

Life Not Worth Living?

In a world wracked with problems, turmoil, and strife, it seems as if one problem constantly follows another. International and domestic affairs merit national headlines while local affairs dot the landscape of regional news sources. Some issues, though, should receive closer scrutiny. *Euthanasia*. Does this word signify a crisis that deserves our attention and action, or is it merely a topic that outspoken, right-wing conservatives keep whining about? No, euthanasia is in reality an issue of universal importance and great future implications. As Christians and American citizens, we must acknowledge the wickedness of euthanasia and fight to prevent its influence from pervading our society.

The debate over the justification of euthanasia fiercely rages today. “Mercy killing,” as euthanasia is labeled by its proponents, is still killing no matter how it is defined. Can people ever justify unnecessary murder? One popular argument among euthanasia supporters today is that some people live such sickly, painful, or worthless lives that death would seem a better alternative to such a life. Adolf Hitler stated this concept much more succinctly. He named this handicapped, sickly existence “life unworthy of life.”¹

The argument that some life may actually not be worth living may seem valid on first consideration, but it must be evaluated in light of God’s Truth. When compared logically with the Bible, euthanasia is clearly a practice that Christians would never condone. Is God not the Creator of life? Has He ever made any mistakes? Would it not

¹Kuhla, Jochen, “Krankenpfleger und Lehrer für Pflegeberufe,” *Western Journal of Nursing Research*, April 1999, [magazine on-line], Internet, accessed 26 October 2007.

then logically follow that God has a purpose for *every single* human life in the world? Whenever one person takes it upon himself to delete the life of another human, his actions are condemned by God. Killing of any form is categorized as a direct violation of God's fundamental Ten Commandments.² No matter how euthanasia is sugar-coated or watered down to appear less offensive, it will always mean stealing another man's most precious possession in express disobedience to the Creator's explicit dictates. Destruction of life, though, is not the only result of a euthanasia-embracing society, for other staples of civilized life eventually disappear as euthanasia takes hold.

Because euthanasia is such a destructive juggernaut, it does not slow down with the mere possession and confiscation of human life. Euthanasia plows through moral standards and leads to callous indifference towards murder. An attempt to debunk euthanasia because of moral implications may seem illogical. But examine the case of Dr. Jack Kevorkian. A physician in Michigan, Kevorkian was titled "Dr. Death" and received national attention because of his direct influence in over 130 cases of "doctor-assisted" suicide [i.e. euthanasia].³ After a third-degree murder conviction and subsequent eight-year prison term, Kevorkian continues to promote euthanasia throughout the country. When asked what his purpose was in effecting these gruesome deaths, Kevorkian replied that his intent was "the prospect of making possible the performance of invaluable [medical] experiments."⁴ Kevorkian also declared that his purpose was not to alleviate suffering and pain, but that pain relief was only a "minor benefit" to his ultimate purposes. Dr. Kevorkian showcases individuals that accept euthanasia, but become

² Exodus 20:13 KJV

³ "Victim List," internationaltaskforce.org

⁴ "The Real Jack Kevorkian," www.internationaltaskforce.org

twisted and morally defunct in only a short time. How long will Dr. Kevorkian need before he requires killing healthy, coherent individuals for his medical experiments?

The attitudes of physicians in the Netherlands provide another grim example of euthanasia's deleterious impact on morality and a nation's general attitude towards killing. Currently the Netherlands is the only country where euthanasia is legally allowed. According to journalist Richard Minitzer, "The path to the death culture [in the Netherlands] began when doctors began to think like accountants."⁵ This abnormal, cold view of murder exemplified by Dutch doctors is a by-product of legalizing euthanasia, and likely will permeate Dutch thinking as a whole with time. Why would Americans desire to replicate the Netherlands's euthanasia program and adopt its callous indifference towards killing? Even the Dutch government is acknowledging surfacing problems with euthanasia. In 2001, the government in the Netherlands admitted that, on average, sixteen people *each day* are "euthanized without their consent!"⁶ Was this a foreseen result that the Dutch planned on when they legalized euthanasia? Despite politicians and physicians who may believe that euthanasia is beneficial for their nation, this harmful practice will eventually lead to uncontrollable, unchecked murder. As euthanasia continues to steamroll through a society, it will continue to affect and injure more and more aspects of that culture – from destroying citizens' moral standards to engulfing the very values for which a society stands.

America was undoubtedly founded on Biblical values. The United State's government is established on well-thought out principles that can be directly linked to God's Word. These basic doctrines should be highly valued here in America, because

⁵ Minitzer, Richard, "The Dutch Way of Death," *The Wall Street Journal*, 28 April 2001, pg.1

⁶ *Ibid*, pg. 1

many other nations of the world do not enjoy such freedom. To legalize euthanasia in the United States would deny certain people the values for which our nation stands. Already euthanasia is gaining influence, as recently as Terry Schiavo's case. Americans will decry shootings in schools across the nation, but a helpless woman who could not expressly speak her desires was removed from feeding apparatus because of the scheming of her husband. Would Terry Schiavo be considered a free American citizen that enjoyed "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness," or is she the first casualty of American euthanasia?

So, is euthanasia really worth it? Should Christians fight euthanasia, or are there more important issues to deal with? "Mercy killing" is an issue that attacks the very principles for which America stands. To accept euthanasia will result in the destruction of national values, moral standards, and eventually unnecessary life. Euthanasia is a needless but legitimate threat that stops at nothing, and unless we as American citizens and Christians acknowledge the wickedness of euthanasia and fight to prevent its entrance into our society, America will reap the repercussions for generations to come. Where does euthanasia stop? Is it worth finding out?