

COVER STORY: Trapped and Hopeless? No Way In Hell!

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I firmly believe in staying faithful to the Scriptures. Even though some topics are not straightforward or easy to explain and there may not be a single, clear-cut answer in the Bible. To arrive at thoughtful conclusions on complex issues, we must consider the broader context of the Bible, pulling together verses and teachings from multiple books and chapters.

These days, life can feel overwhelmingly heavy, especially for the younger folks (Generations Z and Alpha), who have faced unique challenges that can deepen their sense of isolation. Growing up in an era dominated by social media and disrupted by a global pandemic has left many feeling disconnected, anxious and burdened by depression. These struggles often feed the lie that there is no hope, that the darkness is inescapable. But there is a truth that shines brighter than any despair: there is infinite hope and freedom in Jesus Christ.

Jesus: The Light in Our Darkness

The love of Jesus pierces through the darkest corners of our hearts and minds. In John 8:12, Jesus declares, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." For anyone feeling overwhelmed by anxiety or weighed down by depression, His light brings clarity, peace, and a way forward—even when everything around us feels chaotic and uncertain.

This sense of isolation that plagues today's younger generations stems from the erosion of authentic community. Social media, while intended to connect, often leaves users feeling inadequate and alone. Coupled with the disruptions caused by the pandemic—school closures, loss of routine, and diminished face-to-face interaction—these factors have intensified feelings of loneliness.

But Jesus offers what the world cannot: unconditional love and an eternal connection.

Jesus knows our struggles more intimately than we can imagine. The Bible tells us He was “a man of sorrows, acquainted with grief,” (Isa. 53:3). He experienced rejection, abandonment, and profound suffering. His empathy is not distant; it is personal and transformative. Hebrews 4:15 assures us that He sympathizes with our weaknesses, having faced temptations and trials Himself—yet without sin.

When we feel crushed by the weight of our burdens, Jesus lovingly invites us to come to Him: “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest,” (Matt. 11:28).

The hope we have in Christ isn't dependent on fleeting emotions or circumstances. It's rooted in His unchanging nature and eternal promises. Romans 8:38-39 guarantees that nothing—not anxiety, depression, or even suicidal thoughts—can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus. His love is unwavering, and His grace is sufficient for every weakness (2 Cor. 12:9).

For those wrestling with suicidal thoughts, remember this: your life is invaluable. You are fearfully and wonderfully made (Psalm 139:14), crafted with intention and love by a God who cherishes you. Your current pain does not define you or dictate your future. Jesus came to give life—abundant, eternal life (John 10:10)—and His plans for you are filled with hope.

Breaking Free from Isolation

The isolation many feel today is not the end of the story. Jesus not only walks with you through every valley, offering peace that surpasses understanding (Philippians 4:7), but He also places people in your life to support and encourage you. Reaching out to trusted friends, family, or professional counselors is a powerful step toward healing.

Authentic community and meaningful connection can also be found in the body of Christ—the Church. Fellowship with others who share your faith can help replace isolation with belonging and purpose.

In Christ, there is always hope. He transforms despair into joy, sorrow into peace, and brokenness into wholeness. Turn to Him, cry out to Him, and rest in the truth that you are loved beyond measure. You are never trapped—you are free, cherished, and held in His everlasting arms.

No matter how deep the darkness may seem, remember this: Jesus is the light that no darkness can overcome.

Here's What *NOT* to Do

A question I've heard before, and one that weighs heavily on many hearts, is whether a Christian who takes their own life can still enter heaven. It's a difficult and emotional subject. Recently, a man shared with me that he had left his church because his father, who dearly loved Jesus, died by suicide. His pastor told him, "Your dad is 100 percent in hell, without a shadow of a doubt, because that's what the Bible says."

Wow.

First off, if you've ever heard something like that from someone who is supposed to be teaching you the Word of God, I want to tell you I am deeply sorry. Those words carry a lot of

pain, and they may leave you questioning both your faith and the fate of your loved one. But let's slow down for a moment and take a look at what the Bible actually says. We need to dig deep into God's Word, with compassion and wisdom, to understand this sensitive issue.

Is suicide a sin?

Yes, it is.

The Bible says in Exodus 20:13, "You shall not commit murder" (AMP). Most are familiar with this commandment, and here's the thing: Suicide is considered a form of self-murder. God values life, and He created each of us with a purpose. In 1 Corinthians 3:17 Paul wrote, "If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy that person; for God's temple is sacred, and you together are that temple." Our bodies are the temples of the Holy Spirit, and we are called to care for them.

This is a tough pill to swallow, right? Because when someone takes their own life, it feels like they've stepped outside God's plan. They've acted out of deep despair or mental illness, and it leaves us grappling with the eternal consequences of their action. But suicide is not the unforgivable sin.

Let me explain.

Before you jump to any conclusions, let's take a step back and look at the bigger picture. When Jesus died on the cross, He paid for every sin—past, present, and future. That includes the sins we haven't even committed yet. First John 1:9 says, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness," (NKJV).

When we give our hearts to Jesus and confess our sins, something miraculous happens. God, in His faithfulness, not only forgives us but also purifies us. That means the blood of Jesus covers all sin, every sin we've committed and every sin

we will commit. Yes, even suicide.

I can hear the objection already, “But Kelly, doesn’t that mean people will just think they can live however they want and do whatever they want, since we’re saved and all our sins are forgiven?”

