

# **BIBLE STUDY 1 (Student's Guide)**

## **The Meaning of Life: A Gift From God**

**First Sunday: Life Is a Gift To Be Defended From Any Who Would Take It**

*“My parents say they don't want to be a burden. They want to die with dignity. Is that OK?”*

Introduction: Agree/Disagree. God is in control of everything.

If you had to design how and when you would die, what would you choose?

### **Terms:**

**Euthanasia** – From the Greek, meaning “Good death.” It is a term that has been used to describe “mercy killing,” the taking of a life either actively or passively, voluntarily or involuntarily by applying or withdrawing medical treatment with the intent of hastening death.

**Active Euthanasia** – An act in which a physician actively kills the patient, usually by lethal injection.

**Physician Assisted Suicide** – An act in which a physician intentionally provides a patient with the means to kill him or herself, usually with an overdose of prescription medication.

Question: Is euthanasia legal?

Should it be? Why or why not?

**Read Romans 8:20-22.** Describe the “bondage to decay” from which Paul says creation awaits liberation.

What are some of the results of that *bondage to decay* on human life?

Which life has more value – the nursing home patient waiting to die and whose care is bankrupting the family, the newborn in its mother's loving arms, the corporate executive at work, the criminal, or the police officer? Why?

Read Luke 14:12-14, and notice how Jesus challenges the prevalent thoughts and practice.

What natural human tendency does this passage address? How does this passage address it?

Think of a passage of Scripture clarifying the statement that God loves all people equally, regardless of their quality of life.

Read James 2:1-10. Why does James tell us not to show favoritism?

**Truth #1** – Life is not to be valued more or less by a Christian based on its perceived quality. Hannah understood this truth when she sang her song of praise to God. She sang: “*The LORD brings death and makes alive; he brings down to the grave and raises up*” (1 Samuel 2:6).

## **Truth #2** – God is the Author of life and death.

Truth #2 is such a given for a Christian that the author of this Bible study could not think of a question to arrive at that truth without sounding patronizing. But applying it and living by that truth becomes more and more difficult with the many options we seem to have about our life and health care.

**Apply The Truths:** Evaluate some of these situations and apply God’s Word to making that decision.

- In I Samuel 31, King Saul was critically wounded. He asked his armor-bearer, his trusted defender – and perhaps, his friend – to put him out of his misery in order that the enemy wouldn’t torture him. Evaluate the reasons to fulfill that request and those against filling it. What would you do?
- Life Example: Your parents were hardworking, honest, salt-of-the-earth type people. But now, Dad can’t do anything but breathe. He seems to be in pain. Although you love him, you don’t want to see him suffer. Besides that, he needs people to bathe him and wipe him, and he can’t even swallow anymore. The proud and dignified man you knew is just a shell, losing more and more control every day.
  - Should you be able to prescribe something to help send him home to God?
  - What about just not keeping him alive – DNR (do-not-resuscitate) order?
  - What about removing the feeding tube?
- Terri Schiavo was a young woman in Florida described as in a persistent vegetative state. You may remember the court battles as various family members fought over whether or not to withdraw her feeding tube. Although she was breathing on her own and her heart was beating, she needed to be fed through that tube, since she was not able to do that for herself. The doctors said she might have lived in that condition for a long time, costing money and a great deal of care. What decision would reflect a proper application of Biblical principles?
- What if you KNOW the patient wants to die?
  - First of all...is it wrong to want to die?

**Activity:** The Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care – Christian Version

## **Closing Prayer**