Euthanasia: Is It Morally Justifiable?

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**Abstract**: The question of euthanasia is one of the most difficult moral problems that arise in the context of terminal medical care. It now occurs with greater frequency and is much more difficult to resolve because of advances in the art and science of medicine. Since the problem of euthanasia is still not clear to many church members in Indonesia, so the purpose of this study is to determine whether the Euthanasia is morally justifiable from the Christian perspective. The result of this study comes into conclusion that euthanasia is a kind of human effort to make a “good or painless death.” There are two kind of Euthanasia: active and passive. Active Euthanasia is taking human life and passive Euthanasia is simply allowing death to occur in order to avoid suffering. From the point of Christian perspective, active Euthanasia is morally unjustifiable, but passive Euthanasia may be morally justifiable, as long as it is natural and irreversible death. Also, the decision should be taken be consensus of pastor, doctor, lawyer, and family. God should be sought first in prayer and healing. And when the course of death is medically irreversible and no divine inter version is forthcoming, it is morally justified to stop unnatural efforts to prolong the process of dying.

***Keywords***: *Euthanasia, Christian, Indonesian, moral, death*

Introduction

Euthanasia is “the act of actively or passively bringing about the death of a person in order to prevent suffering.”**[[1]](#footnote-1)** it is “the art of painlessly putting to death persons suffering from incurable conditions or diseases.”**[[2]](#footnote-2)** The question of euthanasia is one of the most difficult moral problems that arise in the context of terminal medical care. It now occurs with greater frequency and is much more difficult to resolve because of advances in the art and science of medicine.

Case Background

The case which is considered as the focus of this study happened in Jakarta. *Butet*,**[[3]](#footnote-3)** the main character of the story is an Orang Batak.[[4]](#footnote-4) However, she lived in Jakarta with the parents who worked as a pastor.

The primary questions asked by the new pastors and some of the church members were these: “What shall we do with *Butet*”? Is it morally justified to perform euthanasia in such a case like *Butet*? What are the guidelines for taking decision?

To understand why these problems came up, let us see the actual story-case.

The Case: *Butet*

1. *Butet* was born as a paralyze baby.
2. Physically she was a complete baby, but when she was inside the womb of
3. her mother, the umbilical cord surrounded and tied her
4. neck. This made the muscles and the nerves system
5. through out her body out of work but there was growth in
6. length and weight. She could cry and breathe but could
7. not move her body. She was placed in the ICU. Her father
8. was a pastor who watched her faithfully every day.
9. According to the doctor, there is still hope for
10. Butet to recover but it would take a long time. Butet
11. had lived in the ICU for about 140 days and it had
12. consumed a lot of money. Some people suggested to
13. withholding the oxygen and the mechanical means but some
14. others people considered it as an act of euthanasia[[5]](#footnote-5)
15. which should be strictly prohibited by the law of God
16. since it is considered as an action which destroys the
17. sanctity of human life?

Pastoral – Theological Issue

Just like the case of Butet, many other people facing the same pastoral and ethical questions that we need to answer in this paper. Is it morally fight to keep a person mechanically alive when the body systems seem to have failed? Is it a murder to assist a person to die? What are the guidelines for taking decision?

The Purpose of Study

Since the problem of euthanasia is still not clear to many church members in Indonesia, so the purpose of this study is to determine whether the Euthanasia is morally justifiable from the Christian perspective.

The Significant of the Study

The study proposes to offer a contribution to the understanding of whether Euthanasia is morally justifiable from Christian perspective.

Method and Sources

The method of this study is the descriptive and case study method.[[6]](#footnote-6) First step is description, the researcher will present the case and an introduction of euthanasia. Second step is analysis, the researcher will consult with the tradition and culture how people understand and face the situation. Third step is biblical – theological interpretation, the researcher will consult with revelation in order to know what the Bible says about the sanctity of life. The last step is action, the researcher will propose the guidelines for taking decision then gives the conclusion.

Some Views Concerning Euthanasia

Euthanasia is divided into two types: active and passive. Active euthanasia is direct intervention to bring about the death of one suffering from a terminal illness, while passive euthanasia is letting nature take its course.[[7]](#footnote-7) In this chapter the discussion will be focused on the modern and cultural view of the active Euthanasia, or the intentional taking of another life, whether by one’s self or another in attempt to avoid suffering of physical nature. The modern proponent view and the cultural view in Indonesia of active Euthanasia offer some arguments in favor of it.

