

Blessed with Hope

LIFE WEEK
2023



End of Life

Symptoms at the final stage of life:

- Drowsiness
- Becoming unresponsive
- Disoriented about time, place, and people
- Decreased need for food and fluid
- Loss of bladder or bowel control
- Skin cool to the touch
- Labored, irregular, shallow, or noisy breathing



Prolonging Death Versus Extending Life

Life support technology is intended to support the failing organ until the underlying disorder improves. Yet, when there is loss of functioning in the cerebral cortex (consciousness) and the brainstem (ability to breathe spontaneously), there is no life to be supported.



Life Issues



Declaration of Death

"An individual who has sustained either irreversible cessation of circulatory and respiratory functions or irreversible cessation of all functions of the entire brain, including the brain stem."



Physician-assisted Suicide

60% of doctors think PAS should be legal. Conversely, 60% of doctors also believe most physicians cannot predict with certainty whether a patient seeking PAS has 6 months or less to live.



His Word

Psalm 119:50

"This is my comfort in my affliction, that your promise gives me life."



This Too Shall Pass

We do not lose heart or give up hope. Even when our outer body is wasting away, we are renewed in faith by the reminder that this affliction is temporary, and it prepares us for the joy of eternal glorified bodies.



Have a Care Plan

Communicate your end of life wishes in writing:

- Living will
- Power of attorney for healthcare
- Pre-plan funeral or memorial service



Example Resources:

Pre-plan Funeral or Memorial

- <https://www.smlcbemidji.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Christian-Funeral-Planning-Guide.pdf>

Medical Directives

- <https://christianliferesources.com/resources/christian-medical-directives/>

Our Christian Response



Love to the End

How to be present and supportive in the final moments of one's life:

- Keep them company (pray, read, sing, hold hands, etc.)
- Talk knowing you are being heard - hearing persists even when one is unresponsive
- Forgive and seek forgiveness
- Allow expressions of fear about death without judgment
- Proclaim the Good News and Christ's promises
- Reserve dignity and respect - provide compassionate care, listen to their views, and uphold their right for privacy