

*"I did not come with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring to you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified" (1 Corinthians 2:1-2).*

## On the Question of Suicide

We received the following reply after [Life Before Death](#):

I recently had a very good friend commit suicide, she was a Christian, but in her words could not live up to the standard any longer. I have been haunted by those words since I too have thought that way too many times. If you could please address issues surrounding suicide and the thoughts that we need to live to a certain unobtainable standard.

Shari

**Victor wrote this in response:**

I greet you in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Shari,

When I greet you so, what I mean is that He is my life and inspires me to write to you. Therefore, if you believe, you will know that what I say to you is true.

Allow me to come right to the point concerning both your lost friend and yourself. A Christian, in the true sense, is one who not only lives for, but in and by the power of the Lord Jesus Christ Who dwells in him or her. Had that been the case with your friend, she would not have committed suicide. Here is a Scripture to verify that truth:

"No temptation has taken you but what is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted above what you are able, but with the temptation also will make a way to escape, so that you may be able to bear it" (1 Corinthians 10:13).

Jesus also said:

"The thief does not come except to steal and to kill and to destroy. I have come so that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly" (John 10:10).

Does He mean what He says? Is He a liar or a fool? Are His Words only for another time, or other persons, or do they apply to all those who put their trust in Him? He says:

"My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give to them eternal life, and they shall never perish, and not anyone shall pluck them out of My

hand. My Father, which gave them to Me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of My Father's hand. I and My Father are one" (John 10:27-30).

Undoubtedly, He means what He says, knows what He is talking about, and can perform that which He claims and promises. He has done so for many, including ourselves. After all, He is God. Your friend glorified death and not the Resurrection, the prince of death, not the Prince of Life. She was destroyed by the destroyer because she was not believing the Lifegiver. She was not a Christian as God defines a Christian. If you have not known that, then you too must be delivered from being "your own" Christian.

Shari, there are two kinds of Christians, man-made, and God-made. One is simply religious, although often with apparently good morals, principles, habits, knowledge and lifestyle. There are many like that. We have several acquaintances like that. I have been like that. However, the Lord says that nobody can attain unto fellowship and favor with Him by good works. As it is written:

"For by grace you are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to good works, which God has before ordained that we should walk in them" (Ephesians 2:8-10).

Jesus also said to the Jews listening to Him:

"For I say to you that unless your righteousness shall exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall in no case enter into the Kingdom of Heaven" (Matthew 5:20).

The scribes and Pharisees were devout in their religion. They prayed, they fasted, they tithed, gave alms, "went to church" regularly, preached, witnessed to others, and observed all the feasts of God. They were quite zealous, as Paul the apostle said he was before his miraculous conversion. But when Paul was stopped by the Lord on the road to Damascus, and converted from religious works to the Lord, he learned that all those works were not enough. He also learned that in effect, he had been opposing the Lord in those works because he was trusting in his own "right-being" rather than in the righteousness or "rightness" of God.

Only God has true righteousness. We as human beings have none, Shari, none at all. That is why Jesus Christ sacrificed Himself on the cross. He had to pay the price for our deliverance from sin, from darkness, from this "evil generation" (the world and its ungodly ways of doing and thinking), from the devil who apprehended us through temptation, and from ourselves.

If you read my testimony on our site you will read that I too tried to bear that unbearable burden of trying to be good, to measure up, to "live up to the standard," as you put it. Yes, Shari, those are haunting words. They were for me.

Thankfully, by the grace of God, He brought me to the place of understanding and accepting that I could not win favor with God or please Him by "being good." He brought me to the place where, in helplessness and humility, I had to acknowledge Him as Lord and ask Him to take over my life because I was unable to even comprehend how I should live, much less live. "With men, these things are impossible," said Jesus to His disciples, adding, "But with God, all things are possible."

When finally God was done bringing me to the end of depending on or trusting in myself to be good or pleasing to Him, and gave me to ask Him to take over my life, then things rapidly changed. Suddenly, I was not trying to be good, but something good was happening in me. I knew it was beyond me because I had tried desperately, and failed. I too had contemplated suicide in my failure, frustration and depression. But He saved me, and gave me a new heart and life.

