

Culture

Do things
Make things
Create things



Refine &
Sustain
those things



Survive
Flourish

Euthanasia & Physician-Assisted Death

Legalized Physician Aid in Dying

- International: Belgium, Germany, Spain, Finland, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Switzerland
- In the US: CA, CO, HI, ME, NJ, NM, OR, VT, WA, DC, MT
- *Vacco vs. Quill (1997)*



Brittany Maynard
1984 – 2014

What are the arguments for
physician-assisted death?

“I would not tell anyone else that he or she should choose death with dignity. My question is: Who has the right to tell me that I don't deserve this choice? That I deserve to suffer for weeks or months in tremendous amounts of physical and emotional pain? Why should anyone have the right to make that choice for me?”

- Brittany Maynard -

How do we define death?

And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, “You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.”

Genesis 2:16-17

... and he died ...

Genesis 5:5, 8, 11, 14, 17, 20, 23, 27, 31

Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned—for sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law. Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses

Romans 5:12-14

Desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death.

James 1:15

Christ Jesus ... abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

2 Timothy 1:10

He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away.

Revelation 21:4

The last enemy to be destroyed is death.

1 Corinthians 15:26

Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed, for God made man in his own image.

Genesis 9:6

The central question:
Is taking one's own life wrong?

Key Theological Points

- Although death is normal, it is not natural
- Death is consistently personified in Scripture as “the enemy”
- Death has been conquered by Christ
- The “taking of life” is prohibited, except where expressly sanctioned.

2 Samuel 1:1-16
The Death of Saul

The central question:
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What about advance directives,
palliative care, and hospice?

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palliative care, and hospice?

“Do not resuscitate”

“Do not intubate”

“Pain management & comfort care”

What about stopping / not starting
life-sustaining interventions?

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life-sustaining interventions?

“Mechanical ventilation”

“ECMO”

“LVAD”

“Dialysis”

What about voluntary stopping
of eating and drinking?

What about palliative sedation?

Some comments on abortion ...

Death and the Language of Compassion

Some conclusions

- We do not need to fear death because it has been conquered in Christ's death and resurrection.
- We must recognize, however, the theological implications of death, and take very seriously the Biblical concept of the *imago dei*.
- The world, in its confused depravity, takes the position that "if you can't beat 'em, join 'em" with respect to death and mortality.
- The church is neither "beaten" by death, nor allied with death, because Christ has conquered death.

For further discussion

- How can we (the church community) help one another when death approaches?
- How should the church community be prepared to help those who have been impacted by the world's confusion about death?
- How can the church reflect Christ to the world by the way we approach death and dying?