

What About Euthanasia?

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Introduction

Terri Schiavo died of forced starvation after a period of 13 days. This planned starvation was the result of a court order given on March 31, 2005. What lessons can be learned through the Terri Schiavo case? First, there is the lesson about dependency. It must be understood that Terry Schiavo was not a dying person, she was a dependent person. Second, there is the lesson about personhood itself. Personhood should never be defined by degrees of dependence. From conception through most of childhood we live in dependence on others. Then, in old age and dying, we return to varying degrees of dependence once again. The point is this. Our dependency on others should never disqualify us from life.

Is it now okay to starve people if we don't think their quality of life meets our standard? Babies need to be fed. Is it acceptable to starve babies when they become a medical burden to us? Is it now acceptable to starve people when others think that they are no longer functional or when there is no hope of a certain quality of life? Who determines what are the boundaries of this quality of life? Do the court systems of society now have the right to terminate life when it does not meet a certain criteria for existence on earth? Should people have the right to decide whether or not they die or live? Should they have the right to do what they want with their bodies? If they're going to die anyway what does it matter if they die sooner? Why not legalize a handy method whereby people can be injected with a drug and have their life immediately ended? If it makes life easier for those around and if it is cheaper for the government isn't this a good idea? Should doctors become promoters of death instead of promoters of life and health? These are the questions that are being asked today and many people in our present-day society and world governments are beginning to believe that death is better than life.

It's interesting that 2,000 years of medical practice and ethical codes are being overlooked. The Hippocratic Oath, originating in 400 B.C., and the standard for medical practice ever since, states, "I will keep

[the sick] from harm and injustice. I will neither give a deadly drug to anybody if asked for it, nor will I make a suggestion to that effect." Today this oath and the Biblical view of death and dying are being overlooked as man with his humanistic bifocals overrides God, truth, and those ethical principles that are imbedded within the conscience of mankind by God (Rom. 2:15).

The Definition of Euthanasia

Euthanasia is defined in Webster's dictionary as "the act or method of causing death painlessly, so as to end suffering; advocated by some as a way to deal with persons dying of incurable, painful diseases." Another definition says that euthanasia is "the act or practice of killing or permitting the death of hopelessly sick or injured individuals in a relatively painless way for reasons of mercy." These definitions emphasize that euthanasia is when one human being causes and permits the death of another human being. It involves taking control over death or bringing about the death of another human being. Euthanasia comes from a Greek word that literally means "easy" or "gentle death" or "good death" and promotes the idea of mercy killing. It speaks of terminating the life of a person who is hopelessly sick or injured, hastening the relief that comes with death. Euthanasia is that purposeful action taken to end an individual's life. It is the action of hastening the death of a person who is seriously or terminally ill or injured to bring relief to the individual. Because of this euthanasia is defined as the "good death" and has been labeled as "mercy killings" for finalizing the life of the golden aged (elderly people) or the incurably diseased and irreparably deformed. Such a view is in direct contradiction of the Bible and Christian ethics.

Today there are organizations which publish books to teach people how to kill themselves or others. There is even a church that is called "The Church of Euthanasia." In the United States, Jack Kevorkian ("Dr. Death") has become famous by helping many people kill themselves. He makes a living by killing other people! The Netherlands have led the way in promoting the practice of euthanasia. Before 1973, euthanasia was illegal in the Netherlands. Since that time, doctors and nurses have been actively involved in killing people who were not ready to die. In 1990, nine percent (9%) of all deaths in the Netherlands were carried out by doctors. Half of

these were cases where the patient was killed without his consent. To put this into perspective, in the small country of the Netherlands more than 1,000 people are put to death every year without their willing consent. We live in a disposable society. The sad news is that we are beginning to dispose of human lives much like we would dispose of other unwanted items that no longer prove to be useful and which fail to contribute to our well being.

The Two Types of Euthanasia

There are two types of euthanasia. First, there is passive euthanasia. Passive euthanasia involves a person's choice to refuse medical help or attention so that they might die without human assistance. It is a refusal to use life sustaining medical equipment to prolong life where there is no (medically) prospect of recovery. There are no Biblical principles condemning this type of euthanasia. Passive euthanasia occurs when a person chooses to die by refusing to use advanced medical treatment to sustain life. One example would be a person's written request to be removed from a life-support machine when all hope of physical recovery is gone. Others may choose to refuse aggressive cancer treatments when a cancer has spread to incurable levels in their body. We must remember that in bygone years, millions of people have died without the kind of advanced medical treatment that we have today. They died a normal death without advanced life support to prolong their life without cause. Death came to them naturally without the human attempts to sustain life with advanced medical practices.

The second type of euthanasia that we want to address in this study is termed active euthanasia. Active euthanasia involves deliberately ending another person's life by another human being. Perhaps the most common misunderstanding in the debate about euthanasia concerns what euthanasia actually is. Euthanasia is not the turning off of machines in intensive care units which may be artificially prolonging the dying process. Euthanasia is the direct act of killing a patient by lethal injection or some other human invention to take life. From the Biblical viewpoint active euthanasia must always be considered unacceptable and wrong. Another human being should not purposely and actively terminate life as we are going to see in this study. So when we mention euthanasia in this study we will be

referring to the practice of purposely and actively ending a human life by medical means or some other kind of human practice.

We could break down the second type of euthanasia into two more categories. There are two basic types of active euthanasia. (1) Voluntary. This occurs when a patient is dying a slow and painful death. The patient then asks for help to speed up the process. This actually becomes a type of assisted suicide. (2) Involuntary. This occurs when a person actually causes the death of one who is not able to ask for help in dying. This would include little babies or those in a coma.

The Questions Relates to Euthanasia

The real questions connected with active euthanasia are these. Should today's society be allowed to do away with unwanted people? What about terminally ill people and elderly people? Should doctors of death be allowed to inject medicine of death in the veins of elderly people or babies that are born with severe birth defects? Should people be left to starve when there is seemingly no hope left for them? Should we kill the hopelessly sick or injured? Some people maintain that individuals that have terminal cancer should have the option of receiving a lethal (deadly) injection. This would kill them instantly, as opposed to a possible lengthy and painful death.