That is what your friend needed, Shari. That is what you need. You must be a God-made Christian. That is the only valid kind in the end.

Please understand, I am not condemning your friend. I am simply telling you the truth, the way things are. Not being a true believer, it did not occur to your friend that if she could not prevail in this world, there was no guarantee she could do so in the next.

She went from the frying pan to the fire. That is the lot of suicides. However, she is now in a place of correction, and in the will of God she too will be redeemed in due time. Perhaps her failure will serve you and others for good. This letter is obviously a result of that death, that others may hear the truth.

Isn't it something, that a total stranger to her is moved to spend time writing a letter for the education and edification of others because of something negative she did? All things are under the sovereignty of God. All things have purpose, and in the end, it will all be a perfect work, including every last stitch, every last brush stroke, even the tiny splatters that seemed accidental or useless or even detrimental.

He is here, now, Shari. Trust not in your virtue but in His mercy and forgiveness. Turn from your sins, yes, but turn to Him for deliverance. He is our needful Savior. Think about it: if He so loved you as to die for your sake, which He did, will He not finish for you and your friend what He is doing? Of course, He will. Make no mistake, we will suffer the consequences for our sins, and it certainly does not pay to sin, and repentance is required, but in the end, it is all in His hands and not ours.

Victor Hafichuk

**Paul also responded to the same letter, below:**

Hi Shari,

I thank God that He has not left me hopeless. I have hope because He has caused me to know Him. To know God is hope; it is life and the source of power to overcome all things, even death. It is the power of the Lord Jesus Christ. He, Jesus Christ, is the means by which we know God. It is also His will and purpose for us that we all know Him. Jesus Christ *is* the will of God for mankind. That is why He said He is the Way, the Truth and the Life. And again, "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men" (John 1:4). We are meant to drink His blood, and eat His flesh. We must have His life in us to have life.

The following topic may not seem to be answering your question, but please bear with me because this has everything to do with matters of life and death. Jesus Christ is the Savior of all mankind. He gave His life to that end, and it will be seen in the ages to come that He has perfectly accomplished His work.

To Him shall every knee bow and every tongue confess, all to the glory of God. It will not be coercion, but the confession made by the Spirit of God, Who is the Father of all, given to all, in solemnity, faith, and with great joy. In other words, all will know Him, from the least to the greatest, and all will be saved. That is the will of God, for He is "...not willing that ANY should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9).

The arguments of "What about people who did not know in this life?" or "What about those who thought they were Christians and fell away?" and so forth, are all falling short of the glory and power of the resurrection power of Jesus Christ. God will save all, but each person in his or her own order, in this life **and** in the one to come. God will not be denied. His sacrifice and resurrection is far greater than the sin of Adam. If Adam, a man, could cause the fall of all, how much more can Christ, Who is God in the flesh, cause the raising up of all? (Please do read 1 Corinthians 15:20-26.)

Now, some will erroneously and wickedly say upon hearing this, "Why bother doing anything right if all will be saved?" Usually these are religious people who are trusting in their own works and feel robbed if their works are in vain, which they are. The person who truly loves God does right precisely because he or she is saved. God has caused them to do of His good will and pleasure. They rejoice in His will, because He has brought them into His life and purposes.

Only an evil heart will say, "What does it matter if all will be saved? You may as well live according to the lusts of your flesh and do evil." Everyone suffers the consequences of their ways and thoughts, no exception. "God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man sows, that shall he also reap" (Galatians 6:7). We warn all because this is so. All are called to repentance from doing their own thing.

Another erroneous thought is that if God will save us all it may not be a bad idea to hasten the process and do yourself in. In other words, suicide might even be a good thing. But that is not at all true, and I say emphatically it makes matters far worse when one commits suicide. Again, you cannot sin and expect good to follow.

The process of salvation comes through being exposed to the vanity and evil of living independently of God. The consequences teach and guide us into what is right. The more we go down that path of independence and sin, the more will we suffer in this life *and* in the life to come.

We all must eventually learn that these ways bring corruption and death and do not prosper us. Until we learn we will continue to reap evil things. Salvation begins not as a total cessation of evil, but as a process of deliverance from the engine that drives evil and destruction in our lives and this world. When it is complete then evil and foolishness will be done away with, though until ALL is done in ALL, I must say that suffering is part of our existence. God too, suffers, until all things are made right.

