

# WHAT ABOUT SUICIDE?

By Pastor Mark Suko  
Discovery Baptist Church 2002  
(Expanded from message series on death)



Suicide is a popular and perplexing subject today. Assisted suicide is a hot issue and the use of the term "dying with dignity." Suicide is becoming more acceptable in our culture because of the self-focus of the age in which we live. It is rationalized that suicide is okay because we should have control of our destiny, we don't need to allow ourselves to go through certain hardships or we can be in a more comfortable place as soon as we die.

Statistics show that suicide is now becoming more common in youth, the elderly and women (once it was primarily for men). Women are also using more violent means (guns) to commit suicide. The most common month for suicide in our area is January and the most common day is Tuesday.

Is suicide a sin? Yes it is. It is in the category of murder. God said in Exodus 20 that man shall not kill (murder). Those who choose to kill

themselves are committing murder. Since we are created in the image of God (Genesis 1:26) the one who commits suicide is striking a blow at God who created him.

Do those who commit suicide automatically go to hell because they did not have time to repent of this sin? There is no clear indication in Scripture that suicide automatically means a person is lost. Salvation is based on faith alone in Christ. If a person is not a genuine believer in Christ none of his sins are forgiven so he would go to hell regardless if he died by his own hand or not. Jesus said you must be born again to enter the kingdom of God. Being born again is described as exercising saving faith in Christ (John 3:16).

What about Judas who was one of the apostles, yet committed suicide? Even though he walked with the twelve it does not seem he was really a part of them. His motives were not the glory of God but the elevation of self. Money was so important to him that he sold the Savior for a few pieces of silver. Later he was remorseful and committed suicide. One must remember that remorse is different from true repentance. Remorse is being sorry because you were caught but repentance is being sorry because it offended God. It appears that Judas may not have had genuine faith in the first place and suicide was only an indication of his depraved nature.

What about pastors or Christians who have committed suicide? It would seem to be a logical deduction that if a person committed suicide they could not repent of that sin and hence would go to hell. However, I do not think that because a person commits suicide they automatically go to hell. Here are some reasons why.

*First*, God's grace is greater than our sin. If the person was a Christian then this sin, past, present and future is covered by the cross. Salvation is not based upon not committing suicide. If it were, then we could boast about how we avoided this sin. That becomes a human work on which we are basing our salvation. Salvation is not based upon our works (Ephesians 2:8-9). Salvation is based upon faith alone in the work of Christ on the cross for us personally (John 3:16; 6:47). The person who repents and believes in Christ is saved from all sin, even the sin of suicide (Acts 16:31). Suicide is not the unforgivable sin. Unbelief is the unforgivable sin.

The person who does not accept Christ is rejecting the idea of salvation coming by faith in Christ's sacrificial work for them and cannot be forgiven after death. That is unforgivable.

It is true that suicide is a faithless act because it shows the person was not trusting God to get him through the difficulty. This kind of faith is faith to deal with day to day problems rather than saving faith. While a person may sincerely have faith in Christ as Savior, yet because of twisted thinking he can fall into despair about his earthly problems and forget about trusting God to help him. While suicide is the ultimate act of faithlessness in earthly matters, yet we are still reminded that God has emphatically said He would perfect any work He truly began in us until the day of Christ Jesus (Phil. 1:6).

*Second*, anyone who has sincerely repented and put his faith in Christ as Savior is eternally secure. John 6:47, "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes has eternal life". Eternal life is just as it says, "eternal." It has no conditions. John 10:28, "and I give eternal

life to them, and they shall never perish; and no one shall snatch them out of My hand.”

Even a sinning believer is not strong enough to remove himself (John 10). God as Father may chastise him but that does not change his relationship as a son.

*Third*, many saints in the Bible wished they could die at times. Jonah felt that way on the hillside. Elijah felt that way when pursued. However, there seems to be no clear example of any believer committing suicide in Scripture. Samson is sometimes given as an example (Judges 16) but his death was really an offensive act on behalf of his country when he pushed the temple pillars apart to destroy his captors miraculously and deliver Israel.

### ***If you are faced with a suicidal person, what do you do?***

1. Counsel them about what they are or were living for. Whatever they were living for may have changed, been lost, destroyed or corrupted. Therefore, they now see no purpose in living. Suggest that their priorities were wrong. They should be living for Christ as number one. He alone makes life worth living regardless whatever in life is wrong. Talk about how to make Christ first.

2. Counsel them to forget about themselves and think of what this will do to others. It is a selfish act that will bring much grief upon family and friends. It will cause deep hurt and vivid memories that can't be erased.

3. Counsel them to consider this a selfish act against God who made them in His image. One second after they die they will be facing God. Even the believer, although saved from suicide, will have to answer for deeds done in the flesh (1 Cor. 3:10-16). It is not a good situation to be in the presence of the almighty and powerful God

of the entire universe after you had just finished killing what He had made in His image. This is heightened when you consider that man is the pinnacle of God's creation far above all the animals and plants (Gen. 1: 27-31).

4. Counsel them that suicide is ignoring faith in God's power to help them through the situation. Regardless of how bad their situation is, God promises to give grace in it. If they don't believe He could, then they have a very low view of who God is. Help them have a higher view of God by showing His greatness (cf. read Job 38-42).

5. Counsel them to get right with God. For an unbeliever, exhort them to repent and trust Christ as Savior (John 3:16). See the Plan of Salvation below. For the believer exhort them to repent and seek God for forgiveness (1 John 1:9) because of their sinful attitude and lack of faith. Urge them to trust God to get them through the situation. Remind them that the church is designed by God to help them grow, to be helped and to help others. Offer to help them. Give them hope. Above all, pray for and with them. Use the Scripture, which is God's Word, to bring conviction and correction in their life. Here are some Scriptures that outline the plan of salvation.

### ***What Scripture Says about Salvation***

The Scripture tells us...

1. Recognize you have broken God's Commandments and need forgiveness: *Romans 3:23, "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." Romans 6:23a, "For the wages of sin is death."*

2. Realize you can never gain entrance to heaven on personal merit (good works, baptism, church membership etc.): *Ephesians*

*2:9, salvation is "Not as a result of works, that no one should boast." Titus 3:5a, "He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy."*

3. Repent of your sin and trust in Christ alone for forgiveness: *Acts 17:30b-31, "...now he commands all people everywhere to repent. For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the Man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to all men by raising him from the dead." 1 Peter 3:18, "For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit." John 3:16, "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."*



### ***Discovery Baptist Church***

4902 Gustafson Dr. NW  
Gig Harbor, WA 98335  
(253) 858-8990

Em: [secretary@discoverybaptist.org](mailto:secretary@discoverybaptist.org)

Web: [www.discoverybaptist.org](http://www.discoverybaptist.org)

*"Seeking first His kingdom"*

REV. 3.20.15B