

Suicide; unforgivable? 1 of 2

Hi all,

There are many documented cases of Christians in ancient Rome, so miserable in this life and yearning for heaven, turning themselves into the authorities for arrest, knowing they would be killed. Did they commit suicide? Suicide is defined as 'The act of intentionally causing one's own death.' It is the murder of self. Is it forgivable by God?

A woman age 42, married with 2 teenagers, had bravely fought cancer for 2 years. She confided in me: "John, please tell my husband and the church to stop praying for me. I'm not going to get further treatment, the last 2 weeks have been so amazing in the Lord, I am tired of fighting it and just want to go home to heaven."

We talked to her husband together, and he agreed not to press her to keep fighting. She died within a few weeks. Did she commit suicide by refusing treatment and just wanting to 'go home'?

A young man I knew battled mental illness, seeing demons on fences and shrubs as he drove along the road, and would try to run them over, totaling vehicles and destroying fences, mailboxes, and landscaping in the several times he did that. His illness was driving him to destruction, and one day we got word that at a curve of the road, he drove straight, hitting an embankment and dying instantly.

When I asked the Father about what that spirit was to cause him to do that, He said, "The spirit of suicide." Knowing the young man, I'm sure he saw a demon and tried to run over it with his truck - that spirit literally led him off the road to his death. But was it suicide just because the demon behind his actions was a spirit of suicide, but didn't actually cause him to put a gun to his head or overdose on medicines or something like that?

To his parents and everyone else, it was just a tragic 1 vehicle accident. The Sunday after his funeral, in the midst of our worship service, my eyes were opened to the Lord's realm and there stood that young man, grinning widely happy as could be, worshipping along with us. 2 others saw him as well. Then after a few seconds, he was gone. The Lord did that to give assurance he was with Him, and doing well in heaven.

Is a person who smokes cigarettes committing slow suicide? Is the alcoholic drinking to the point of liver damage and perhaps the loss of marriage and jobs along the way, committing slow suicide? What about the anorexic girl starving herself or the glutton who eats themselves to death? Do we label their habits and lifestyle as something other than just 'destructive', to include 'suicidal'? Suicide is understood to be a single act of self-murder, but many live self-destructive lifestyles over decades in a slow spiral towards death.

What is the difference?

What is the difference between 'Greater love has no man than he lay down his life for his friends' of John 15:13, and someone knowingly living in a self-destructive way?

Is the act of laying down one's life for another suicide? Wasn't John 15:13 a veiled reference the Lord made of Himself going to the cross? He did so on purpose. How was that not suicide? Where do we draw the line?

Most people who commit suicide have thought about it for a long time

A middle aged woman showed me the scars from cutting on her forearms and wrists. She confirmed a word of knowledge that I had spoken during a church service, that a woman was there whose mother had told her when she was 12: "You're not pretty and not very smart, so you'll have to work hard in life to get ahead."

The Father had told me she believed what her mother said, and to her it was truth. Those words to a fragile 12 year old just going through puberty and struggling with self image as things changed within her, had deep consequences. She was discouragement, then despondency, then hope left, replaced by anger and depression, then self-hate and thoughts of suicide. As a teen she began cutting herself. More than 20 years later, at that Wednesday night service, she got free. Months later I saw her and she confirmed she was still free, knowing she was loved and loving herself.

The difference was the love of the Father; that she for once in her life, knew down in her spirit and in her mind, that she was unconditionally loved by the Father, and then she could move herself. But on a practical level, suicide had entered her life through a long series of hurts, disappointments, condemnation, and hopelessness.

If she had taken her life, would she have gone to hell?

I was speaking at a little country church in the hills of west central Tennessee one Sunday morning. When I looked out over the congregation of about 40 I saw a woman sitting with her children occupying a pew about 2/3 of the way back. Above her I suddenly saw a picture of a house's front door, with a porch, and a man sitting there with a gun in his hand. Next to that vision was the same man in heaven, looking at his family and expressing to his wife how sorry he was for the pain he had caused her and their children, and how he looked forward to the day they would all be together again.

Then the Father said to me. "This man committed suicide on that porch. He had battled alcoholism and depression for years, in part because he wanted to provide more for his family, but always struggled. Tell her he is with me and well, and looks forward to them being together again."

I did exactly that, explained exactly what I saw, and she burst into tears, said it was just as I saw, and so thankful because she was very afraid he was in hell. She understood 'and well' to mean mentally and emotionally well, and was very thankful to the Lord.

She was able to forgive herself and him, and have peace all will be well in the end. She had been condemning herself for not trying harder to help him. He was born again, but alcoholic. She had been full of condemnation and guilt - and was so relieved he was in heaven, sobbing heavily, at having the weight lifted from her.

I've had several times over the years the Father has given me a vision and/or word about someone who committed suicide being in heaven. But can we find answers in scripture about suicide and the thoughts that lead up to such a decision? That is for next week, until then, blessings,

John Fenn

www.cwowi.org and email me at John@cwowi.org

Suicide unforgivable? 2 of 2

Hi all,

Last week I shared a few personal experiences and also raised questions about defining suicide. The reason for doing so is that one denomination teaches a person will automatically go to hell if they kill themselves, and that doctrine has spilled over into the beliefs of some Christians outside that denomination.

My experience has been that most Christians have questions, so this is to help us think through what we believe and why we believe it, thus the many examples and questions raised.

