

# A Solution for Suicide

Suicide is a one-time decision, but its results last forever. For some, it is a way out of an extra-difficult spot in life. Demands can overwhelm us. Pain is unbearable. There may be confrontations that we do not want to deal with.

Because the results are so lasting, let's look at suicide for a couple of minutes.

The life-guide, the Bible, does not say much about suicide. Overall, the Bible conveys an underlying sense that the power over life and death belongs to God alone. Perhaps that's why Elijah—and later Jonah—ask God to end it all for them, but stop short of doing it themselves.

The best-known Bible case of someone taking his own life is Judas Iscariot, a disciple of Jesus. Judas had traveled with Jesus about three years and enjoyed all of the benefits of learning from the Master.

But there were several problems, one being that he was the treasurer for the band of Twelve and liked to pad his own pockets from the group money bag. But he had the confidence of his fellow disciples. They trusted him.

Never did a human have more opportunities come his way than Judas. He saw and heard over and over the fact that Jesus was from the Father in

heaven. He turned down every truth that came his way in order to make a little money. Judas did not simply make a one-time bad decision, but his death was the culmination of several years of acting, hiding and stealing from his closest friends.

He could have come clean and told Jesus what he was doing. He could have asked forgiveness. He lived in company with the Jesus who could offer total forgiveness to all who ask. But Judas did not ask. This sealed his eternal fate.

Peter, another disciple, denied knowing Jesus when the pressure was on. The difference between Peter and Judas is that Peter was sorry and allowed Jesus to forgive him. Judas never gave Jesus the chance. He took his own life instead.

Peter became a leading apostle of Jesus, using his life to bring the message of salvation to distant places, and write at least two books of the New Testament. Peter won, Judas lost.

In the Bible was also a case of a responsible jailer who worked for the Roman Government. He was ready to take his life, but someone stopped him. Luke tells the story in Acts 16:25:

**About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were**

**listening to them, and suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken. And immediately all the doors were opened, and everyone's bonds were unfastened.**

**When the jailer woke and saw that the prison doors were open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped.**

(It would be an automatic death sentence for this man.)

**But Paul cried with a loud voice, "Do not harm yourself, for we are all here." And the jailer called for lights and rushed in, and trembling with fear he fell down before Paul and Silas.**

**Then he brought them out and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" And they said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household."**

From helplessness to hopefulness in a few words. Paul the prisoner pointed the jailer to salvation in Jesus and he followed through. Paul was directive, and the jailer didn't dispute. He was humble enough to listen.

**And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their wounds; and he was baptized at once, he and all his family.**

Now the jailer began living out his new hope. The prisoners had not escaped and he had new friends and a total solution to his thoughts of suicide.

His skills as a jailer would continue to be used. He did not leave his lady a widow. He did not leave children without a dad.

The jailer was now ready for the big courtroom that we all face when death's door has closed behind us.

**And just as it is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment . . .** Hebrews 9:27

**W**hen everything is black, hope may be a few words or decisions away. The jailer and his family members integrated into the newly forming church. They learned more about the Lord from Paul and his friends. The jailer and his family met with the church, became interested in the needs of other new believers and took part in the Lord's Supper, the weekly reminder of the voluntary death of Jesus for all who believe and are baptized.

This writer has never known of a person who observed the Lord's Supper regularly who decided to take their own life. So cases are rare.

There is always someone to talk to NOW. Phone *Southwest Washington Crisis Line* at: (800) 626-8137.

Or come to church and listen. Talk to the greeters about your needs. Try our 10:45 Sunday meeting.

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By Charles Dailey