Once this bridge is crossed then the subject comes up concerning those who are in a comatose state. Should they be left in that condition? Or should they simply be injected with something lethal? And then what about the paralyzed? Do they have any real quality to their lives? Would it be better to just end their frustrations and limitations? What about the mentally handicapped or those who have the mentality of a small child? What about those who will never grow up? Should they be killed or murdered by lethal injection? Actually, this practice has already been going on in America since 1973 with unborn babies. In some procedures, a saline solution is injected into the womb, which literally burns the baby to death. That is a routine option for those who are told that "something is wrong with the baby (fetus)." Rather than bring a baby into the world with some handicaps, a lethal injection (abortion) is recommended by many doctors. Where

does it all end? What do you do with people who are severely injured at accident scenes, put them out of their misery by killing them right on the spot? What do you do with the elderly who are in severe pain from arthritis, put them out of their misery by killing them? What about those who are in deep depression and who want to die? We repeat. Where does it all end? What about the poor, blind, deaf, unborn, handicapped, and terminally ill? When man becomes God over life and death there is no definitive line that can be drawn when people should be euthanized or to put it bluntly – murdered!

Abortion and Euthanasia

The mentality that promotes abortion also fuels active euthanasia. If we can abort babies or blobs of tissue, as people say, then we should be able to end the life of people outside the womb who are no longer functional and profitable for a society. This kind of thinking was similar to Hitler's philosophy of extinguishing unwanted human life. For the first time since Nazi Germany we are seeing a regression to death technology and to state-sanctioned, assassination medicine. History documents that legalized abortion and euthanasia preceded the Holocaust and these sinful atrocities were fueled by abortion. Thus euthanasia is a natural progression from the legislation of abortion on demand. After all, if one can justify the taking of unwanted or useless life inside the womb, then why not take the unwanted and useless life outside the womb. This is the humanistic mindset of many today who have a warped conscience about life and who want to overthrow the place of the true God in matters of life and death by becoming their own god (Gen. 3:5).

Evolution and Euthanasia

Evolution has played the major role in paving the way for the acceptance of euthanasia. Evolution reduces humans to the level of animals, making it just as acceptable to put down a human, as it is to put down a dog. Many evolutionists advocate euthanasia as a wonderful means to rid us of unwanted burdens. Such opinions lead to the belief that killing a severely handicapped child is ultimately no different to killing a pig. Since there is no God, there is no intrinsic value to human beings and therefore nothing is wrong with killing a child who has Down's syndrome (a tragedy that already happens with

abortion). Sadly, such opinions have wide acceptance by ethics committees deciding the fate of thousands of defenseless newborn children in our hospitals. In Nazi Germany, once evolution was accepted as state truth, it's then that social Darwinism in the form of euthanasia was implemented. It was first practiced on the terminally ill, then on the disabled and the elderly or those who were burdens to society, and finally on six million Jews and minority groups such as gypsies.

The Christian Response to Euthanasia

As Christians we must recognize the difference in prolonging the act of dying and protecting the act of living. We must also remember that it's one thing to die by natural causes and quite another thing to die by the unnatural causes of humanistic plots to terminate life. These seem to be the main issues related to euthanasia. Let us remember that God places a high value on human life and so must we. Whenever one human being deliberately ends another human being's life he takes death into his own hands, which is only God's prerogative.

We must also remember that the Bible does not command us to do everything we can to keep a person alive (Ecclesiastes 3:22; Kings 20:1-7). If a person is being kept alive only by machines, it is not immoral to turn off the machines and allow the person to die. If a person has been in a persistent and confirmed vegetative state for a prolonged period of time it would not be an offense to God to remove whatever tubes/machines that are keeping the person alive. Should God desire to keep a person alive He is perfectly capable of doing so without the help of technologically advanced machines and respirators. More specifically, where there is clear medical indication that the patient has suffered brain death (permanent unconscious state, not equivalent to a coma), removal of any extraordinary life-support system is morally appropriate and allows the natural dying process to proceed.

The Christian must face these "end of life issues" in the present hour in which we live. Of course, the more machines that man invents, the more difficult the decisions become as to when to put people on those machines, and when to take them off. But this really is not the

issue that we want to address in this study which involves the deliberate action of killing another person by lethal injection of some other means.

Biblical Reasons to Reject Euthanasia

We want to give some solid Biblical reasons for rejecting the practice of euthanasia. The Bible is a fixed standard (Deut. 4:2; 12:32; Rev. 22:18-19). The Bible is an inflexible authority in matter of morals and ethical issues. If we lose the fixed moral standard of Scripture then society and mankind, as we now know it, will become hopelessly lost in the humanistic quest to engineer both life and death apart from God and absolute truth. Christians must step into this issue in order to lay the foundation with Biblical absolutes.

There are ten Biblical reasons why euthanasia is wrong.

1. Because of the command of God (Ex. 20:13).

“Thou shalt not kill.”

We are to promote, protect, and preserve life because of the command of God. Euthanasia violates the clear command of God to not murder another person. Here, as in other places within God’s moral codes and laws, every act that endangers human life is condemned, whether the act arises from carelessness (Deut. 22:8), wantonness – without motive (Lev. 19:14), or in hatred, anger, and revenge (Lev. 19:17-18). Euthanasia negates God’s estimate of life and violates the sixth commandment (Rom. 13:9). But let’s reflect on this commandment.

It must be understood that when God gave the commandment “Thou shalt not kill” (Ex. 20:13) He was talking about killing man in an unauthorized way without God’s authority and without acting on the behalf of God’s justice. The sixth commandment refers to the individual, intentional, and the unauthorized taking of human life. By unauthorized, I mean the kind of killing that God has not condoned. What God did say in Exodus 20:13 was that man could never kill without His authority and approval. What God did not say was that man could never kill since God sanctions certain killing through the

institution of law and government as they seek to maintain justice and peace in this world (Romans 13:1-7).

Does the Bible ever authorize the killing of other human beings? How does the Bible answer the question: "By what standard does man have the right to end the life of another human being created in the image of God?" The answer is this. God alone gives life and He alone may take life or delegate to another the authority to take life on His behalf. The mind of God on the matter of taking life is clearly revealed through Holy Scripture which is the final authority on the issue. Scripture distinguishes between justifiable killing and murder.

This means that there are Biblical exceptions to the fifth commandment and these exceptions only prove the sanctity of human life and God's disapproval of euthanasia. For instance, there is the exception of self-defense. God said in Exodus 22:2, "If a thief be found breaking up, and be smitten that he die, there shall no blood be shed for him." God's moral and ethical laws do not change. If you come into my house with a gun and threaten to kill my family you will be looking down the barrel of a shotgun and I'll pull the trigger. Well, I don't have a shotgun but God gives me that right to own one and protect myself and family (Luke 22:36). Self-preservation is a lawful killing authorized by God. The old saying is true: "If you outlaw guns then only the outlaws will have guns."