No, that’s not what I’m saying at all. Once you give your life to Jesus, it’s not just about believing He exists. It’s about allowing Him to take up residency in your life. But even more than that, Jesus doesn’t just want residency; He wants presidency. He wants to be Lord over every aspect of your life.

That’s why we’re called to renew our minds constantly, as the Bible says in Romans 12:2, “Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.” Life with Christ is a process. It’s a journey of surrendering more and more to Him. And this journey doesn’t exempt us from struggles with mental health, anxiety, or depression.

Mental Wellness As Important As Physical Wellness

The sad reality is that there are many amazing men and women of God who love Jesus, serve Him, and live faithfully yet still lose the battle of depression. Depression is a disease, just like any other illness, and it affects the brain in profound ways. It can cloud judgment, distort reality, and make people feel trapped in a darkness they can’t escape. So when someone takes their own life in a moment of despair, it’s not because they didn’t love God. And it’s not because God stopped loving them.

Was suicide God’s plan for them? No, of course not. Jeremiah 29:11 tells us that God has a plan for our lives—a plan to

prosper us and not to harm us, a plan to give us hope and a future. Suicide cuts that plan short. But Romans 8:38–39 reminds us that nothing—not life, not death, not angels, not demons—can “separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Even suicide cannot separate us from God’s love.

Here’s another question I hear quite often: “Kelly, you just said we need to repent for our sins. But if someone dies by suicide, how can they repent afterward?” I understand why this feels like a tricky issue, so let’s break it down.

When we first come to Christ, we repent for salvation. That repentance is a turning away from our old lives and a choice to follow Jesus. In that moment, we receive the gift of salvation, freely given and fully paid for by Jesus’ sacrifice on the cross. All our sins—past, present, and future—are covered by His blood.

However, after we’re saved, we will continue to struggle with sin. This is why we repent again and again—not to earn salvation but to restore our relationship with God. At this point, it becomes repentance for restoration, not salvation. Think of it like this: When you’re adopted into a family, your status as a son or daughter doesn’t change when you make a mistake. Every time you mess up, you don’t have to go down to the courthouse and have the judge put you back in the family. That would be ridiculous! You’re still part of the family, but you might need to apologize to repair the relationship.

Salvation is not something we earn. Ephesians 2:8–9 tells us it is by grace we have been saved, through faith, not by works, so no one can boast. If salvation depended on our ability to be perfect, none of us would make it. But because salvation is a gift, we don’t lose it when we fall short. We come to God in repentance not to be saved over and over again but to maintain the closeness of our relationship with Him.

So does the act of suicide cancel out a lifetime of faith in Jesus? No, it doesn't. The grace of God is bigger than our moments of failure.

Now, some people may point to the Bible and say, "But isn't there an unforgivable sin?" Yes, the Bible does mention one sin that cannot be forgiven: blasphemy of the Holy Spirit. This sin is essentially a hardened, deliberate rejection of the Holy Spirit's work and the salvation Jesus offers.

The person who commits this sin is someone whose heart has become so hardened toward God that they have no desire to repent. They have completely rejected the gift of salvation, and that's why it's unforgivable, because they have turned away from the only One who can save them. It's not because God's grace isn't big enough to cover it but because that grace is rejected by them entirely.

Feeling Trapped In Hopelessness Is a Lie from Hell

Let's return to a hypothetical example. Suppose a Christian man with a deep personal relationship with the Lord is driving home from work. As he drives, he sees a beautiful woman walking along the sidewalk and finds himself staring. In that moment, he begins to lust after her. Distracted by his thoughts, he misses the red light and ends up in a fatal car accident. He didn't have time to repent of his lustful thoughts. So does that mean he's condemned to hell?

Of course not.

God's grace doesn't hinge on whether we can repent of every sin in every single moment. The key here is that this man had already repented for salvation. His relationship with Jesus was secure, and his eternity wasn't determined by one fleeting moment of sin. The same is true for those who die by suicide. If they have placed their faith in Jesus, their eternity is secure, even if their life ends tragically.

If you have lost someone to suicide and you know they loved Jesus, I want to encourage you today. I fully believe you will see them again in eternity. God's grace is sufficient, and His love covers all. Jesus paid for it all, and nothing can snatch us out of His hands.

If you're struggling with thoughts of self-harm or suicide, please know that this is not the end of your story. God sees you. He loves you more than you could ever comprehend. He has a plan for your life, and no matter how dark things may seem right now, there is hope for you. Don't believe the lies of the enemy, who wants to rob you of the future God has planned for you.

You are fearfully and wonderfully made. You are not a mistake; you are a masterpiece. You are deeply loved by the One who created you.

You Have Never Been Alone—Here's Help Now

If you need someone to talk to right now, please reach out. Text D2L to 91627, and someone from the Death2Life ministry will be there to speak with you. You don't have to go through this alone. There is hope, and there is help.

Kelly K. (Kopp) is a husband, father, pastor, author and full-time evangelist based in Oklahoma. Thousands have come to know Jesus through the messages of love, forgiveness, repentance and salvation Kelly shares with enormous passion and wisdom through his social media platforms, which reach nearly one million followers. Before coming to Jesus, Kelly K. was a musician and tour manager for some of the biggest rock bands in the world. After a near-death car crash while out on tour, Kelly gave up everything and turned to Jesus, never looking back. His new book, *Tough Topics: 25 Biblical Answers to Controversial Questions*, is available now at .