Proponent View of Euthanasia

Because of the existence of incurable diseases, there are two nations in the world, Belgium and Dutch, which have been officially, legalized the practices of euthanasia.[[8]](#footnote-8) Beside those two nations, many proponents of euthanasia support it for some reasons:

To Die with Dignity in a Moral Right for Every Person

Because of the existence of the incurable diseases that causes suffering and painful death, so the proponents of active Euthanasia argue that” everyone has a right to die with dignity, and that this is a part of what it means to have human kind of life. “To them, “a slow painful and merciless death is not a dignified death. Rather, it is dehumanizing death like that of an animal.”[[9]](#footnote-9) Thus the proponents of active euthanasia insist that “Euthanasia is a necessary means to guarantee a dignified death.”[[10]](#footnote-10)

Euthanasia is an act of Mercy to the Sufferer

Proponents of active Euthanasia argue that “not allowing Euthanasia merely prolongs suffering.” So, “the most compassionate thing to do is to put the sufferer out of his endless pain for nothing.”[[11]](#footnote-11)

According to them “mercy dictates that we alleviate the pain in the most effective way possible, that we give a suffering person a good death.”[[12]](#footnote-12) Then, Euthanasia is an act of Mercy to the Sufferer.

Cultural View of Euthanasia

From what I have observed in several cases of incurable diseases, I saw that the culture considers the psychological suffering and the heavy financial burden of the family as reasons why euthanasia should be considered. Although the culture seems not to agree with active euthanasia,[[13]](#footnote-13)but for natural passive euthanasia[[14]](#footnote-14) the culture in Indonesia seems to agree, as Kartono Muhammad the chairman of Indonesian Medical Doctors Association said that, “although euthanasia in Indonesia is not officially legalized but it has been passively practiced.”[[15]](#footnote-15) That is why in the case of Butet some suggested to withholding the oxygen and mechanical means which pictured the cultural view.

Euthanasia takes the Burden of the Suffering Family

Most of the time the social sacrifice and psychological suffering of the family can be as great as the physical suffering of the one dying. It can consume time, and much money of the suffering family.

Severe illness can wipe out a big amount of money in a short time. In the case of Butet, it had consumed a lot of money (line 12). According to Butet’s father they had paid about 130 million rupiah (USS 14,000.00) just for medical expenses of Butet. Thus, the burden of the family is not only in the social and psychological aspects of life, but also in carrying a heavy financial load. That is why from the cultural view of euthanasia in Indonesia, as I see it from several irreversible diseases that happened, the act of natural passive euthanasia[[16]](#footnote-16) is not only an act of mercy to the dying, but also the living who are responsible for them. In the case of Butet even some of the relatives suggested Butet’s father to withhold the oxygen (lines 12, 13) for releasing this heavy psychological and financial burden but he did not. Butet’s father and mother loved her very much and always hoping and waiting her recovery (lines 7, 8)

Evaluation of Active Euthanasia

There are some evaluations that we want to make in response to the views and arguments of active euthanasia.

There is no moral Right to Kill

The proponent view of euthanasia assure that there is a moral right to take the life of an innocent human in order to relieve his suffering and he may die with dignity. But Bible says, “Thou shalt not kill” (Exodus 20:13, KJV). And actually human dignity includes “the ability to confront the death and to understand it.”[[17]](#footnote-17) Therefore, “death with dignity cannot without further ado be equated with an easy death, with camouflaging the death process”[[18]](#footnote-18) such as through euthanasia. Human life has intrinsic value. God alone holds the right to give and take life (Gen 1:27; Heb 9:27).[[19]](#footnote-19) To take life of another human is to be an accomplice to the crime of assisting one in his own suicide.[[20]](#footnote-20)

No Price Tag Can be Placed on Human Life

The cultural view of euthanasia concerning the relief of financial strain is based on the fallacious premise that price tag can be placed on human life. But for me it is a wrong concept that we need to protect and to preserve life only if we can afford it. Human life is more valuable than anything in this world (Matt 6:26), because man was created in the image of God, that is why God sent His son to save man from sin (John 3:16). We are very precious in the sight of God. So, no material value can be placed on a spiritual value.

