

Session 3:

END OF LIFE CHOICE REFERENDUM!

The upcoming End of Life referendum will not be asked if we believe in euthanasia". The question is, "Do you support the end of life choice Act coming into force. Yes or no? The referendum is the final hurdle, so that if more 50% vote yes, then it will become law.

The act is about the choice to intentionally, legally take a lethal dose of medicine to bring about an early death by a person with less than 6 months to live. It is about choice to relieve suffering now, when death is estimated to occur within 6 months.

When it comes to medication and dying, a helpful distinction can be made between- Assisted dying vs active dying.

Active dying is the final phase of the dying process, lasts roughly three days. By definition, actively dying patients are very close to death, and exhibit many signs and symptoms of near-death. The current medical practice of using medication to keep people comfortable during these last few days, but not intentionally giving them a lethal dose, is not what this referendum is about. End of life Choice Act. is about assisting an early death of someone who may be up to 6 months from actively dying.

The Act stipulates that a person asking for assisted dying, person must meet ALL the following criteria...

- be aged 18 years or over.
- suffer from a terminal illness that's likely to end their life within 6 months.
- have significant and ongoing decline in physical capability.
- experience unbearable suffering that cannot be eased
- be able to make an informed decision about assisted dying.

Assisted dying is giving a person with a terminal illness, but not actively dying, the choice to take a lethal dose to bring about immediate and early death.

Some criteria for eligibility are subjective and open to interpretation as there is individual variation in coping with suffering itself.

Is this a line being crossed? Whilst modern medicines and palliative care have significantly reduced suffering of those with a terminal illness, is the choice to intentionally take a lethal dose to end life, a line that should not be crossed, even where there is ineffective relief of suffering. In other words, do all that you can to fight illness and relieve suffering including a lethal dose at last resorts OR do all that you can to fight illness and relieve suffering but not including the choice of assisted dying.

What framework does the Bible give us to for ending life in this context? This is the End of Life Choice Act...choice is an important word, because choice is about empowering, having ownership, personal rights to be in the control seat. In this context, taking the controls for when you die.

HOW SHOULD A CHRISTIAN VOTE?
WHO SHOULD I VOTE FOR?
WHO MAKES THE END OF LIFE CHOICE?
CANNABIS LEGALISATION AND CONTROL?

VOTING AS AN EXPRESSION OF FAITH

A FOUR WEEK SERIES EXPLORING
HOW EACH OF YOUR VOTES CAN
BE REFLECTIVE OF THE GOD WE
SERVE.



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But are there some areas of life we have no place to tread? Are there circumstances as hard as it may seem, where we must submit to God's authority and wisdom - in this case submitting to His absolute authority over your death and mine; and submitting to His wisdom about our manner of death as well as our life. Can we trust God with His timing of our death?

Can we trust God with our suffering? The referendum is about relieving suffering by bringing on death. Question is, does God give us that choice to make or is it his alone? As God's creation we do have great freedom in choosing many things that shape our life. But this freedom is within a boundary. Some things are off limits. Adam and Eve had the freedom to eat from any tree in the garden, but there was the boundary of one tree being completely off limits, no exceptions. The choice to end your own life, even in suffering, is outside the boundary that God has set for us. Death is God's exclusive call to make as God and Creator of life. Life is given by God and taken by Him. He numbers our days. As our Creator and God, he holds the right to end life. What this referendum does, in part, is to dishonour God by saying, "You alone are no longer God over death. We will now step in, make decision for ourselves and not submit to your exclusive authority." Therefore, putting ourselves above God.

The bible speaks of people who call evil good and good evil. Many will say this is a good thing- to relieve suffering in the terminally ill if they so choose. But defying God's exclusive rights is evil. The nature of mankind is to throw off, defy, rebel against, ignore the authority God has over all of humanity. So, our personal Christian response in a state sanctioned referendum is to uphold God's honour and reflect the submission we owe him as our Creator and God, even when it is a much harder road.

Jesus Christ is not unacquainted suffering. He took the suffering of the cross full on and only when his work as our sin-bearer was finished did he commit his spirit into God's hands and die. This means at least one of many things, that a terminal illness, suffering and active dying are not because Jesus does not love us nor has lost his authority over our lives and dying.

<https://www.kingstoncommunitychurch.com/vote-2020>