Causes. The number one cause of suicide is clearly depression. Other reasons cited include psychoses, suicides related to drugs and alcohol, and those who prefer death over living— especially with severe or terminal illness or dire consequences lay ahead they consider too difficult to bear.

Suicide and the Bible. There are six known acts of suicide in the Bible, personal or assisted. Perhaps the best-known was Judas Iscariot who betrayed Jesus for thirty pieces of silver. Afterward he felt remorse, returned the silver, went out and hanged himself. (Matthew 27: 3-5) Others include King Saul and Samson, both under unique circumstances.

Let's get straight to the question that interests or troubles many people, ***Is suicide a sin?*** The **answer is yes.** The sixth Commandment reads (in the best translations), "*You shall not commit murder.*" It refers to an intentional act, not an accident. Suicide is sadly the act of murdering oneself. It takes the ultimate authority of life from God into our own hands.

Words of Comfort. As quickly as I went to the first painful question, I want to get to one that is more important. Here it is, asked in two ways:

Can the sin of suicide be forgiven? or Is suicide an "unpardonable" sin?

The first answer is **YES!** The second answer is **NO!**

Now let me prove both straight from the mouth of God. When Jesus speaks, I lean in and listen closely. The context of the unpardonable sin is found and explained in Matthew 12 (and Mark 3). The background was Jesus doing miracles, and the people marveled that He may be the Messiah. It is the role of the Holy Spirit to testify to people Who Jesus is and the Spirit draws us to Him leading to our salvation.

*"But when the Pharisees heard this, they said, "This man casts out demons only by Beelzebul the ruler of the demons...(Jesus speaking) Therefore I say to you, any sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven people, but blasphemy against the Spirit shall not be forgiven. "Whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man, it shall be forgiven him; **but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come."***

Matthew 12: 24, 31-32

As you can read, the Pharisees, who hated Jesus, quickly chimed in (verse 24), Jesus is of the devil and does His miracles through Satan. That denial of Christ's deity and attributing it to the work of Satan is blasphemy of the Holy Spirit—the only unpardonable sin. Why? Because Jesus said so.

Comfort is found in Jesus' words in v31—"Therefore I say to you, any sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven people" **Any means any.** Jesus said any sin can be forgiven—including suicide.

Yes, but...the Bible clearly teaches the way to forgiveness of sin is through confession, contrition, and repentance. So there are those, especially within some religions and denominations who point out that the person who commits suicide did that as their last act leading to death with no chance to seek forgiveness or repent. That leads to the second part of our lesson today.

What we do NOT know...

Jesus direct words, followed later by the consistent teaching of the apostles, state very clearly how we can identify a true, born-again Christian.

- *First, we love Jesus then others as ourselves—especially those we really do not like.*
- *Second, we bear (spiritual) fruit by the power of the Holy Spirit.*

It is not difficult to identify Christians who are on fire for the Lord. It is difficult to identify “chameleon” Christians who blend in so well with the world. Too many people say they are Christians, but their lives show no evidence neither do they bear fruit for the Kingdom of God.

To that point, Jesus warned about those who think they are saved when they are not. He gave two examples—tares among wheat and goats among sheep. Then He warned of what will be the most terrifying words ever spoken to man when one of them stands before Him at his judgement. *“Depart from Me. I never knew you.”* (Matthew 7: 23)

That thought and imagery ought to scare the Hell out of everyone!

Now comes the part that judgmental people do not like to hear, but it is straight from the mouth of Jesus.

Jesus is the only Judge of the hearts of mankind.

“The Father judges no one but has given all judgment to the Son.” John 5: 22

He told us not to judge others. Suffice it to say that while, as Christians, we are instructed to exercise good judgment and discernment when it comes to other people – based on the evidence I referred to above – we are NEVER to judge their eternal standing with God. That is dangerous water to wade into. Only God knows the REAL intent and condition of

someone's heart. We do not.

So unless someone is defiantly opposed to Jesus—mocking Him and scoffing at the prospect of Hell, we need to remain silent when someone, about whom we are uncertain of his or her eternal standing before God, commits suicide.

Christians and Suicide

If we are truly born-again in Christ, we made choice to move away from that lifestyle to allow the Holy Spirit to do His transforming work in our lives. We are a creature, as the Apostle Paul wrote.

"Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come." 2 Corinthians 5: 17

This is a process not an event. Salvation is an event. Sanctification is a process. But **Christians still sin** along the way. And sometimes, even Christians get so distraught and depressed—at times under tremendous demonic attack including substances—they give up. They simply get so overwhelmed by our fierce enemy who Jesus said came to kill and destroy us, the weary defeated believer looks downward instead of upward. And in that moment of weakness, he makes that decision reserved only for the Lord God—he takes his own life.

The following verses apply to all believers regardless of our sin. For true believers CANNOT commit the unpardonable sin since we have believed the testimony of the Holy Spirit and received Christ as our only hope of salvation.

(Jesus' words) *"For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through Him. **Whoever believes in Him is not condemned**, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. "* John 3: 17-18

The world was condemned from Genesis 3 forward. Lost and hopeless. Even God's chosen people threw Him off and blew Him off because they chased after other gods. They "played the harlot" as He called them many times in the Old Testament.

The Apostle Paul wrote these words in Romans 8 that reinforce those of Jesus.

*v1. "There is therefore now **no condemnation** for those who are in Christ."*

vs 38-39 "For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

If you have a loved one you think or know had received Christ as his or her Savior and later committed suicide. Cling to these words of hope and comfort in desperate times. Jesus is our only hope now and forever, Amen.

A Few Final Thoughts

If you are reading, listening to, or watching me teach this difficult message, and at this moment in a hard, even desperate, place, the Holy Spirit Who is God wants you to stop what you are doing and breathe. Now lean in and hear the following words I am pouring into your spirit from His that will help *ease your pain, quiet your troubled mind, and slow your racing heart.*

Hear these words of Truth:

- *Your life matters to God.*
- *God loves you no matter who you are, where you are in life, or what you have done.*
- *God was thinking about you before He even created you in His own image.*

- *God knew you before you were born and knit you together in your mother's womb.*
- *God has a plan/purpose for your life that only you can fulfill.*
- *Jesus Christ died for your sins so you do not have to...no matter what.*

My dear friend, **do not run from God...run to Him.** His arms are wide open. His ear will hear all your lamenting and anguished cries. His hands will catch every tear you shed. His love alone can bring help, healing, and hope your heart desires. I beg you to fall on His kind arms today.

For Christ's sake,

Walter