

Looking for a Cure

News about him spread all over Syria, and people brought to him all who were ill with various diseases, those suffering severe pain, the demon-possessed, those having seizures, and the paralyzed, and he healed them. (Matthew 4:24).

In Christ's time, healing was nearly impossible — outside of a miracle. Although ancient doctors learned a few things about curing ailments and disease, healing mostly involved a miracle. The lame were left to beg at the city gates and the lepers to live out their days in isolated colonies.

By the hand of God mankind now experiences incredible medical advancements. Diseases that plagued nations are now virtually non-existent. The lame learn to walk, the blind can see, and the deaf are able to hear. Technology today is miraculous in helping the ailing, disabled, and dying. We learn the value of diet, exercise, and hygiene. We educate ourselves to understand practices and places that are dangerous and learn to avoid them. It also gives many of us a sense of invincibility. And, we think we can do more.

Science is now able to take the human being down to its cellular level. In the minds of some high profile people, the “holy grail” of potential cures is in stem cell research. Simply put, stem cells represent foundational building blocks for human beings. At its basic level, in theory, a stem cell can be prodded into developing into almost any kind of human tissue.

Promises of a cure for Parkinson's disease, diabetes, or Alzheimer's are eagerly embraced by many people. There, however, is a problem. Despite progress with “adult” and “umbilical cord” stem cells, the greatest promise is presumed to lie in “embryonic” stem cells. Therein lies the problem. Although the extraction of adult or umbilical cord stem cells involves a relatively simple procedure that endangers no lives, that is not the case with embryonic stem cell research. In order to harvest embryonic stem cells, a person in the embryonic stage of life must die.

For some, it is not seen as a loss at all. It is reasoned that a child, as an embryo, lacks the reasoning skills to allow it to measure existence and therefore its loss of life is viewed as negligible.

Others consider embryonic stem cell research a sad but worthy loss of life. Children, as embryos, left over from in vitro fertilizations, are someone's children who are not wanted. Rather than destroy them through extraction of the stem cells, some feel we at least get some benefit. Sad, but prudent.

Christians, however, recognize a more fundamental reality about embryos. They are human beings and cannot be killed. The psalmist once observed that he was sinful, not just from birth but from his conception (Psalm 51:5). Because of that accountability our search for cures cannot be accomplished at the cost of other human lives. The trade off is neither fair nor correct.

We want cures in order to better care for each other. That care, however, applies to all people — even the littlest ones.

For additional information and resources in dealing with this life topic, visit the Christian Life Resources website at www.ChristianLifeResources.com or call us at 1-800-729-9535.