Many years ago I was on a speaking engagement in the backwoods of Illinois. The home in which I was staying was a nice home. However, the man told me in no uncertain terms that if I come into the house late at night unannounced I would be shot! I thought to myself, this should be a fun week of meetings. Now listen, when God says a man can protect himself and family by killing another person this only reveals God's high view of human life. When a man is given permission to kill another human being for self-preservation and the preservation of his own family this command teaches us that life is sacred in God's eyes and should not be cheapened by would-be assassins and killers.

There is also the exception of war. In Numbers 10:9 God says, "And if ye go to war in your land against the enemy that oppresseth you, then ye shall blow an alarm with the trumpets; and ye shall be

remembered before the LORD your God, and ye shall be saved from your enemies.” The just war cause is also an authorized killing given by God for national defense. In Judges chapter six God directed Gideon to deliver His people from Midianite slavery and actually sent Gideon to war with the Midianites (11-16) and told Gideon that He would be with him in this war (Judges 6:12, 14, 16). Other accounts would be of Othniel going to war under God’s approval (Judges 3:9-10) and Ehud (Judges 3:15-30).

There is also the exception of capital punishment. God said in Genesis 9:5-6, “And surely your blood of your lives will I require; at the hand of every beast will I require it, and at the hand of man; at the hand of every man's brother will I require the life of man. Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man.” This command is transdispensational and teaches us the value that God places on human life. Where capital punishment is not practiced on murderers, the land becomes guilty of blood (Numbers 35:31-34).

A nation and its government are given the authority to carry out God’s justice within the world and protect life by taking human life (Romans 13:1-7). The state has the civil duty to execute criminals who have been properly convicted of capital crimes. So there are exceptions to God’s command or ruling – “Thou shalt not kill.” God gives the exceptions for He makes the rules! So the bottom line is this. The sixth commandment condemns the unauthorized killing of human beings or the unauthorized taking of human life. God is very clear on what the command means and what it does not mean. As we study the Bible there is no authorized command for the practice of euthanasia or so-called mercy-killing. All forms of euthanasia and assisted suicide are considered the same as acts of cold-blooded murder in the Bible and in God’s eyes. Saving someone from pain is not a reason to kill them nor is it lawful to kill oneself to save oneself from pain. Jehovah still hates the “hands that shed innocent blood” (Proverbs 6:16-17).

Every doctor of death and suicidal person must remember God’s sore displeasure when a person is killed without His divine sanction. Please note that the command does not say, “Thou shalt not kill someone else” or “Thou shalt not kill thy fellowman.” There is no

direct object connected to this command. It simply says, “Thou shalt not kill.” Therefore, the command also forbids personal suicide (the destruction of one’s own life). It also forbids voluntary euthanasia or assisted suicide. Suicide of any type and euthanasia violates the sixth command of God. Will hospitals soon become homicide hospitals? If the trend continues and the government becomes the determining factor on when life ends, then our hospitals will become high tech morgues instead of places for recovery and health.

Some stress that there is an example of assisted suicide in the Bible by pointing out the incident involving King Saul. They sight this incident to try and prove euthanasia but a closer look at the story only reveals God’s displeasure over the issue of euthanasia (2 Samuel 1:1-16). This account of reported voluntary euthanasia (in which one person asks another to kill them in order to alleviate the first person’s suffering) involved King Saul and an Amalekite. The unnamed Amalekite tells King David that he killed Saul at Saul’s request, as Saul was wounded in battle.

2 Samuel 1:6-10

“And the young man that told him said, As I happened by chance upon mount Gilboa, behold, Saul leaned upon his spear; and, lo, the chariots and horsemen followed hard after him. And when he looked behind him, he saw me, and called unto me. And I answered, Here am I. And he said unto me, Who art thou? And I answered him, I am an Amalekite. And he said unto me again, Stand, I pray thee, upon me, and slay me: for anguish is come upon me, because my life is yet whole in me. So I stood upon him, and slew him, because I was sure that he could not live after that he was fallen: and I took the crown that was upon his head, and the bracelet that was on his arm, and have brought them hither unto my lord.”

Those who support euthanasia will say that Saul was sure to die, Saul was in a lot of pain, and Saul requested that he be killed. They use these vain arguments to support a cause that is not condoned in the Bible. The Bible nowhere condones Saul’s actions or requests anymore than they condone Satan’s requests (Matthew 4:1-10). Please note that the armorbearer’s reaction in I Samuel 31:4 reveals that he was sore afraid and he refused David’s initial request – “How went the matter? I pray thee, tell me.” This means the Amalekite was

fearful and negligent to tell the king what had taken place. Apparently the Amalekite was not an advocate of euthanasia nor was King David. David's reaction to the Amalekite was very clear. The man was declared to be a murderer (vs.13-14) and David had the Amalekite executed for murdering King Saul (vs.15-16).

The very passage used to support euthanasia actually condemns it as murder and a violation of the sixth commandment ("Thou shalt not kill"). David's response was to kill the Amalekite for touching God's anointed. If euthanasia was a beneficial practice, David would have rewarded the Amalekite, not sentenced him to death. Saul was evidently in error in requesting his death and David was correcting the situation with justice. There are simply no proof texts to warrant the practice of euthanasia or the unlawful taking of another person's life through lethal injection due to imminent death, pain, suffering, age, psychological problems, or some other kind of physical handicaps and birth defects. "Thou shalt not kill." God is very clear on the matter. Let us not put a question mark where God puts a period.

2. Because of the enemy of God.

We are to promote, protect, and preserve life because God's enemy is behind the evil acts of murder and suicide in our world today. This is reason enough to oppose the push for euthanasia in our land and society. The "works of the devil" (1 John 3:8) should be opposed in every way (Ephesians 5:11). We have to conclude that euthanasia started in the mind of Satan for according to John 8:44, "he is a murderer." Let me tell you who is behind the doctors of death in our land today. It is the devil. Euthanasia is directly contrary to the will of God and originates in the realm of the devil and his demonic host who have come only to "steal, and to kill, and to destroy" (John 10:10). It is devilish and demonic influence that tempts men to kill others. This has been true from the first murder recorded in the Bible.

