

# WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT SUICIDE? ASSISTED SUICIDE? MENTAL ILLNESS?

Suicide, assisted suicide, and mental illness are heartbreaking and touchy topics. Everyone reading this has likely been touched, or will be touched, by suicide and mental illness. Maybe you are having thoughts of, or are considering suicide yourself. Maybe you have lost a loved one due to suicide. Maybe you are concerned for someone who has previously talked about or attempted suicide. *This resource is designed to help you to find God's answers for some of your toughest questions.*

## **If you're considering suicide...**

Don't. Stop. Please call out for help. Your life matters, even if you don't think it does at this moment. Your pain and distress is temporary. There is hope and strength here for the pain you are in right now! There are people that do care about you. Suicide may seem like the only answer to your problems at the moment. Don't believe that. In truth...

- Suicide doesn't "fix" problems or relieve pain. It creates more problems and pain.
- Suicide isn't a cure for suffering. It creates more suffering.
- Suicide isn't an escape from this world to heaven. It may, in fact take you immediately to Hell.

These statements may sound harsh or "unloving," but they are the truth. If you are in the depths of a depression that is so dark and deep that you see no other way out than taking your own life, the truths you are reading now are the very thing you need. If your pain seems inescapable with no end or relief in sight, you need true hope that is rooted in reality. You don't need false hopes or "feel good" statements that temporarily distract you from your situation or pain. You need to know what God has to say to you. He loves and cares for you. He has much to say to you about your pain and suffering. So keep reading to discover His truths...

## **“What Does the Bible Say About Suffering, Worry, Death, Life & Heaven?”**

- [www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-suffering-worry-death-life-and-heaven](http://www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-suffering-worry-death-life-and-heaven)

## **“What Does the Bible Say About Depression?”**

- [www.trustworthyword.com/depression](http://www.trustworthyword.com/depression)

Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil,  
for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me. (Psalm 23:4)

**Is suicide really that serious? Don't I have the right to take my own life whenever and however I see fit?** Suicide is murder, self-murder. Murder is a sin. (Exodus 20:13) God cares about you. The same God who made the universe made you, formed you, and knew you (Jeremiah 1:5, Psalm 22:10; 139:13; 147:3-4). You are not an accident or mistake. God has a purpose and plan for your life. Listen to Him. Trust in Him. Receive His love. Let Him forgive you, heal you, and rescue you.

“He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds. He determines the number of the stars; he gives to all of them their names.” (Psalm 147:3-4 ESV)

**Aren't there stories and examples of suicide in the Bible?** Yes. There are several examples in the Bible of suicide (Judges 9:54, 1 Samuel 31:4-6, 2 Samuel 17:23, 1 Kings 16:18, Matthew 27:5). However, the men that took their own life in the bible were considered wicked and ungodly. Examples of suicide are *described* to us, but suicide is not *prescribed* for us. In other words, they are told as examples and lessons as how NOT to act or react to our troubles in this life. God does not support or allow suicide as a response or option for us, even in the most desperate of situations. Suicide is always condemned by God as sin in the Bible.

Say to those who have an anxious heart, "Be strong; fear not! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God. He will come and save you." Isaiah 35:4

**I feel so useless and such a burden on everyone. Won't the world be a better place without me?** Absolutely not. God has a specific purpose for your life. Even before He created the universe, He already knew us. He already had planned our life. (Psalm 139:16, Ephesians 1:4). Your existence was no accident. Even in your pain and distress, God still has a plan for your life (Jeremiah 29:11).

**Is suicide the “unforgivable” sin? If someone commits suicide will they go to Hell? Is it possible to commit suicide and go to Heaven?** There is only one unforgivable sin; the ongoing rebellion and rejection of Jesus as Lord (Matthew 12:31). All other sin is forgivable. Jesus talks about the “unforgivable sin” in Mark 3:22-30. *Suicide is so serious because it is a final act of rejecting God as being in charge of your life, choosing to end your life on your terms and timing. Dying in this state of open rebellion as a non-believer gives you no opportunity afterward to be forgiven of all your sin by trusting in the work of Jesus on the cross* (Luke 16:19-31).

As earlier stated, suicide is murder. Murder is sin. An authentic Christian has been pardoned from all sin, past and future (Romans 8:1); including murder. While it is possible for a Christian to commit suicide, it should be cause for serious concern for the genuineness of one's faith if he doesn't see any other way to deal with life's troubles and struggles other than suicide (1 Corinthians 10:13).

