

American Council of Christian Churches
78th Annual Convention, October 22-24, 2019
Faith Chapel, Carlisle, PA
Resolution on the Culture of Death

The Bible places a strong emphasis upon the sanctity of life. Jesus declares in John 10:10, “The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.” Jesus gives abundant life, while Satan steals and destroys life.

God’s Sixth Commandment proclaims: “Thou shalt not kill.”¹ According to the *Westminster Shorter Catechism*, “The sixth commandment requireth all lawful endeavors to preserve our own life, and the life of others.”² As society rejects Biblical values, it shifts from a culture which defends life into one which devalues and destroys life. From the womb to old age, life is presently losing its value.

The National Institute of Mental Health reports that there was a 31 percent increase in the rate of death by suicide in the United States between 2001 and 2017. In 2017, suicide was the tenth-leading cause of death in the United States, the second-leading cause of death among people between ages 10 to 34, and the fourth-leading cause of death among people ages 35 to 54. There were more than twice as many suicides in the United States as there were homicides.³ Taking one’s own life is murder, thus violating the Sixth Commandment.

Already commonplace throughout Europe, Physician Assisted Death (PAD) and euthanasia are spreading in the United States. “[PAD] is about helping someone to take their own life at their request,” while “euthanasia refers to active steps taken to end someone’s life to stop [his] suffering and the ‘final deed’ is undertaken by someone other than the individual.”⁴ These procedures are also both violations of the Sixth Commandment.

At the beginning of 2019, the total number of abortions in the United States, since the procedure was nationally legalized in *Roe v. Wade*, was approaching 61 million.⁵ Abortion terminates human life. According to the Bible, that which resides within a mother’s womb is a human life. David prays in Psalm 139, “Thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother’s womb. . . . My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them.”⁶ Even when David was in his mother’s womb, God knew him and had a plan for his life. Terminating life in the womb is murder and, hence, another violation of the Sixth Commandment.

Therefore, the American Council of Christian Churches at its 78th Annual Convention, October 22-24, 2019, at Faith Chapel, Carlisle, PA, resolves to oppose the culture of death by proclaiming the Christ of whom the Apostle John says in John 1:4, “In him was life; and the life was the light of men.” We encourage Christians to publicly stand for the biblical position on suicide, PAD, euthanasia, and abortion, while ministering with grace to those who have been harmed by the culture of death. We also urge Christians to support political candidates and laws which oppose these forms of murder.



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¹ Exodus 20:13.

² https://www.shortercatechism.com/resources/wsc/wsc_068.html.

³ <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/statistics/suicide.shtml>.

⁴ <https://www.theguardian.com/news/2019/jul/15/euthanasia-and-assisted-dying-rates-are-soaring-but-where-are-they-legal>.

⁵ National Right to Life Committee, Inc., *The State of Abortion in the United States, January, 2019*, p.6.

⁶ Psalm 139:13, 15, 16.