1 John 3:12

"Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous."

All murder is devilishly oriented and demonically orchestrated. For this reason, every Christian should oppose euthanasia. The unauthorized and unbiblical taking of human life has its roots in the hater of life – the devil. One lady said that her husband Henry should be put to sleep in the same manner as her suffering cat. Such diabolical thinking can only come from the devil. To kill Henry, even out of mercy, would be murder in the worst degree and first degree! Today people are supplementing the term euthanize instead of murder. But the Bible tells it like it is. The devil did not come to euthanize people; he came to murder people (John 8:44).

Listen, the sooner the devil can get people to die the sinner's death, the sooner he will have them in his own hell, which was initially prepared for him and his angels (Matt. 25:41). The devil knows what he is doing and if he can damn people to hell by getting mankind to murder other human beings prematurely this will certainly be to his liking. Euthanasia is not only inspired by the devil, it plays into the hands of the devil's scheme to speed people on to a Christless eternity (Hebrews 9:27).

3. Because of the image of God.

Genesis 1:26-27

“And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.”

We are to promote, protect, and preserve life because of the image of God. God has given mankind the highest dignity of all creation for He has created man in His image or likeness. This makes man distinct from the animal world for the animal kingdom was not created in the image of God. Man is not an animal! This is simply an evolutionary myth and lie. When the Bible says that man is created in God's image it means that there is more to a man than there is to an animal. Man is the highest creation of God. He was crowned with glory and honor and is placed far above plant life and animal creation. Man is not some type of primordial ooze that came out of the swamp.

Psalm 8:3-9

“When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained; What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with glory and honour. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet: All sheep and oxen, yea, and the beasts of the field; The fowl of the air, and the fish of the sea, and whatsoever passeth through the paths of the seas. O LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth!”

The glory and honor that man possesses is linked to the fact that he is created in God’s image. There is a certain glory (splendor, magnificence, dignity) and honor (value, worth, excellence) that man possesses before God since he was created in His image. There is human dignity that is connected with being created in God’s likeness that prohibits euthanasia or the active and premature killing of people. To take a human life without God’s approval or sanction is to show disrespect for God’s image and make a mockery out of the likeness of God that is connected with man’s creation. This is what we will see in this point. A man’s life is sacred because he is created in God’s image.

The relationship between the words “image” and “likeness” in Genesis 1:26 have long puzzled expositors. Usually the two words are synonyms in the Old Testament and they are used interchangeably. Even our verses here seem to do this for verse 27 only uses the word image and a similar summary in 5:1 only uses the work likeness. In 9:6 the word image is only used. Apparently the words are used interchangeably. The Hebrew word for “image” speaks of a shadow and implies how a shadow represents something. Man then is the representation of God in certain specific ways. He shadows God in some way. The Hebrew word for “likeness” carries the thought of resemblance or “to be like” and so both words may simply mean that Adam is a representation of God who is like God in certain respects. In other words, there is something about God that is also true of human beings but is not true of the animals. This is what gives human beings special dignity, significance and value in God’s eyes.

Humanity was not created in God's image as perfectly holy and unable to sin. Nor was man and woman created in His essential being or deity. They have never possessed God's supernatural attributes, such as omniscience, omnipotence, immutability, or omnipresence. People are only human; they are not divine. However, there are likenesses between God and man that need to be explained so that we can understand the concept of man being created in God's image.

Man is created in God's image or likeness in at least seven ways.

a. Morally

Although man has lost the perfect moral image (innocence and holiness) of the Creator because of the Genesis Fall man does still have traces of God's image left with him even in his fallen state. God has given man a sense of right and wrong (Rom. 2:15) and the awareness and accountability to his Creator (Rom. 1:19). This is something the animals do not possess. The conscience of man is intended to prompt mankind to act in a moral way toward His Creator. The innate conscience in man faintly reflects God's moral image. Man has a unique moral capacity unlike the animal kingdom. The animal world does not possess the same kind of morals or a God-given sense of right and wrong. Although man was deformed from God's exact image by sin and does not possess the same moral excellence that God originally gave in the beginning, he nevertheless still retains a certain aspect of God's moral image. Man has the ability to reason morally and ethically and is morally responsible for what he does or does not do (Romans 1:24-32). The animal kingdom does not have this created capacity.

b. Relationally

The Bible teaches that man is a trinity consisting of a body, soul, and spirit (1 Thess. 5:23). This same relationship exists in the Godhead. God is a Trinity that exists in three different persons who share the same existence as God. All three persons (Father, Son, Spirit) are co-equal and co-eternal sharing the same existence as the one and true God. Genesis 1:26 speaks of the Trinity when God says, "Let us

make man in our image.” The plural pronoun tells us that God is a Trinity. God created man in His own image by making him a trinity being consisting of three functioning parts. Thus, we share the same tripartite make-up that exists in the Godhead. We might also add that God intends the order of male headship and female submission to this headship to be a reflection of the image of God in man. God’s image as the Trinity is reflected in the very pattern of marriage that He has given to society. Like the Godhead, both partners are equal in personhood but carry on different functions and roles. The Son is submissive to the Father (Luke 22:42; John 4:34) and the Holy Spirit sets out to do the Father’s will (John 14:16; 15:26). This is part of the image of God that is seen even in the marriage relationship. It’s a functional leadership and submission that creates perfect order and harmony.

c. Intellectually

This is a special part of man’s personality that needs to be emphasized. Man has unique intellectual capacities that are different than the animal kingdom. Man has the ability to reason and think logically or rationally and to learn in a way that sets him apart from the animal world. I have never seen a chimpanzee earn a degree in biology, math, or nuclear science. Only humans can ponder the future, create music, art, and literature, and make scientific and technological advancements. Only humans in this sense reflect God’s image. Humans are self-conscious or possess self-awareness in that they know that they are a person and can think for themselves and understand that they will remain the same person from the cradle to the grave. The rational and intellectual aspect of man reflects the image of God.

d. Personality

God created man in His image in the sense that man has a plugged-in personality (the sum total of the rational, emotional, and social characteristics of an individual) that resembles God’s own personality and design. When the Bible says that “man became a living soul” (Gen. 2:7) it is emphasizing the intellectual, emotional and volitional aspects of man’s existence (man’s essential personality and self-consciousness) that differs from the animal kingdom. Mankind

possesses certain characteristics of God in his make-up or design. Such things as a complex system of emotions, intellectual capacity, and freedom to rationally choose (Gen. 3:6) are all part of God's image. These higher and specific traits lift him up above the realm of the animals. The complexity of man's intellectual, emotional, and volitional design all point to God's image. Man then reflects God's image in his personal design and make-up.

e. Spiritually

The inner quality of humanity or man's existence reflects God's image. When God breathed into man "the breath of life" (Gen. 2:7) it was more than just physical or rational life. It was spiritual life that allowed man to possess a special relationship with God unlike the animals. Nowhere in Genesis does it say that the animals received the breath of God. Man has been given a spirit like God (John 19:30; Acts 7:59). The Bible teaches that God is spirit (John 4:24) and man is also created with a spirit (Zech. 12:1). It is man's spirit (spiritual make-up) that is his primary link with God. Through the spirit man is capable of having communion with his Maker.

