

“Help—My Daughter Just Attempted Suicide”

My 19-year-old daughter has been hospitalized because she has tried to commit suicide. This has not only created a moment of crisis with in our immediate family but a very big puzzling question. Why would a person who professes to believe in Christ attempt to commit suicide? What should I say to her? How can I tell her that Christ is bigger than any of her problems may be?

Please know that I will be praying for your daughter and your family in this difficult time.

Teenagers are universally having a difficult time sorting out their lives in this new millennium. There are so many competing pressures and influences that they easily get overwhelmed. While suicide is indeed a drastic measure, it is more common today among our youth than ever before.

If your daughter is a believer, as you suggest, she might be wondering where is God in her life and circumstances. She may have a false expectation that knowing God should make everything better. While Proverbs makes clear that we are better off living with wisdom and insight, there are no guarantees against trouble. In fact Jesus warned that we would have tribulation in our lives. We can often see the ungodly and wicked succeeding in life and wonder why we should bother doing things right. Asaph wondered the same thing in Psalm 73. Check out my article on [Where Was God on 9/11?](#) for an exposition of this important Psalm.

She may also rationalize that heaven will be a far better place than earth and why not get there sooner if her life seems impossible for whatever reason. This logic is hard to refute especially since we believe in the eternal security of

the believer. Suicide does not forfeit your place in heaven if you are a true child of the King.

If she is not truly a believer then she needs the hope only He can bring. Images of the Good Shepherd from Psalm 23 and John 10 (especially verses 9, 11, 14, 15, 27, 28, and 29) can be very helpful to someone struggling to make their way in this messy world. The entire Gospel of John may be a good project for the two of you to read together.

So what do you say? First, you assure her of your love and commitment to her no matter what she has done. As her father, you carry the major load in communicating your love and acceptance of her no matter her failures or perceived inadequacies. You must depend on the Lord to allow you to see her through Jesus' eyes.

Second, she needs to understand that God is sovereign and has planned out her life. In our relationship with Him we need to seek His wisdom and guidance not our own. Things may look bad now but she can't see her life ahead as the Lord does. There is a reason for everything even when it doesn't make sense to us. She may not be ready to trust God with her life yet but she needs to know you trust God with her life.

Third, there is undoubtedly some deep seated need or hurt in her life that causes her to disrespect herself so much. She will likely need counseling to uncover this. But she will need your support through the entire process. You may need to face a failure on your own part in her life that you are unaware of. You have to be willing to face whatever it takes to bring her back to wholeness. For awhile you will need to supply the courage she needs to face every day. You can't do this in your own strength. Remember Isaiah 40:31:

But those who hope in (or wait upon) the LORD
will renew their strength.
They will soar on wings like eagles;

they will run and not grow weary
they will walk and not be faint.

Take courage, for your Savior has overcome the world and there is nothing impossible to Him.

Respectfully,

Dr. Ray Bohlin

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