I speak of death as a consequence of sin, and not as simply a physical event. Death is a spiritual state, whether in this body or not. ("Let the dead bury the dead," Jesus said.) So, what we do has consequences in this life and in the life to come. The Scriptures say:

"For this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit" (1 Peter 4:6).

If a person is facing problems in this life (and who is the person that is not facing problems?), those problems are there for a reason or purpose, and likely both. The reason is because of things he or she has done, while the purpose is from God for His higher purposes to work good for all. Suicide is an attempt to escape problems by physical discontinuation of life in this present world. It is an attempt to escape the consequences of sin without recognition of the sovereignty of God Who is over all circumstances and is working all things for good.

The escaping of problems, however, is not enacted by physical death, but is actually compounded when one tries to escape prematurely from that which is there for his or her own good. The elements that God has placed there to resolve and deal with the problem are removed when one takes his or her own life. The very means to escape are cut off in trying to escape! I do not say there is not a solution in the world to come (there is), but it will be that much harder for those who take their own life.

Truly, the problem lies within, always. If one takes his or her own life, he or she takes the problem with him or herself. The truth is that the issue is never external, but internal, never the circumstances, but one's attitude toward the circumstances. One may rearrange circumstances, as in suicide or flight, or whatever, but the attitude remains. Being that God designs all circumstances for our development, our only hope of deliverance is in a change of attitude and not circumstances. Do you understand?

I will give you an example and illustration of this. A friend of mine had an alcoholic uncle who committed suicide. As would be expected, this traumatized his family. They were devastated by their loss. One of his sisters, not a professing Christian (nor

was the brother), had a dream of her brother, which I believe God gave her (He is God of all).

In the dream, she drove up to a drab institutional type of building and saw her brother Doug sitting in front of the building in a wheelchair. He had no feet. She was horrified, and in shock said, "This can't be, how could this happen to you?!" Doug however, was calm, and told her it was ok. He was at peace with things as they were and needed to be.

This is an illustration of precisely what I am saying. You cut off your own feet when you take your own life. Trying to circumvent the circumstances in which God has placed you is a surefire way to sabotage yourself.

Nevertheless, He is still God, and you must still go on in the next realm. If you accept your circumstances by His grace you will be on your way to remedy. Unlike that which the Hindus and Buddhists teach, there is no reincarnation, but there is more to come after life in this present realm.

The hardness of the circumstances after a suicide death are necessary to deal with the inner state of that person who sins against God, man, and him or herself in taking his or her own life. It is truly a matter of God being merciful and His willing something good as the end result that things are hard. Punishment and judgment are never an end in themselves. Maybe for men, but never for God!

I will give you another example. The Lord sent Victor and me to Missoula a few years ago to speak to some people. During our stay there we went to a religious gathering with a man who invited us. A family that commonly met with this group had just lost a son to suicide. The son was in his early 20's, had a wife and young child. He had been struggling with drug problems for years. He apparently felt he could not go on and committed suicide.

The congregation was in prayer for his soul and the family. They were trying to buck up their courage about the eternal fate of this young man because while at one time he had "accepted" Jesus, his life was not at all being lived as a believer, even by their own standards.

When we heard of this young man it moved us. Victor saw, in the Spirit, what happened to this man when he committed suicide. This fellow, upon death, recognized what he had done, and was gripped in his soul by a terrible anguish for which there was no solace. What he had done could not be undone, though he desired with all his heart to undo it.

He was not released from his problems at all. He was now catapulted into a far greater torment because there was absolutely nothing he could do to go back to find resolution and peace in dealing with his problems. He had to move on knowing he had cut himself off permanently. He could not speak to his wife, or child, or be of help to

anyone that he loved. We are not placed here in this world just for ourselves. Suicide is an extreme expression of selfishness, which is thinking that the world revolves around you. It does not.

The family (and congregation) tried to take comfort in the false notion that their son was "in heaven with Jesus." Inside themselves they knew this was not true, so there really was no comfort at all. We tried to talk to them but they would have none of the truth. The truth was the son did die in sin. Who can deny that?! The truth was and is that there is yet hope in Him Who raises the dead. Without faith the parents were left in horrible grief and without hope. A young wife and child were left without husband and father. If this is not sinning against man and God, what is?