**“How Can I Be Sure I am a Christian?”**

• [www.trustworthyword.com/how-can-i-be-sure-im-a-christian](http://www.trustworthyword.com/how-can-i-be-sure-im-a-christian)

**“How Can I Become a Christian?”**

• [www.trustworthyword.com/how-can-i-become-a-christian](http://www.trustworthyword.com/how-can-i-become-a-christian)

**“What Does the Bible Say about Heaven?”**

• [www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-heaven](http://www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-heaven)

**“What Does the Bible Say about Hell?”**

• [www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-hell](http://www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-hell)

## **What about “assisted suicide” or “active euthanasia”?**

Assisted suicide and active euthanasia are terms used to describe the intentional act of ending one’s life in light of a medically declared untreatable or incurable condition (medically diagnosed as eventually ending in the death of the individual). It is often considered and acted upon as an avenue for “speeding up” the apparently inevitable.

Assisted suicide is usually referred to as PAC (physician assisted suicide). PAC involves a physician’s prescription of some sort of lethal medication to the patient. The patient is then responsible for taking this lethal medication themselves. Active euthanasia is similar, however the treating physician is much more active in the process by administering the lethal medication to the patient himself.

Both of these processes are initiated by the patient’s desire and decision to end their life due to their seemingly incurable and terminal disease or condition. This is not the same as being on life support in an unconscious state. Making such a decision based on medical advice ultimately, however, doesn’t consider the truth that God can heal anyone He chooses to from any illness or otherwise hopeless physical condition, if He wills.

The Bible contains stories and examples of those that express their desires to God for Him to end their life because of extreme mental or spiritual anguish from troubles and suffering (1 Kings 19:1-14, Jonah 4:3, Job 6:8-11). None of these requests are granted by God, however. The Bible tells us that God is the One that determines the day of our death, and not us (Deuteronomy 32:39, Psalm 90:3, 1 Samuel 2:6).

While there may be times that we experience extreme distress and trouble in our life, even to the point of wanting to die, God tells us in His Word that there is always a solution to our problems here on earth, and suicide is not an option for us to consider (1 Corinthians 10:13). Therefore, regardless of the circumstances, assisted suicide and active euthanasia are still considered murder.

And he said to them, “Why are you troubled, and why do doubts arise in your hearts?”  
Luke 24:38

Say to those who have an anxious heart, “Be strong; fear not! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God. He will come and save you.” Isaiah 35:4

**What about cutting, and self-harm?** The Bible talks about cutting and self-mutilation in the Old Testament concerning pagan rituals while worshipping false gods. In the New Testament, cutting was mentioned in a story concerning demon possession (Mark 5:2-5).

Cutting and self-harm is something practiced today by some individuals that are dealing with depression, anger, or pain that hasn’t been properly dealt with or addressed. Often they have had traumatic experiences in life, severe stress, ongoing anxiety, or other difficult life events. As a result, physical pain to oneself in the form of cutting and self-harm serve as an outlet for emotional pain. Self-harm produces a type of temporary relief from mental and emotional stress, and sometimes even serves as self-punishment for feelings of guilt and self-condemnation.

The Bible doesn’t specifically talk about cutting and self-harm as a result of anxiety, stress or depression. However, God does remind us that as Christians, our body does not belong to us anymore, and we should treat it with care (1 Corinthians 6:9-10). A person practicing cutting and self-harm has a false view of themselves and their identity and self worth. God wants us to know that our worth is found in the love of Jesus Christ and His work on the cross. A personal relationship with Jesus through this work is absolutely necessary to truly understand our actual and full worth. This is the ultimate cure for self harm and cutting; to see how valuable we are to Christ who sacrificed His life so we may live!

## **“What Does the Bible Say about Christian Identity?”**

- Check out [www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-christian-identity](http://www.trustworthyword.com/what-does-the-bible-say-about-christian-identity)

**What about mental illness?** It is important to understand that some people struggle with worry, anxiety, fear, and depression to such a degree that it paralyzes them, while others only have occasional struggles. Mental illness is real, just like a physical illness, and Christians should not neglect to consider medicines and medical solutions that God has provided to help treat and relieve the symptoms of mental illness. Adequate research should be done concerning the side effects and potential dependence on such medicines.

Simultaneous to any medicinal usage, Christians should be reminded that we have a volitional responsibility to know and believe God’s revealed truth and actively follow Him in obedience (mentally, physically, emotionally, and spiritually), regardless of our feelings (Mark 12:30-31). Christians should demonstrate sympathy and compassion towards those dealing with mental illness, even if they do not fully understand or have not experienced similar struggles or mental bondage.

Worry, fear, anxiety, depression, and mental illness should never be looked at from a mere physiological approach. We should be reminded that we have a real, supernatural enemy in Satan who seeks to “kill and destroy” (John 10:10) us (mentally, physically, emotionally, and spiritually) from loving God and loving others. God’s truths are described as the “sword of the Spirit” which is one of our weapons in spiritual warfare as we stand firm in our faith, prayerfully resisting the enemy of our souls (Ephesians 6:10-20). Non-believers who struggle with mental illness should be reminded that their only hope for everlasting peace will be found in Christ Jesus.

