



## What do you think of the Terri Schiavo situation ?

This is obviously a situation that has been on everyone's "radar screen" for the past month. I've heard valid points on both sides and I've had lots of thoughts of my own about the situation. But the challenge here is to separate personal feelings ("what *I* think") from what *God* thinks. That really is the challenge with every situation we face. We are always tempted to base our decisions on what *we* think and feel instead of on what God thinks.

How do we know what God thinks? He's told us in His Word (the Bible):

Some things God has told us in His Word:

- God is the author of life. Acts 17:24-25
- Only he has the authority to end it. Deuteronomy 32:39 / 1 Corinthians 6:19-20
- The value of life isn't found in who we are (i.e. what we can do).
- The value of life is found in *whose* we are. Genesis 9:6

Our lives are valuable to our Creator God in spite of what we do and what we can't do. Two simple facts show how valuable each person is to God.

1) God created you and knows you - knew you even before he created you (Psalm 139, etc...)

and 2) God sent His own Son to die for you (*because* of the things you do). (John 3:16, etc...)

One thing the Schiavo case brings to light is how we have tried to place value on life based not on God's standards, but on our standards of

"What can that life do?"

Back in the 70's we started to do this by saying that the life of the unborn child is worth less than that of the mother, so that gives us the right to take that life. That is absolutely wrong. No room for if's, and's or but's on that one. Abortion is the taking of a life that God created. That life may be inconvenient. So what! That doesn't give us the right to end it. Only God has that right. Thank God the people around us don't take it into their hands to end our lives when we are "inconvenient" to them!

The thing that I fear with the Terri Schiavo case is that, because the courts got heavily involved, this could do for euthanasia (assisted suicide) what Roe v Wade did for abortion thirty years ago. Roe v Wade made it acceptable (to us - not to God) to take a life that's inside the womb based on our (not God's) definition of the value of that life. I fear the Terri Schiavo case will make it acceptable (to us - not to God) to take a life outside the womb based on our (not God's) definition of its value.

There's a difference between allowing death to come naturally and actually taking away a life. The situation with Terri Schiavo was one of taking away a life. Terri Schiavo was not kept alive by any "heroic" technological means. Just food and water. Taking a person off artificial life support to allow death to come naturally is one thing. Withholding the basics we all need for survival is another.

Once again, the key isn't "What we think." The key is "What does *God* think?"

How do we know what God thinks? He's told us in His Word (the Bible). The challenge for Christians is to make sure we are listening to God more than we listen to the people who are only willing to give us "What they think."

Thanks for asking,  
Pastor David

**Send your questions to [pastor@livingwordlutheran.net](mailto:pastor@livingwordlutheran.net)**