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### **The Door called ‘Suicide’**

One of the many wrong choices made in life is the easy-looking door called suicide. It opens when knocked and does not answer when called to be let out, for eternity! The sad erroneous concept in the minds of many today is that “Suicide is not a sin. God understands.” God has not trusted us with the choice to end our lives at any man-appointed time. No one is given the right to die before God’s time. “Thou shall not kill” applies to our lives too.

Suicide is often considered, based on the wrong belief that it’s the solution to all problems. Ironically, people gather courage to adopt escapism rather than to face the reality—which we humourously say ‘from the frying pan to fire.’ Basically a state of confused perception which blinds people from viewing things realistically triggers this act of cowardice. In my counselling experience, when people are helped to see the true nature of the situation and realise that their problem is only temporary and solvable, they are surprised that they actually considered suicide in the past.

It's a feeling-motivated act. People who show and express suicidal tendencies should be taken seriously though most threats are merely manipulative. It's not true that people who threaten suicide never do it. Most who commit suicide have warned someone of their intentions. In fact, 10 percent of the persons who make suicidal gestures eventually do. A suicidal death occurs every twenty minutes, 'attempts' every three minutes, among all religious denominations. They are left with no choice to return back to life when the situation improves. The causes shock us. Seemingly trivial matters trigger suicide. The need for genuine love, respect and acceptance, family and marital conflicts, low self-esteem, depression (which is the leading cause), psychological disturbances, debt, dissolution, perfectionism, loneliness, anger, failures, intense emotional pain or grief, hopelessness, loss, chronic self-destructive behaviour (alcoholism, drugs), an intense need to achieve, revenge, manipulation, incurable disease and the list goes on. The effects of suicide on the surviving children, relatives and friends are devastating. Children tend to blame themselves for the suicide of a parent and are more likely to follow their parent's example by giving up on life when as adults they find themselves in difficult situations.

Six suicides are listed in the Scriptures. Samson in deep guilt and revenge (Judg 16:28-30); Saul in pride (1 Sam 31:4); Saul's armour-bearer in fear (1 Sam 31:5); Ahithophel in need of respect and acceptance (2 Sam 17:23); Zimri in guilt (1 Ki 16:18,19); and Judas in lust for money lost perspective of what he was about to do, and guilt when hypocrisy revealed and loneliness in his sin (Mt 27:5).

Suicide is often seen among teenagers, people who live alone, the unmarried, the divorced, and the higher socio-economic groups.

Being sensitive to this unconscious cry for help we need to go further beyond sympathy and act empathetically towards such. Our attitude towards them should motivate us to feel with them in their problems and to gently help them understand their situation optimistically with godly perspectives. Instill hope and courage in them that God's will for us is to live life in the abundance of His grace. Show them the changing nature of circumstances against the unchanging character of Christ.

Every twenty minutes someone succeeds in their suicidal attempt—shall we soften our hearts and turn our ears as our neighbourhood cries for help? Let's show them the other Door!