

/Hello. /We will now begin the second lecture on Christian ethics. /Today's topic is about Christians and suicide. /Our society has currently been seeing continuous shocking stories about suicide.

/There was recent news about celebrities who committed suicide. /There was even a story about a pastor who committed suicide. /Among the celebrities who committed suicide in the past few years, there were people who were Christians.

/There are stories in the news about Christians who committed suicide. /At their funerals, there is a cross besides their names.

/Then their funeral services are conducted in Christian ways. /How can believers, who are so loved by God that he considers them more precious than the entire world, /easily take their own lives? /It is incredibly sad that believers would choose to end their own lives.

/According to Statistics Korea, South Korea has the highest suicide rate among the members of the OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development). /Twenty-five out of ten thousand people commit suicide, which means that approximately thirty-four people commit suicide each day.

/If this were to be calculated by time, one person commits suicide every forty-four minutes. /The number of deaths caused by traffic accidents is about twenty people. The suicide rate is very high in comparison with the number of deaths caused by traffic accidents.

/Can Christians commit suicide? /I am frequently asked this question. /As previously mentioned, many Christians today choose to end their lives.

/There are also many Christians who ponder the idea of suicide. /Even right now, someone, somewhere is ending his own life.

/Among them would be Christians. /When asked the question, "Are the Christians who commit suicide believers who have truly been saved?" I cannot say that truly are.

/However, it is for certain that they were believers who were registered in the church. /First, we will look at what the Bible says regarding suicide.

/The Bible does not fundamentally specify clauses or regulations that prohibit suicide. /However, the Bible does forbid suicide through God's Word that tells us to honor life and value life given by God.

/There are a few people in the Bible who commit suicide. /However, most of the people who committed suicide did not have faith or had weak faith. /King Saul, the first king of the Israelites, took his own life after he lost in battle and faced death by his enemies.

/When David's advisor, Ahithophel, saw that his advice had not been followed, he

hanged himself. /Judas Iscariot, who was once one of Jesus' twelve disciples, sold his Teacher Jesus, and ended his own life.

/Suicide is a great sin for the following reasons. /First, suicide goes against God's sovereignty. /God reigns over all life. /Man is not the creator, but the creation.

/Man was appointed stewards and given life by God, which means that he does not have the authority to do as he pleases. /However, to commit suicide means to go against God's sovereignty, who is Lord over life and death, which means that this is the greatest of all sins.

/Second, suicide is the act of destroying the image of God. /When God created man, he created man in his own image. /Man is more valuable than animals because God's image is in him.

/To have been made in the image of God means that the image of the spirit of God is within man. /To commit suicide means to personally destroy the image of God in oneself, which is a great sin.

/Third, suicide is a great sin because it defies the commandment, "You shall not murder." /The Ten Commandments is separated into two categories. /First, the first to fourth commandments are about God, /and the fifth to tenth commandments are about man.

/The sixth commandment says, "You shall not murder." This means that the sin of murder is a great sin. /Suicide is the greatest sin regarding man, the sin of murder. /Murder cases are not treated lightly in court, and punishments for murder are severe.

/Murder does not only imply taking the lives of others. /To take the life of another or of oneself are both murder. /Therefore, suicide is considered homicide, which is the most heinous crime one can commit.

/This is also the reason why suicide is considered the greatest sin in Christianity. /However, those who commit suicide do not know the severity of this sin. /They believe it is a great sin to harm the lives of others, yet, they do not think it a sin to end their own lives.

/We must understand that killing another person and taking one's own life are both regarded as homicide. /Fourth, suicide is a great sin because it covers the glory of God, which is the reason for why we live.

/Why did God create man? /God created us for his glory. /Why did God redeem us from our sins? /God redeemed us for his glory.

/Therefore, it says, "So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God." /However, suicide severely damages the glory of God, /and it brings down the name of God.

/As previously mentioned, the name of God is greatly insulted when the funerals of famous people who committed suicide are conducted in Christian ways. /A few days ago, an actor committed suicide in Korea.

