

Does an Individual Have the Right to Die Prematurely?

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Your loved one is dying and you are watching. What can you expect? Is this normal what they are feeling? Maybe this will help those of you who are facing the death of the one you love.



No one can fully predict what to expect on the journey to death. No one is prepared to face every challenge adequately in the dying process. However, we must remember that dying is a sacred process to the believer. The death of a saint is precious in the eyes of the Lord. Not that He enjoys seeing us suffer but His plan works for us a far more exceeding weight of glory. It is a journey from the mortal to the immortal. It is traveling from weakness to power, from dishonor to honor, from the corruptible to the incorruptible. Therefore, it is in His hands and no one has the right to die prematurely.

If this were true, then we must think on the dying process if we are to sufficiently cope with the timing of our death. We cannot hasten the days that are numbered or the appointed day of our departure as a believer.

Death is a process that involves the breaking down of our normal body functions. This change can be gradual and being impatient we often create an

anxiety that can be relieved tremendously by an understanding of what is happening when a person is dying.

Dying involves the entire person not just the body. Sometimes the spirit is ready to leave this world but the body is not yet prepared to stop functioning. Often times we race toward death faster than the body keeps pace. This presents a terrible dilemma if not handled properly.

Dying is hard work. The body is laboring as it shuts down just as it labors when we are born. These changes can be very troubling to family members who are witnessing these occurrences. These are not emergency situations to the one departing but those present in the dying process sense an unusual urgency.

It is not unusual for a dying person to lose the desire to eat. This is not an act on their part to enhance premature death. Food often does not taste the same and the thought of eating is very nauseating. Since we as bystanders realize that life is sustained by food, we often misread the lack of desire as an attempt to die prematurely which is not the case at all.

With the lack of eating and drinking the body becomes dehydrated. That is why often times the dying person has such tendencies to sleep. Many refer to this time as a coma stage when

in reality it is the body reacting to the shut down processes which occur in death. They are not quitting, they are merely responding to the natural makeup the Lord has given to all of us. They long more for a gentle swabbing of their mouth and touch of your hand.

Changes can occur in breathing. Breaths become fewer and further apart. Often there is a build up of fluids in the lungs. There may be a long pause where you feel they are not breathing at all. They are often unconscious at this point and are not experiencing suffocation as you think. Therefore, it is not wise for a family to feel they need to speed the process. They are not experiencing the same feelings as the living. They are dying and as hard as it may seem the worst thing that a family member or anybody on the medical staff can do is rush or hinder the natural process.

The variations of the level of consciousness are not a warning sign that the loved one who is dying is signaling to force premature death. They will experience emotional and physical changes, which must be endured by those looking on. The sooner we accept this process the less likely we are of making a terrible decision to assist them in some way in the dying process, which is wrong.

The dying person often will speak of happenings and metaphors and other past memories that move to the front of their mind. The dying person needs us to reassure them that we are there and their life has meaning to all of their family and friends. Never take for granted that they are unable to hear your voice. The touch of your hand and the tones of your voice are a great comfort to them in crossing from this world for eternity.

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