I never saw a chimp singing in the church choir or walking down the church aisle to be saved. The animals do not possess a spiritual link with God. Man's innate sense of right and wrong (conscience) operates through the spiritual part of his existence. Also, we can relate spiritually to God and have fellowship with Him in prayer and praise (John 4:24) because we possess a human spirit that can have contact with God. However, this part of our spirit must be regenerated or brought back to life through the new birth (John 3:6) so we can once again have fellowship with God. Nevertheless, man was created with the special capacity for fellowship with His Creator through this inner quality of his humanity – his spirit. God wanted a creature He could relate to in a special way and therefore He created man in His image.

f. Kingly

God is the sovereign King over all the universe (1 Tim. 1:17) and He created man to be king or ruler over the animal creation. The very next verse following man's creation in the image of God states the

kingly likeness that man would share or possess with God. Genesis 1:28, “And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.” Man was created to rule the animal world and have dominion over all the earth in the same way God was a King. So man’s rulership abilities and privileges today stem from being created in God’s image. Humanity is different from the plant and animal kingdoms because of his lordship over all creation. Others suggest that this kingly aspect of man’s rulership is simply the result of being created in the image of God but not a direct link to the image of God. In other words, it is the presence of the image of God in man that allows man to exercise dominion over the earth.

g. Luminously

It may also be true that the image or likeness in the original man included a physical luminous body that would reflect God’s perfect holiness and glory who rules as the sovereign King in a fabulous display of radiant light (Psalm 104:1-2). Although God in His eternal being does not possess a body (John 4:24), He does manifest His presence in a glorious and dazzling display of light, which manifests His matchless holiness and sovereign kingly status. In a similar manner, man was given the kingly rulership of planet earth and may have initially ruled with a radiance of physical light or brilliance that emphasized God’s glorious kingly nature and holiness. Physical light is associated with ruling. Like the sun which rules over the day and the moon that rules over the night in physical brilliance and brightness (Gen. 1:16), so man was originally created to rule and have dominion over planet earth reflecting the same radiance and brilliance of God’s kingly glory and perfect holiness.

Someday we will once again reflect this brilliant display of glory when we receive our glorified body and are fitted for the eternal state (Dan. 12:3; 1 Pet. 5:4). In once sense, even our physical bodies should seek to reflect this glory by the way that we live and represent God in society. Today God’s people are being changed from glory to glory (2 Cor. 3:18) but never reaching the goal of perfect Christlikeness. But someday we will be glorified and express the same physical glory that

Adam and Eve possessed in the Garden while they were in the stage of innocence.

All of these attributes and qualities make us more like God and less like the animals. The image of God has been defaced but not erased in our lives. The likeness of God has been tarnished but not destroyed. The Bible seems to stress that man has continued resemblance of God's image in him even after the Fall.

James 3:9 says,

Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God.

James says that a man should not curse another man due to the fact that mankind is created after the similitude (likeness) of God. This is an interesting observation. God sees man as being a special creation. Man is seen to have dignity and worth because he has been created in God's image or likeness and therefore cursing him is an inappropriate action.

Because man was created in God's image the Lord instituted capital punishment in the governmental system that was to be established over the new earth following the Genesis Flood.

Genesis 9:6 reads,

“Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man.”

Because man still possesses traces of God's image even after the Genesis Fall this is reason enough not to unjustly murder another human being. Because man has been created in God's image his life is sacred and should be held in high esteem. Life should not be cheapened and seen as a commodity that can be used for humanity's advantage and then disposed of at will. Therefore, taking the life of a person who unjustly and without God's authority takes the life of another should suffer his own death.

Some will suggest that taking the murderer's life (capital punishment) is the same crime and cheapens the value of human life. But this is not what God says. Man's reasoning is not God's reasoning (Isa.

55:8). God says that justice is carried out when the government executes a murderer. This is the principle of retributive justice. A man who does not follow God's moral code concerning the dignity of human life must suffer the consequences. The Governor of the universe is God and God is righteous in all His ways (Rev. 15:3; 16:5). Therefore, whatever He says is right. If God says it's proper to take the life of another human being, who has murdered another, then it is just and righteous. It does not matter who says what or how man reasons. It only matters what God says!

God says that punishing a murderer by taking his own life actually declares the value of human life. It sends the message that life cannot be taken without a consequence because life is sacred to God. God never said that we are to stand by and let a ruthless tyrant carry out a program of slaying whole segments of humanity. We are to use force against him and by doing so we affirm the sacredness of life. We don't cheapen life. Killing is sometimes the most effective way to affirming our high view of life's sanctity. A murderer, by his very act, declares his lack of reverence for human life. The only way we can fully affirm the sacredness of the life that has been taken is by demanding that the murderer forfeit his own life in exchange for the life of the other person he killed. This is what God is saying in Genesis 9:6. When the government executes a murderer it affirms the terrible nature of his crime and the sacredness of the life he took.

The dignity of man is that he was created special by God. He was created to represent God on earth and express God throughout the earth. No animal was ever created for this purpose. Man was created with a personality, which is similar to God's rational, emotional, and social characteristic. He was made intellectually, morally, spiritually, relationally, kingly, and even physically different from any other creation. Man was made in the image of God. Because of this his life is worth saving. He has an inherent dignity of resembling and representing God and therefore his life must be treated with dignity and respect. It is not to be taken at will and discarded.