It is not true that a person is sent to heaven or hell upon death. Heaven and hell are spiritual states, not determined by the physical life or death. They are present realities.

That is not to say that there are not future rewards and punishments. It is to say that you are what you are within. The changes that bring one into the Kingdom of Heaven begin when the soul turns to the Lord and He, Jesus Christ, begins to take that life over.

That process is not initiated or finalized by physical death. It begins for some in this life. We are of such, the Lord having brought us out of hell and death to live with Him now in heaven. We are testifying of these things from heaven, just as He did in His physical appearing.

I will also speak of personal experience. In 1986, several years after I had become a believer, and knew of God personally, being given a measure of faith through Christ, I believed I had blown it spiritually and that there was no hope for me in this life. I could not measure up, not nearly, and found myself in an exquisite form of torturous hell. I was not in contact with other believers, nor did I have any family or friends around me. I was alone in a city where I knew no one, with no hope or reason to live as I saw it. I saw myself as the man who began to build but who could not finish. The things of this world were no longer of the same interest or desire to me as they were in the days when I was ignorant and did not know the truth of God and Christ. I knew we are not here to simply eat and drink. Life is not meaningless. If, as I saw it, the Meaningfulness of life was cut off from me, what did I have to live for?

I contemplated suicide, at least intellectually. I considered whether it was an option for me. Although emotionally distraught, and without rest in my soul, I did not act emotionally in this matter. I still knew there was right and wrong, and that what was right mattered more than how I felt. I am not claiming any righteousness; this too was what the Lord had given me. He was with me. I realized that even if not a single soul cared about me (which was not true), for me to hang myself and leave a stranger to find my body to have to deal with it - that was a terrible thing to do to anyone. It just was not right to do that.

Not too long after this I knew with certainty that God had forgiven me what I thought unpardonable, and He had not cast me away. Did that mean there were no problems after that? Not in the least. We enter the Kingdom through much tribulation. But I am a witness here to tell you the Lord is faithful, there is no problem too big for Him, and that most of all, we are not our own.

Our lives were bought and paid for by His blood, and we need to and can only live according to His commandments, not our own whims and estimations. "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God." Anything else IS death.

In case anyone should think that God's standards would drive one to take their own life, Jesus said:

"Come unto Me, all you that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and you shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light" (Matthew 11:28-30).

It is not His standards or expectations of us, but pride (shame before men, instead of God), ignorance, and the false teachings of men that drive people to suicide. Those things bring heavy burdens. As Jesus also said:

"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, you make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves" (Matthew 23:15).

Listening to men, who feed one's pride and expect the impossible of others, can drive people to kill themselves. God knows our frames, and that we are but dust. He does not expect the impossible; He did the impossible for us. He requires us to believe on Him, Jesus Christ Whom He sent to us.

Even this is something He gives us. No person can receive Him except it is given to him or her from above (John 6:44). If we believe on Him we will have everlasting life, which is not a state related to our physical whereabouts, but comes because we believe on the One Who gives rivers of living water from within, even here and now.

Jesus said, "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believes in Me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: And whosoever lives and believes in Me shall never die..." (John 11:25-26).

We cannot spin gold out of straw. God does not expect us to do so.

"Then said they unto Him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that you believe on Him whom He has sent" (John 6:28-29).

The problem for so many is that they have believed in a false Jesus, a historical Jesus, the religious man's Jesus that is created in the image they have conceived of themselves and which they hold up as one to be imitated or emulated, or whose example they should follow in their own strength. This is an unbearable burden. They are not believing in and hearing from the living, resurrected Lord of life.

They are instead following men, other spirits, carnal understandings, and their own lusts. These all fail, and one is left without hope. We are here to call you and all to repentance to turn to the true and living Lord Who is with us, and Who has sent us, so that you might learn of Him and live. That is what He is doing.

"For the earnest expectation of the creature waits for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him who has subjected the same in hope, Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and travails in pain together until now. And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man sees, why does he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it" (Romans 8:19-25).

In that true hope of all men, Whom I confess before you, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Paul

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