

## A right to die?

**OPINION:** Will assisted suicide, like abortion, become a “choice”? But who will do the choosing? | *Cal Thomas*

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BELFAST, Northern Ireland—While America debates whether the federal government should dictate which insurance policies and medical treatments it will allow us to have, here in the U.K., the conversation has “advanced” to the approval of assisted suicide.

Debbie Purdy, who suffers from multiple sclerosis, has won a landmark ruling in the House of Lords that many believe will move Britain one step closer to self-destruction. Purdy must be told under what circumstances her husband, Cuban violinist Omar Puente, could be prosecuted should he accompany her to the Dignitas euthanasia clinic in Switzerland. The director of public prosecutions will now be required to spell out exactly when the government will act if someone helps a friend take their own life abroad.

The media and “right to die” advocates are calling it “compassionate assisted suicide.” There are always euphemisms to help us through the troubling practices we might not, under other circumstances, wish to pursue.

One doesn’t have to be a futurist or prophet to see where this is headed. Having removed the right to life from the unborn in the U.K. and the United States, it is only a matter of conditioning before the at first “voluntary” and ultimately involuntary snuffing out of life at its other end will be tolerated and, indeed, promoted as the state seeks new ways to cut expenses.

What is to stop them if life has only the value assigned to it by the state? As suicide, like abortion, becomes a “choice,” it will be done for reasons that go beyond the reason through which it is ushered in: the supposed “intolerable pain and suffering” and “lack of hope” of recovery. Abortion on demand was conceived through the bogus rape of an unmarried woman and now it can be had for any reason, or no reason. Crimes against humanity don’t begin in the ovens or on killing fields, but by small steps among civilized people.

If granny has willed you her nest egg, why not convince her and the doctor to slip her a pill and end her “suffering.” Wouldn’t she “want it that way” so as not to be a “burden” to her family? The executioners will not come with black masks, but in white coats and bureaucratic suits. Let us prey.

Should individuals make decisions about whether they want life-extending methods used if they suffer a catastrophic medical event? Absolutely. But that should be distinguished from a third party (besides you and your doctor) making that decision for you or “helping” you make it and then assisting in your suicide.

In a sense we all have a “right,” or more precisely an obligation, to die. For the theologically inclined, see [Hebrews 9:27](#). The debate is about the manner and method.

Should that decision be left in the hands of others whose motives may be suspect, or even to our own hands when our perspective may be clouded by drugs or pressures from family members trying to unload their “burden” and get to the estate before the money is spent?

Is this even ultimately our decision? We did not create life (not even in British laboratories where artificial sperm was recently whipped up in a petri dish). The state is supposed to protect life, not take it except in cases of capital murder.

The One who gave us life has, or ought to have, sole discretion as to when it ends. But if increasing numbers of us think “The One” refers to a character in *The Matrix*, and that we are just evolutionary accidents, then the conclusion of it all is euthanasia for the elderly, the “defective,” the inconvenient and the unwanted. It’s coming sooner than you think to a senior center near you, especially if Obamacare becomes law.

Debbie Purdy may think she has won a great victory for herself, but her “victory” is a significant loss for the human race.