The sacredness, value, and worth of human life, which is based on man being created in God's image, extends throughout a man's life and is not simply limited to those times and circumstances when man happens to be strong, independent, healthy, and fully conscious of

his relationships with others. God is active in the womb creating man (Psalm 139:13-16; Job 10:8-1) long before a human being can exercise the kind of mental functions and awareness that they will when they are physically born and grow to maturity. Although greatly tarnished man does bear God's image when he is conceived in the womb and his life is sacred for this reason. In a similar way, God image is still stamped upon the dying and comatose patients for whom conscious human relationships are broken.

The body of the dying is still sacred for that body still bears the image of God. Therefore, abortion within the womb and euthanasia in the bed are premeditated and malicious murderous acts committed against human beings who bear God's image. Man's life is not a cheap commodity. Life is sacred because God's image is stamped upon humanity. Since man was created to represent God on earth, and since man is like God because he possesses functions and capacities unique to God, for these reasons his life is not to be unjustly taken by another human being. His life is considered valuable and important to God and therefore human life should be treated with dignity and respect. From the womb to the tomb life is to be handled with dignity. Because man bears God's image his life is sacred in every state of its existence, in sickness and in health, in the womb, in infancy, in adolescence, in maturity, in old age, or even in the process of dying itself.

Murder (the deliberate taking of another person's life without God's authority) is an incredible crime against God and against humanity since mankind is made in God's likeness or image. Euthanasia is premeditated murder that offends God's holiness and man's honor and glory as bearing God's image (Psalm 8:5). That man is precious in His sight is seen in the fact that God has from the very beginning condemned the taking of another life due to man's reflection of God's image (Gen. 9:6). The same should be true for our present generation.

4. Because of the trust of God.

We are to promote, protect, and preserve life because of the trust of God. Life is a sacred trust from God. Life is something God graciously gives to every human being and because of this it can be looked

upon as a trust that must be protected and treated with dignity. This means man must care for human life, be a custodian of human life, and guard the value of human life. Therefore, it's the duty of man to see that he lives until God sees fit to relieve him of this trust or duty and obligation to live. Acts 17:25 says this about God: "Neither is (God) worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things." The Bible teaches that God has given us our life and every breath that we have. With this precious gift there is a trust that is formed. Man is called upon by God to protect life and not unlawfully take human life (Ex. 20:13; Gen. 9:6). Since God has given life man becomes terribly ungrateful when he destroys it. Human life is sacred because it has been created and given by God himself. Christians must always stand for the sanctity of life. When faced with difficult situations, our current president said something very important: "It's always better to choose life." This is very true because the life that we possess is a gift from God (James 1:17). It is a sacred trust that must be guarded and seen as highly precious and valuable.

This life we have is from God and only God can decide its termination at the time of His choosing. Job 14:5, "Seeing his days are determined, the number of his months are with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass." God is in charge of the span of a man's life. This is because God owns man (Ezek. 18:4) since God is the Source, Sustainer, and Sovereign of man. Romans 11:36 says, "For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen."

The point is this. Since God created man and gave man his life and existence on earth, it only makes sense that God is to be the One who decides when life should end. Until this appointed time comes man must be a good custodian over his own life and the life of fellow human beings. This brings us to our next point.

5. Because of the sovereignty of God.

We are to promote, protect, and preserve life because of the sovereignty of God. God's sovereignty means that He is the Superpower of the universe who is in control of everything - even death. God is not bound by the dictates of His creatures or by the

circumstances of time. God's sovereignty connotes His purpose and counsel that He wants to bring to pass. God has decrees that He wants to bring to pass. Some of His decrees are efficacious which means they cannot be changed. Other decrees are permissive (tolerant) in the sense that God indirectly allows them to take place at the hands of wicked people in the midst of a fallen world (Matt. 18:7; Acts 2:23). But even these decrees bring about His glory. Such things as sin, disease, death, war, rape, abortion, child pornography, molestation, euthanasia, starvation, AIDS, floods, hurricanes, and earthquakes that claim the lives of millions of people are all part of the permissive decrees of God which He allows to occur in the midst of a fallen society.

a. God's sovereignty over death

We can Biblically conclude that God is the source and giver of life (Gen. 2:7). Life is not an accident of nature. God is also the preserver of life (Acts 17:24-25,28). God is the taker of life (Deut. 32:39; I Sam. 2:6). No man dies unless God allows it (Job 2:6). It is not your life to do with as you please. To think so is rebellion (Ps. 12:4). Life and death belong to God and God alone.

Revelation 1:18

"I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."

Keys speak of authority and the Bible clearly reveals that Jesus Christ is sovereign over death and dying. We must leave the keys in His hands. Jesus Christ is in control of the events of living and death. This is a sole prerogative or exclusive right of God and when men try to take control over the realm of death they begin to shake their fist at the sovereign God of the universe. The overriding truth that drives me to the conclusion that God is opposed to euthanasia is His sovereignty. We know that physical death is inevitable (Psalm 89:48; Hebrews 9:27). However, God alone is to be sovereign over when and how a person's death occurs. Job testifies in Job 30:23, "For I know that thou (God) wilt bring me to death, and to the house appointed for all living." In Psalm 68:20 we read, "He that is our God is the God of salvation; and unto God the Lord belong the issues from death." Ecclesiastes 8:8a declares, "There is no man that hath power

over the spirit to retain the spirit, neither hath he power in the day of death..." God is to have the final say over death (see also 1 Corinthians 15:26, 54-56; Hebrews 2:9, 14-15; Revelation 21:4). Euthanasia is man's way of trying to usurp authority from God over the realm of death. It is a humanistic attempt to put man in the place of God.

Taking charge of human death is assuming a godlike control over death. God has appointed a certain time for each of us to die. Job 7:1 says, "Is there not an appointed time to man upon earth...?" (see Job 14:5). Psalms 31:15 reads, "My times are in thy hand..." God has a plan for each life and shortening this plan interrupts what He wants to accomplish in that person's life. For instance, elderly people sometimes feel useless, or limited in what they can do. But the Bible says they are very valuable and can still have a purpose in their later years (Psalms 92:14 - "They shall still bring forth fruit in old age"). When we take the decision for life or death out of the hands of God, and place it in the hands of imperfect people, only mistakes will be made.

Job 1:21 says,
"And said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD."

Job recognized that only God is to take away life – not man. Job seemed hopelessly sick and dying. His wife was in favor of self-euthanasia (suicide). She told her husband, "Dost thou still retain thine integrity? curse God, and die" (Job 2:9). How did Job receive that advice? In the next verse he said, "But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips." Job admitted that whether we suffer with pain in life, or whether we do not, is in the hands of God to decide.

