

The Value of Life of the Handicapped from a Biblical Standpoint

If one was to list the most famous Bible verses, John 3:16 would rank number one. Not only does this verse sum up the gospel message in one sentence, but it also gives us hope in life. Another popular verse is First Corinthians 10:31, which tells of the purpose of life: why God created us. It states that “Whether therefore ye eat or drink, do all to the glory of God.” This short verse proves that life has value for everybody, even those who are physically handicapped.

First, it is important to realize that life itself has value, whether the body is perfect or not. Jane Campbell, former Chair of UKDPC (The United Kingdom’s Disabled People’s Council) declared so truly in one of her articles, “We live with the negative stereotype that disability equals a state worse than death, an idea reinforced by our collective obsession with the body beautiful.” Thus many think that it is allowable to let the disabled die, that it is a compassionate act to help someone end a life that seems intolerable to them. In Genesis 9:6, the Bible says that murder of a person is a direct attack at the image of God, since we are created in his image. (Gen. 1:27) No matter what the disability is, a person has value simply because they are made in the image of God.

Second, it is important to realize that it does not matter what we *can't* do, as long as what we *can* do glorifies God. In Second Corinthians 8: 13, Paul expresses his desire for equality among the people. Are we not all created for the same purpose? Everyone—anyone—can glorify God. Why is it allowable for some to be killed and others spared, if we are all capable of doing the same thing? Two students were asked to complete a math problem, and the first student finished the problem with the aid of a calculator. But the other student did not own a calculator, yet he also finished the problem. If both answers were correct, it would not be fair for the teacher to give the second student less credit simply because he did not own a calculator. In the same

way, it would not be fair to treat the handicapped person in an inferior way simply because he would complete a task—such as glorifying God—a different way as a normal person would.

Third, God cares for the disabled and does not want them to be neglected. Psalm 103:8 reads that He is a compassionate God, abounding in love. Matthew 4: 23-24 mentions that Jesus went “healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.” These verses portray that God loves us deeply, no matter how flawed our physical body is.

One person who realized this was Joni Eareckson. She became quadriplegic at age 17. When Joni discovered that she was unable to regain the use of her legs or arms, she thought that she was also unable to do anything worthy with her life. However, she soon discovered the purpose of her life—to glorify God. “He uses our problems for His glory...” she said in her book, *Joni*. She began to express what God was doing for her in her art. By selling them, she was even able to earn a living. Joni has also written more than 20 books, besides drawing many beautiful paintings. In addition to all that, she also speaks at numerous retreats, encouraging other people who have been handicapped and giving them hope.

Louis Braille is another person who is handicapped and accomplished great things. He became blind after he accidentally stabbed himself in the eye with his father’s awl. Louis Braille later became an inventor and designed Braille writing, benefiting all blind people around the world. If it were not for this method of reading, no other blind person would have enjoyed a written story or been able to comprehend important paperwork. By becoming blind, Louis Braille thirsted to know how to read as easily as one with the ability to see, so he invented Braille. He was God’s present to the blind, God’s tool for fulfilling the desire of those with the same desire as Louis Braille.

In conclusion, it is evident that God cares for all, whether one is disabled or not; and the handicapped person is able to do something with his or her life and make a difference. Anybody can be used by God for His glory, regardless of how flawed their physical body is. There is a purpose in life; it is only a matter of realizing it and accomplishing it.