When a person starts to think about killing themselves they are not thinking right. Their emotions are not right, and often it is difficult for those around them to see all this. A person can wrestle with thoughts of suicide for years without anyone knowing about it.

Do we condemn a person physically ill?

Emotional and mental illness can be kept hidden from view for years in the same way a person may conceal their sore back or knee, arthritis, or other condition as they continue to work and go through life.

If a person who is physically ill dies, do we wonder if they are in hell based on their illness? Of course not. So when a person is emotionally ill and takes their own life, why do we wonder if they are in heaven? To take one's own life demonstrates an emotional illness, but why should we think that illness automatically condemns them to hell?

Suicide is murder of self. Is it unpardonable, or can it be forgiven?

We must remember that Jesus died for others, not for Himself. Because it was for others, He could not die for Himself, meaning there is exactly 1 sin that was not covered by the cross; The rejection of Him.

To reject salvation is to blaspheme the Holy Spirit, who is the one and only agent of salvation. To reject His work, His efforts to bring us to Christ, to reject Jesus and the effort of the Holy Spirit, isn't covered by the cross.

That means suicide is covered by the cross. If you know someone who committed suicide, have you considered asking the Father to forgive them for that act of murder as you work through forgiving them for such a selfish act? I've done that for people I've known who have ended their lives.

One doesn't just decide to kill their self on a whim. It is the culmination of a long series of thoughts kept deep within for a long time. Like the woman mentioned last week who began hating herself at age 12 because she was hurt by her mother's words and took them to be absolute truth. Thoughts and attempts at suicide were built up over time, carrying her to the precipice. Now that we've determined the only sin that sends a person to hell is the rejection of Jesus, what are practical steps to help someone?

How does the local church deal with someone having suicidal thoughts?

It doesn't matter whether you celebrate the gathering of the saints in house church like in our network, or the auditorium, dealing with someone having suicidal thoughts is very 'hands on'. It requires 1 or more of their friends to help them walk through the reasons they are thinking as they are, and what are the roots. Like a person with a chronic physical illness that requires long-term care, so too can emotional illness require a long time to heal.

And we need to remember that if a person is serious about it, no one will be able to stop them from killing themselves. For those who loved them, emotions range from anger at the selfish act, to guilt about not seeing the signs, or wishing they did more to prevent them from taking their own life. But usually, a person will kill themselves when they are all alone, with no one there to intervene.

Some warning signs can include talking about death or being preoccupied with death. They tend to withdraw from social contacts, friends, activities. Also large mood swings, changing their daily routine including not able to sleep, feeling trapped, talking about suicide, thinking

there is no other out. Even going around to people they know to make sure they are on good terms with them, can be a sign.

We had a neighbor we didn't know well, but we understood from other neighbors her husband and adult son who lived with them were abusive and alcoholic. Her work was her escape, but when she sustained an injury at work she could not work any longer. She was in pain every moment, trapped in that home. Her adult son had stolen from other neighbors and would go off on fits of rage on anyone near. Her husband and son would get drunk and their fights could be heard by many neighbors. The police were often involved - her work had been her daily escape, and with the injury she no longer had that.

One day we happened to meet when I was outside doing some yard work. She came over and started some small talk, and then said, "So, are we okay? Are we good?" I said yes, of course, and mentioned I pray for them - she said thank you, and that she prayed every day, and then she left. I thought it odd, but went back to what I was doing. About a month later I was up for my pre-dawn walk, and saw an ambulance pull up to their house. She had gone out back to their shed in the back yard, and shot herself in the head, and died.

Are we to love ourselves?

Thoughts of suicide are private, so if anyone knows about it, it will often be family or the closest friend. There are many resources in most communities to help a person, but in my experience, the root causes have to do with not knowing the absolute, unconditional love of the Father. Knowing Him and actually experiencing Him, not just head knowledge, not just mentally agreeing the Father and Lord love them - but actually knowing the Father, is key.

In Ephesians 3:15-20 Paul prayed for them, that the Father would strengthen them in their inner man by His Spirit so they would know the love of Christ which is beyond knowing - that is what he said - the love of Christ is beyond knowing with our minds and must be experienced. That experience leads to love of self.

While some would argue there is no where in the Bible saying we need to love ourselves, I would counter with the fact it is self-evident. If we have the proper understanding that God the Father created us, then we understand we are sacred, special unique. That creates a sense of loving self for the uniqueness each person is. Life becomes sacred. To take that out of the theological and into the natural I'll add this scientific fact: During the fight for conception, there are about 300,000,000 sperm racing to fertilize that egg, and out of that 300,000,000 million, you won. Consider that. You are literally 1 in 300,000,000 - you are worth fighting for.

In the proper context a person can love themselves realizing how unique and special they are, which is a humbling experience and should turn their heart to their Creator in humility and thankfulness, knowing they are loved and a special creation. It is the realization of that love and uniqueness that causes thoughts of taking one's life disappear, overwhelmed by the Father's great love.

For the person contemplating ending their life, consider praying in your own words, what Paul prayed in Ephesians 3:15-20. That the Father would strengthen them by His Spirit with might in their inner man, so they may know the height, depth, width, length, and full volume of the love of Christ which is beyond head knowledge. That they may truly experience His unconditional love.

But to answer our question, no, a person who commits suicide is not automatically going to hell. They weren't well emotionally, and it is their relationship with the Lord, or lack of, that determines a person's eternal destiny.

New subject next week, until then, blessings,

John Fenn
cwowi.org and email me at john@cwowi.org