/In the news, it said that the man was an actor who attended church. /He was a middle-aged actor who ended his life after suffering with the hardships of life and with depression.

/When it is reported in the news that believers committed suicide, it covers the glory of God. /It is undeniable that such news is heartbreaking.

/Second, we will look at the moral problems regarding suicide. /Suicide is not only a problem biblically, but is also a problem in terms of ethics.

/First, the suicide of one person ultimately leaves tremendous shock and pain in all who are associated with that person. /The person's family, relatives, friends, colleagues, neighbors, and other believers are left with shock, sadness, and pain.

/Many family members of people who have committed suicide receive severe mental damage and are unable to live normal lives, but suffer from all sorts of aftereffects.

/Because families and others associated with the person who committed suicide are affected with great pain and problems, suicide can be seen as morally wrong.

/Therefore, even if one is tempted by the thought of suicide or feel that his circumstances are unbearable, he must avoid committing suicide by thinking of the pain it will bring his family, relatives, friends, colleagues, and neighbors.

/Second, suicide is criticized for its unfairness in how it affects people directly and indirectly involved in it, for it can ultimately cause guilt in those involved in the suicide cases. Thus, suicide is not the right way.

/Suicide can make it difficult to reveal the truth about incidents.

/Those who commit suicide usually leave wills to explain themselves, still, it makes it difficult for people involved in the suicide to be cleared of their charges.

/In this way, not only does suicide get rid of opportunities to justly disclose information regarding incidents, but to cause blame on those involved in incidents is morally wrong.

/Third, we will discuss the issue of salvation of those who commit suicide. /With recent news about Christians committing suicide, we begin to think about suicide. /“Do Christians commit suicide?”

/“Can Christians who commit suicide receive salvation?” /“Does everyone who commit

suicide go to hell?” /I receive many questions such as these. /Many pastors in the church teach, “Believers who commit suicide cannot be saved.”

/In fact, some churches do not hold funeral services in the church for those who commit suicide. /According to those churches, those who commit suicide were not saved because they did not have the chance to repent.

/According to them, salvation does not come from faith, but from faith and repentance, and because one does not have the chance to repent after they commit suicide, they cannot be saved.

/However, believers become children of God when they receive salvation through faith in Jesus. /Believers who have been saved are surely saved because the God of mercy will never forsake them.

/John 5:24 says, those who believe in Jesus have crossed over from death to life.

/According to Presbyterian’s five points of John Calvin’s doctrine, the fourth point addresses irresistible grace and the fifth point, unconditional election. These points state that those who do not receive God’s grace of salvation cannot be saved, and those who once receive salvation cannot be stripped of the grace of salvation.

/Because we repented when we first believe in Jesus, we received forgiveness of all the sins of the past, present, and future. /We have been saved through faith in the righteousness of Jesus.

/We are not saved by our righteousness, but saved by the righteousness of Jesus. /John 13:10 says a person who has had a bath needs only to wash his feet.

/“Has had a bath” means that one has been born again in God’s Word and the Holy Spirit through repentance after believing in Jesus, and he has been forgiven of his sins of the past, present, and future.

/If saved believers sin and don’t get the chance to repent before they die, and thus, they cannot be saved, /then believers who suddenly die through accidents or illnesses cannot be saved. Therefore, this is a wrong claim.

/There are faithful believers who become diagnosed with Alzheimer’s and commit suicide. /There are some who become depressed and die. /They were not unbelievers, but believers of Jesus.

/However, the claim that even such people cannot be saved in such cases is quite unreasonable. /We Christians can believe that such cases of suicide result from mental illnesses rather than spiritual problems.

/Of course, not everyone who attempts to commit suicide does so because of mental

illnesses, but it is generally the case. /According to statistics, the more one suffers from depression, the more he will have suicidal thoughts or plans for suicide.

/According to a study on suicide deaths, at least ninety percent of the deceased suffered from psychiatric illnesses. /I believe that if one has deep faith, he will not feel the urge to commit suicide.

