



A Christian Response to Euthanasia

Session 2 Leader Outline

Student Handouts

- Student Handout #3: "The Negative Effects of Euthanasia"
- Student Handout #4: "What does God say about suffering"
- Student Handout #5: "Principles Governing Medical Decisions"
- Personal Testimony entitled "Blessings Through Suffering" from Scholl Institute of Bioethics

Scripture Verses for Session 2

Objectives

- To understand man's stewardship over life: food, water and pain relief.
- To recognize the dangers of physician assisted suicide.
- To share the Christian response to pain and suffering and identifying ways a Christian can respond to the suffering of themselves and others.
- To become aware of principles regarding the withdrawal of life support.

Welcome/Prayer

Welcome students and open with prayer. Take a moment to introduce any newcomers. Be sure any new members of the group have the student handouts from the last session.

Discussion

Briefly review the last session. Invite participants to share any reactions or insights gained during the week as a result of the first session of the course.

Show Session 2 of DVD

You may want to set the stage for this segment of "The Right To Kill" DVD they are about to view. Introduce your students to Krista Ecklund, a young woman who will share her dramatic and heartrending battle with depression and her many suicide attempts that started when she was only 16. Remind the students of the ballet dancer with cancer and the young man who requested suicide after breaking up with his girlfriend shown in the first session.

Discussion

Ask the class:

- **Should Krista, the ballet dancer or the heart broken young man have been able to obtain a lethal injection?**
- **Why? Why not? If you were Krista's friend what would you do?**
- **Would you fear your doctor if euthanasia or physician assisted suicide was legalized?**

Pass out Student Handout #3: "The Negative Effects of Euthanasia" and ask:

- **Is euthanasia an attack on Christian values?**
- **Would you have confidence in your doctor if he had the "right" to take your life?**
- **Whose value of life do you think would be utilized if euthanasia was legalized in our nation today?**
- **List some reasons a family might be pressured into pulling the plug.**

Discussion

As Christians we need to seek our Lord's wisdom in making medical decisions. As we learned in Session 1, God is the author of life and we are the stewards. We do not have absolute power over our lives. However we also know that for some, death will come quickly and others may find suffering. There is never an obligation for a Christian to suffer without pain killing drugs (analgesics). Steps are being taken to remedy the lack of training of doctors in the field of pain control. Consultations with pain specialists may be indicated in cases of difficult pain management.

Pass out Student Handout #4: "What Does His Word Say About Suffering?".

1. Have a member of the class READ 2 Corinthians 12:9-10.
Discuss: What does His Word says about suffering at the end of life?
2. Have a member of the class READ Romans 8:28-39.
Discuss: What assurance does the Lord give us during times of suffering?
3. Have a member of the class READ Romans 5:1-14.
Discuss: As Christians how may our approach to these life decisions bear witness to the Lord in us?

Pass out Student Handout #5: "Principles Governing Medical Treatment Decisions."

These principles reflect a Biblical response to the sanctity of human life regardless of the individual's age or capabilities. They are designed to be a guideline when making difficult end of life decisions regarding medical treatment. Stress the importance of respecting all human life,

including those who can no longer function in an active role in society. Each person should be treated with respect and loving care, which includes providing as much comfort humanly possible through the provision for basic needs, food and water, and effective pain management.

Read aloud to the class all the principles on the handout and discuss how these principles relate to the scriptures studied today on suffering and those studied last week on the sanctity of life.

Stress the importance of the next session. Explain to the students they will be given the opportunity to work through actual case studies where they can apply these Biblical life principles.

Closing Moment

Invite all to join hands in a circle. Ask everyone to include those among you who are suffering physical, mental, or emotional pain. Pray for families, friends and care givers of those who suffer.