Consider how Nebuchadnezzar was allowed to live when he went crazy, and how he actually recovered from it after seven times or years, and went on to live a normal life after that (Daniel 4:29-37). On the other hand, Hezekiah was praying and crying that he might

recover from his illness; when, in fact, it was God's time for him to die (2 Kings 20:1-7). God is to control the events of death. When man attempts to take death into His own hands he assumes a godlike control over life and death which is God's exclusive right. Only God should be able to decide when a person dies since He is the Sovereign Creator of mankind. The insistent secular preaching of "individual rights" now seems to mean that there are no "individual wrongs." Actually all the individual rights talk is the self-determination of man to put himself in the seat of the Sovereign God.

b. God's sovereignty over suffering

Euthanasia does not consider that God has a sovereign purpose for suffering and illness. Euthanasia overlooks the sovereign working of God in disease and deformities.

Exodus 4:11 reveals:

"And the LORD said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the LORD?"

This verse has always been in your Bible! The Scriptures reveal that God makes the dumb, deaf, and blind. God is in control over the mentally handicapped and disabilities found in the human race. Behind the genes and chromosomes is God. If someone has a disability, it's because God has given it to them by His sovereign hand. Therefore, to conclude that the life God has given to certain people is inadequate is awfully presumptuous. Who on earth can judge better than God? Genesis 18:25 asks this question, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" Nobody knows what God's hidden purposes are for people and therefore we should not take a person's life and interfere with the omniscient God and His sovereign purposes and providence.

God's providence speaks of His continuous activity and control in guiding and directing the events and affairs of the world and His people to their intended goal or purpose (Ps. 115:3; 135:6; Dan. 4:35). God in His providential ways allows suffering and tragedy to occur in the world and no man should question God's purposes (Romans 9:20) and attempt to take the place of God in bringing about the death of people. God has a purpose to keep people alive even

until the very end. Only God knows what is best and His timing in one's death is perfect. Sometimes God allows a person to suffer a long time before his death comes. Other times the person's suffering is cut short. No one likes to suffer, but this does not make it right for us to determine when a person should die. The Scriptures clearly reveal God is in control of both the suffering and the death of people.

John 9:1-4 says, "And as Jesus passed by, he saw a man which was blind from his birth. And his disciples asked him, saying, Master, who did sin, this man, or his parents, that he was born blind? Jesus answered, Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents: but that the works of God should be made manifest in him. I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work." Please notice that "the works of God" were to be manifested in this man who was born blind. This tells us that God always has a purpose for the suffering and seemingly tragic things that happen to the human race. When a person wants to unlawfully take another person's life they are interfering with the works of God!

We might also add that from the perspective of the Christian life suffering always has purpose and plan. Job 23:10, "But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." Romans 5:3 teaches that tribulations bring about perseverance. We must remember that for Christians suffering has spiritual value? 2 Corinthians 4:16-18, "For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God. For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."

Job experienced physical, spiritual and psychological suffering. How did he respond? Job 1:20-21 again reads, "Then Job arose, and rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped, And said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD." Job 2:10 concludes by

saying: “shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips.”

How should Christians respond to personal challenges, disabilities and infirmities? Luke 1:38, “And Mary said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word. And the angel departed from her.” 2 Corinthians 12:9, “And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.” Philippians 4:11, “Not that I speak in respect of want: for I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.” Philippians 4:13, “I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.” Philippians 4:19, “But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.”

How should Christians respond to the fear or reality of pain and suffering? Deuteronomy 31:6, “Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them: for the LORD thy God, he it is that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.” Deuteronomy 31:8, “And the LORD, he it is that doth go before thee; he will be with thee, he will not fail thee, neither forsake thee: fear not, neither be dismayed.” Romans 8:32, “He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?” Romans 8:35-37, “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.” “Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the LORD delivereth him out of them all” (Psalm 34:19). Psalm 23:4, “Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.”

According to these verses, the Lord promises to deliver us by giving us His grace and strength, no matter what we may face. Even if we suffer in this life, there is coming a day we will no longer suffer, and God will make all things new (Revelation 21:4). Even when God allows us to die we are going to enter the land of no more suffering and death. Psalm 23:6 says, “Surely goodness and mercy shall follow

me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.”

6. Because of the glory of God.

We are to promote, protect, and preserve life because of the glory of God. Is God glorified in the suffering and sickness that takes place in the world? The Bible says that God does get the glory (praise and honor) even through a person’s suffering and physical calamities. The glory of God means that God’s name is praised and magnified even when suffering and sickness are allowed.

John 11:1-4 says, “Now a certain man was sick, named Lazarus, of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha. (It was that Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick.) Therefore his sisters sent unto him, saying, Lord, behold, he whom thou lovest is sick. When Jesus heard that, he said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby.”

Jesus confirmed that the sickness that Lazarus had was for the glory of God’s Son. Imagine this! Sickness and death was for God’s glory. This tells us that God is always glorified even when a person’s life is full of pain and suffering. Behind the physical suffering God in His own way is being glorified. His sovereign purposes and all-wise plan are coming to fruition and because of this God is glorified for His wisdom, workings, and righteous ways. This is what the glory of God really is. It is praise directed toward God that is designed to exalt His flawless attributes and ways. When we praise God we are bringing His attributes out into the open. God’s unique glory and excellence can be seen even in human sickness and distress.

1 Peter 4:11 says “that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.” This means mankind should glorify God in all things; even in those severe cases of physical suffering, when there seems to be no rhyme or reason for the suffering to continue. Dear friend, it’s all about the glory of God! Everybody has forgotten this in the euthanasia debate and circles. Humanistic doctors of death want to unjustly and unlawfully murder people. Why? It’s because they have

no concept of the glory of God nor do they want to promote the glory of God in the world today. Their philosophy of life is anthropocentric instead of Christocentric. Therefore, it should be no surprise to us when mankind looks at suffering from a humanistic viewpoint and wants to take the matter of death into his own hands. The age-old Biblical adage is still true - every man does what is right in his own eyes (Judges 17:6; 21:25).

