

# How Should We Look at Christians and Suicide?

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What happens to a Christian if he commits suicide? Does he go to heaven or hell? Does he go to be with Christ (2 Cor. 5:7), which is far better than this life (Phil. 1:23), or is he thrown into the lake which burns with fire and brimstone (Rev. 21:8)?

The Bible clearly affirms that true believers have eternal life and will not come into judgment since they have passed from death into life (John 5:24). There is now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus (Rom. 8:1). Consequently, when believers die they go to be with Christ in paradise (Luke 23:43).

On the basis of the preceding paragraph, we should conclude that all true believers who may have committed suicide are in heaven right now. However, some have suggested that there are other reasons that could lead us to draw the opposite conclusion. Let us examine them to see if they are cogent and compelling.

*1. The Bible teaches that no murderer is saved.* 1 John 3:15 says, “Anyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life in him (see also Rev. 21:8; 22:15).” Since suicide is a form of murder, the person that commits suicide is a murderer and thus does not have eternal life.

It is important to note that the Bible also says that all liars will go to hell (Rev. 21:8). And without a doubt all Christians lie from time to time. Does this imply that all Christians are lost? Not at all! The point is that if one’s life is characterized by lying, hating or murdering then that person is not a Christian and will not inherit eternal life.

A Christian, who in a weak moment, falls into the sin of self-murder cannot be characterized as a habitual murderer. Furthermore, King David fell into the sin of murder, yet he was saved. The argument from 1 John 3:15 and similar passages, therefore, is not very persuasive.

*2. No true Christian would ever commit such a heinous sin like suicide.* This argument is simply incompatible with the biblical record of the sins of the saints. David engaged in adultery and murder. Peter publicly denied the Lord three times to a servant girl and a believer in Corinth was guilty of incest.

The Westminster Confession of Faith states, correctly I believe, that true believers “may, through the temptations of Satan and of the world, the prevalency of corruption remaining in them, and the neglect of the means of their preservation, fall into grievous sins; and, for a time, continue therein: whereby they incur God's displeasure, and grieve his Holy Spirit, come to be deprived of some measure of their graces and comforts, have their hearts hardened, and their consciences wounded; hurt and scandalize others, and bring temporal judgments upon themselves.”

3. *Suicide is unforgivable.* According to Jesus there is only one unforgivable sin and that is blasphemy against the Holy Spirit (Matt. 12:21). Suicide is not blasphemy against the Holy Spirit.

4. *If you die with unrepentant sins you will go to hell.* If this argument were true then no one would go to heaven. None of us is perfect and we are all ignorant of numerous sins in our life. As a result we will all die with unrepentant sins. If you are lying to your spouse at the moment Christ comes back, will you go to hell? If in a burst of sinful anger you yell at your children and storm out of the house only to be hit by a car and die, will you go to hell?

Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law (Gal. 3:13). Our sins do not put us as believers back under the curse. There is no condemnation to those who are in Christ!

5. *A combination of arguments #2 and #4.* We can die with ‘small’ unrepentant sins and still be saved but it is not possible to be assured of salvation if we die with heinous ones. One minister has written, “Unfortunately, if we take our last breath and our life ends with unrepentant sin, we cannot go to God’s holy Heaven. It is impossible for one to ask God’s forgiveness for the heinous sin of suicide after they have died. A murderer can repent and be saved (King David did), but suicide victims have no time to repent to find forgiveness. We must not be deceived. Without exception, all unforgiven murderers will end up in the lake of fire.”

This argument cannot be sustained because all sins, great and small, are worthy of hell. Also, combining two bad arguments does not make one good argument. Two leaky buckets will not accomplish the goal of holding water! If it is possible for a Christian to commit heinous sins and if it is possible to be saved with unrepentant sin, then it is conceivable for a Christian to commit suicide and go to heaven.

None of the reasons offered to argue that Christians who commit suicide go to hell are biblically convincing. It is the testimony of Scripture that all “true” believers who commit suicide are now with the Lord, for “where sin abounded, grace abounds much more” (Rom. 5:20).