/Certainly, this is a point of view from the religious. /As previously mentioned, Saul, Ahithophel, and Judas Iscariot committed suicide because of their lack of faith or because they were the unchosen.

/However, this is not the case in terms of psychiatric illnesses. /Pastors or believers with devout faith also suffer from depression or other illnesses that cause them to battle with suicidal thoughts.

/I knew an elderly pastor. /He was devout in faith. /He was a godly man. /He was faithful. /However, he was diagnosed with depression. /There are many types of depression.

/There are those who become depressed and sad, /and there are those who destroy whatever objects they get their hands on. /The most frightening form of depression is one that drives people to commit suicide.

/There is a form of depression that causes one to think about death and attempt to die. /The elderly pastor suffered from this form of depression, /and there were many others who suffered with the same depression in the hospital.

/Many from among the people committed suicide, and by the grace of God, this pastor did not commit suicide but received treatment. /In the spiritual sense, those who good faith cannot commit suicide, but when one is diagnosed with a serious psychiatric illness like depression, one attempts to commit suicide regardless of his faith.

/Psychiatrists claim that when people become absorbed in hopeless thoughts, they fail to think of other things. /They continue to think of only one thing and become more and more absorbed in what is commonly known as tunnel syndrome.

/This is the feeling of being inside a tunnel, where there is only one way out. There is no choice but to go forward. /People with depression show symptoms of tunnel syndrome, which means that they feel that suicide is the only alternative to getting out of their hopelessness.

/Now, let's discuss the problem of funeral arrangements of those who commit suicide. /Is it wrong for the church to hold funeral services for those who commit suicide? /Many pastors of churches in Korea are reluctant about performing funeral services for those who commit suicide.

/They see suicide as a serious crime, and holding funeral services for those who do

commit suicide can be seen as if the church tolerates the act of suicide. /Certainly, suicide must be prevented, and suicide goes against what is taught in the Bible.

/However, when the families of those who committed suicide are shaken in their faith and are discriminated against by society, it is important that the church comfort and embrace them through funeral services in the church.

/Fourth, we will look at how one can overcome the temptation of suicide. /Suicide is a problem in both spiritual and moral terms. /We Christians must fight to avoid, prevent, and resist such evil.

/Today, we are surrounded by economical problems, domestic troubles, loneliness, problems with grades in school, problems at work, problems with illnesses, and problems with the opposite gender. /What must Christians do in such a secularized world where people hold contempt for life?

/We Christians must not think drastic thoughts even when life seems irrational or painful. /The Bible shows that even those with exceptional faith suffered from temptation of death.

/Job lost everything he had and waited for death in terrible circumstances. /Jonah asked God to take his life after God provided and took away the vine, /and the prophet Elijah asked God to take his life because of the temptation of death.

/The prophet Elijah asked God to take his life after running away from Jezebel's death threat. Elijah became despondent when Jezebel's threat was what he received in return for serving God with all he had.

/However, anyone would feel such a way in such circumstances, and believers must keep in mind that life is not meaningless. /All patterns of life are under the sovereignty of God, and our lives are under the administration of God.

/There are times when life becomes too difficult to handle, but we must know that pain makes us spiritually mature. When we become spiritually mature, God will use us for his purpose and lead us down the path of blessings.

/The church, the spiritual community, must see that believers do not fall to the temptation of suicide. The church must become a loving and serving community that looks after believers who are in similar situations.

/The church must give hope to the hopeless through God's Word when believers are despaired and weary. The church must give love and attention to the isolated, and must see that lives that are more precious than the entire world do not die a wrong death.

/The church must provide deep affections of love to believers who suffer from severe depression, and make sure that they do not take extreme actions.

/Cell groups and small groups must expand their field of activities so that there would be fellowship of love, which can be a method to prevent suicide.

/It is time that we understand that the church and its believers are in need of attention, and we must provide that attention.

/Here, we will conclude the second lecture on Christians ethics. /Thank you.