“When anxiety strikes and blurs our vision of God’s glory and the greatness of the future that he plans for us, this does not mean that we are faithless, or that we will not make it to heaven. It means our faith is being attacked.” John Piper

Christians who struggle with mental illness should not doubt their faith, but should be reminded that they are not helpless or hopeless. They should desperately petition God for relief, but simultaneously see their weakness as an opportunity to grow in faith and dependence on Christ (2 Corinthians 12:1-10). If Jesus chooses not to remove your mental struggles from you, you must trust and seek out His grace to be sufficient for you.

Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. [9] But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. [10] For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong. (2 Corinthians 12:8-10 ESV)

*For more on mental and emotional health see:*

## **“What Does the Bible Say about Mental Health?”**

- [www.trustworthyword.com/mental-health](http://www.trustworthyword.com/mental-health)

## **“What Does the Bible Say about Emotional Health?”**

- [www.trustworthyword.com/emotional-health](http://www.trustworthyword.com/emotional-health)

## **Is it wrong to take psychiatric medicines like antidepressants?**

Oftentimes medicine is necessary for mental illness the same as is necessary for physical illness. Psychiatric medicines can be a key component of a holistic solution when an individual seeks and is ready to receive help. Unfortunately some discount or discredit the need for medicinal treatment while others abuse and overly-depend on a medicinal aid.

In biblical times, alcohol was used and biblically described & prescribed for medicinal purposes in ways similar to an anti-depressant (Ecclesiastes 9:7, Psalm 104:15, Proverbs 31:6-7, Luke 10:34) but was simultaneously warned about concerning the dangers of misuse, abuse, and over-dependance (Proverbs 20:1; 23:29-35; 31:4-5, Romans 14:21).

Proverbs 31:4-7 “it is not for kings to drink wine, or for rulers to take strong drink, lest they drink and forget what has been decreed and pervert the rights of all the afflicted. Give strong drink to the one who is perishing, and wine to those in bitter distress; let them drink and forget their poverty and remember their misery no more.”

## **What can I do to help a family grieving from loss of a loved one to suicide?**

Families and individuals that have lost a loved one to suicide will deal with ongoing and intense emotions. Along with normal feelings associated with loss, those dealing with suicide can also be dealing with guilt, anger, and shock. Many times loss to suicide can be unexpected when an individual doesn't share his personal troubles or pains with others as not to “burden them.” Guilt can be felt as a result of thinking of the lost opportunities to talk the deceased about those pains and struggles. Here are some very practical and truth-filled ways of loving and assisting those that have experienced loss due to suicide:

- *Be praying and fasting*, they need healing and strength that only God can provide.
- *Be present with them*, even in silence, lovingly showing you care.
- *Be silent and respect their privacy*, don't ask for details you don't have the right to know.
- *Be sensitive*, think before you speak out shallow, ineffective sayings that hurt more than help.
- *Be helpful*, meals and routine, practical help makes a difference as life goes on.
- *Be patient*, healing can take a long time and things will never be the same.
- *Be a friend*, don't abandon or forget them in their time of need, no matter how awkward or difficult it may be.

“The Lord is near the brokenhearted and saves the crushed in spirit” (Psalms 34:18, ESV)

Ultimately, the family and loved ones of those experiencing such a tragic loss need to be loved. They need to be loved in the way that Christ loves them. Be an example of the that love by being present in their time of need. This process of grieving can be long and painful, so be patient with them and their emotions. Always be prepared to answer their questions and doubts in love and truth (1 Peter 3:15).

## 5 TRAGIC STATISTICS CONCERNING SUICIDE

1. Suicide is the second leading cause of death in the U.S. for the age groups of 10-14 year olds, 15-24 year olds, and 25-34 year old age groups. (cdc.gov)
2. Suicide is the 10<sup>th</sup> leading cause of death overall in the U.S. Homicide ranks 17<sup>th</sup>. (cdc.gov)
3. There is one death by suicide every 12.3 minutes in the U.S. (cdc.gov), and one every 40 seconds in the world. (World Health Organization, AAS)
4. There are 800,000 suicides per year worldwide. (World Health Organization, AAS)
5. 90% of adolescents that receive treatment for depression are treated successfully (TADS Study)

### HELPFUL RESOURCES

[www.gotquestions.org](http://www.gotquestions.org)

[www.412teens.org](http://www.412teens.org)

TrustworthyWord.com is an International resource, but for those living in the United States of America, here are some suicide hotlines and helpline ready for you now. If you do not live in the USA, please call your local authorities or medical treatment centers for help immediately.

- National Hopeline Network: 1-800-SUICIDE
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-TALK (Español: 1-888-628-9454)
- National Child Abuse Hotline: 1-800-4-A-CHILD
- National Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-800-799-SAFE