7. Because of the love of God.

We are to promote, protect, and preserve life because of the love of God. To state it simply, loving another person implies that we will not murder them. Jesus said in Matthew 22:38-39, "This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." We are commanded to love our neighbor, as we would love ourselves from a physical standpoint in life. This means that we would normally express compassion and love toward our human body and meet all of its physical needs. Jesus was saying that we should love our neighbor in the same way we would express compassion toward our own human body. This rules out both personal suicide and murdering someone through euthanasia. These are not a true expression of Biblical love and compassion. True love is demonstrated by showing compassion and care for the dying. It is not demonstrated by taking the life of another human being. God wants us to express love and have mercy on the sick and elderly, as opposed to sacrificing them for "the greater good" of society.

The expression of mercy is the reasoning behind the modern hospice movement. They want to suffer with terminally ill patients instead of trying to take control over death or bring about death. The proponents of controlled death have tried to conceal their deadly weapons under the velvet cloak of compassion. They call it mercy killing. But is it really mercy? The word compassion literally means "com" (with) "passion" (suffering) and connotes suffering with people (1 Pet. 3:8). Webster defines compassion in this way: "a feeling of deep sympathy and sorrow for someone struck by misfortune, accompanied by a desire to alleviate the suffering; mercy." Those who insist on legalizing euthanasia are impatiently rushing people toward death. They are not willing to help people and express loving compassion toward them during their time of suffering. They are not willing to

suffer with them and love them as Jesus taught (Gal. 6:2, 10). Euthanasia proponents have actually discarded compassion in their mad dash for godlike control. They are not offering the kind of compassionate love that Jesus calls for in the Bible. Instead, doctors who are commissioned by society to give care and cure to people are now becoming active killers of patients.

Matthew 25:40 reads:

“And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.”

Jesus says that we are to express love “to the least of these my brethren.” This suggests that no matter who a person is and what their allotment is in life, we should express loving compassion toward them. We should be willing to suffer with them and help them along in life in spite of their physical conditions and limitations. Jesus never said that the least of these must keep up with the most of these or else! We are not to give the dying deadly poisons but rather neighborly love (Mark 12:31) and the hope of eternal life (Titus 3:7). Deliberately taking the life of another human being is not mercy killing; it is actually ruthless killing.

8. Because of the government of God.

Romans 13:1-7 states:

“Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is

due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.”

Paul reminds us in the book of Romans that the government is actually to be God’s divine institution for ministering justice throughout the world for those who oppose God’s moral and ethical laws (“For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil” – vs. 3). God expects governments to uphold His moral or ethical codes and when mankind steps over these boundaries he should expect justice to be carried out by the government. The government of God should act on God’s behalf to enforce His ethical codes upon society (“For he is the minister of God to thee for good” – Rom. 13:4). The government of God on earth should not allow the unmerciful acts of euthanasia. It is not a good death or merciful death but a passionless display of self and expression of man’s will over God’s ethical absolutes.

So the very government of God, that is to say, a government who is standing on God’s moral absolutes, should cause the practice of euthanasia to cease in our society. As Christians we should pray for our government officials (1 Tim. 2:1-2) and those who lead our country so that God’s moral government would be upheld.

9. Because of the promise of God.

We are to promote, protect, and preserve life because of the promise of God. God promises to bless the lives of those who honor their offspring. Let the promise of God stand true and every man a liar.

Exodus 20:12

“Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.”

Deuteronomy 5:16

“Honour thy father and thy mother, as the LORD thy God hath commanded thee; that thy days may be prolonged, and that it may go well with thee, in the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.”

Matthew 15:4

“For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death.”

Ephesians 6:2

“Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise)”

In short, we are to honor our father and mother – not kill them! Under the Mosaic Law it was not the father or mother who would die if they no longer honored their parents; it was those who failed to honor them (“He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death” – Matt. 15:4). The ethical principle behind this command is still true today since God’s ethical principles do not change. The fact that honoring parents is repeated in the New Testament epistles (Eph. 6:2) is unmistakable evidence that God’s primary ethical laws do not change. Can anything be made clearer than this promise? God will honor us if we honor our father and mother. He will bless our lives if we take care of our offspring. The attempts of modern-day society to wipe out the elderly, the fathers and mothers of present-day society, not only demonstrate man’s defiance to disobey this command, but also refuse to take God’s promise seriously. Can this nation really expect God to continue to bless it when we want to dishonor our parents by putting them to death?

To me, euthanasia is just another test to reveal the soul of our nation. Are we going to have a culture of death that will produce more death or are we going to choose life? Do we want to embrace euthanasia in our country along with abortion or do we want to express compassion (suffering with people) as God tells us to do. We must not side with the part of our nation that encourages euthanasia for the simple reason of God’s promise. We need to stand against the culture of death that is trying to prevail in our nation and remember another promise that God gives in the Bible:

Psalm 9:17 says,

“The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God.”

10. Because of the salvation of God.

We are to promote, protect, and preserve life because of the salvation of God. The concept that death will bring an end to everybody’s suffering is wrong. For many death is the doorway into

judgment (Heb. 9:27) and an eternal nightmare of hell and horror. Death will only lead to their greater suffering and misery. To take an unsaved person's life hastens them on to hell and judgment and takes away from them opportunity to repent and be saved.

2 Peter 3:9 says,

“The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”

If God is longsuffering toward people we should be longsuffering as well. We should want them to be saved and not see them exit into eternity without salvation and eternal life. Instead of unlawfully killing people we are to shower compassion upon them “making a difference” (Jude vs. 22) in their lives and “others save with fear pulling them out of the fire” (Jude vs. 23). Our aim should be to see people saved instead of murdering them and sending them on to a Christless eternity. Perhaps we could see more people saved if we stop the euthanasia epidemic that is beginning to spread throughout this world and even into our own country.

Conclusion

There is no Bible justification for euthanasia. The truth of the Bible is designed to touch all ages and cultures. Its timeless ethical principles do not change. It is the final authority and deciding issue of all moral and ethical questions. The Bible tells us to choose life. When we agree that a woman should be starved to death because it is the law, it is time to change the law. We need to change our laws to agree with the laws of God, the true and righteous Judge (Rev. 15:3). When we learn to live by God's ethical codes there will be greater blessing as a nation (Psalm 33:12). When we vote for the death of our babies through abortion, and now agree to put to death (murder) someone who is brain-damaged or dying of some disease, where will it end? Those who agree with euthanasia (the practice of murder) may find death on their own doorstep. It may come sooner than they think since this kind of mentality in our present world will only hasten (2 Pet. 3:12) planet earth one step closer to God's judgment day (Rev. 3:10). We reap what we sow (Gal. 6:7).