Suffering is One Way Through which God Sanctify Our Lives

Much of the proponents of euthanasia emphasize the avoidance of suffering. For them suffering is a great evil to be avoided at all cost. This is against Christian view of suffering. Paul wrote to the Corinthians at Rome that “we know that suffering produce perseverance, character, and hope.” (Rome 5:3-4). So, euthanasia, which ends the suffering by prematurely induced death, is contrary to the meaning of the life of the sufferer. For, “man, unlike the animal, is a being who can suffer ethically.”[[21]](#footnote-21)

In this case of Butet, the one suffering was not only Butet but also the parents and the whole family. From day to day Butet’s parents fully consecrated their life to God by praying and fasting, hoping that God will perform miracle to recover Butet. Every day in the morning the graphic in the EKG screen indicated that there was a progress of Butet’s condition but in the afternoon it went down again. Butet’s suffering made the parents lived closer to God.

Biblical Viewpoint of Euthanasia

The debate over euthanasia is basically a conflict of world views. From a secular humanist perspective euthanasia makes sense, but from biblical perspective it is morally unjustifiable. There are several reasons why it is morally unacceptable within a Christian context.

Euthanasia is Contrary of God’s Sovereignty Over Life

According to the Scripture God is the Creator and Owner of all things (Gen 1:1; Ps 24:1). He made man in His own image (Gen 1:27).[[22]](#footnote-22) When Pharaoh challenged God’s sovereignty saying, “who is the Lord, that I should obey him?” He immediately found out when God took the life of all Egypt’s first born sons, including Pharaoh’s (Exod 11:4-7). When God through Moses produced life out of the dust, the magicians of Pharaoh cried out, “This is the finger of God” (Exod 8:19).

From those facts we can conclude that God alone is sovereign over life. God alone created human life and God alone has the right to take an innocent life. Euthanasia is an attempt to replace God who has sovereign fight over human life.

Euthanasia is Against the Sanctity of Human Life

Man was made in the image and likeness of God (Gen 1:27). According to Cairus, “Physical, Intellectual, social and spiritual faculties are closely related to the dignity of a person, an essential aspect of being an image of God (1 Cor 1:17).”[[23]](#footnote-23) Being in the moral image of God, “man was righteous as well as holy (cf. Eph 4:24), and was part of the Creation God pronounced “very good” (Gen 1:31).”[[24]](#footnote-24)

So, created in the image of God makes human life is sacred. And because of this, it is wrong to kill an innocent human being. That is why God explicitly stated that: “Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God has God made man” (Gen 9:6).

Human life is sacred and God-like. For this reason it is even wrong to curse another human being (James 3:9). So, because of the sacredness of human life, God has forbidden that anyone kill another, for he has thereby indirectly attacked God. Euthanasia, as a forum of taking life or allowing death to occur in order to avoid offering, is against the sanctity of human life.

Euthanasia is a Form of Murder and Suicide

The practice of euthanasia is condemned on the basis of revelation (divine practice law). Gerald Kelly insists that euthanasia is contrary to the revealed law of God. He points out that “In the Holy Scriptures we have these clear statement: ‘The innocent and just man thou shalt not put to death (Exod 23:7),”[[25]](#footnote-25) Scripture is emphatic in proclaiming that murder is wrong. It says: “You shall not murder” (Exod 20:13). After the flood God said to Noah and his sons that if a person takes the life of another, that person must be put to death (Gen 9:6).

Unnatural And Natural Passive Euthanasia And How To Take Decision

After evaluating active euthanasia from a Christian perspective in the previous chapter, it is time to look at what is often called passive euthanasia. Two distinct views go by this name and must be differentiated.

Active euthanasia means to produce death. Passive euthanasia, on the other hands means to allow death.[[26]](#footnote-26) The former is morally wrong because producing death is against the sanctity of life which has been created according to the image and the likeness of God, but the latter may be morally right, depending on whether it results from withholding ordinary means of sustaining life or from withdrawing extraordinary means of resisting irreversible sickness. Passive euthanasia that withdraws ordinary means of life support in order to “allow” the death is called unnatural passive euthanasia.[[27]](#footnote-27)

Unnatural Passive Euthanasia

Unnatural passive euthanasia is allowing someone to die by deliberately withholding ordinary means of sustaining life. Ordinary means are such normal methods of life sustenance food, water, and air including “all medicines, treatments which offer a reasonable hope of benefit for the patient and which can be obtained and used without excessive expense, pain or other inconveniences.”[[28]](#footnote-28)

Extraordinary means include mechanical devices such as respirators and artificial organs.[[29]](#footnote-29) Ordinary means are always required, but “allowing” a patient to die by falling to provide those measures is morally equivalent to causing his death.” And “this is morally wrong.”[[30]](#footnote-30)

Natural Passive Euthanasia

Passive euthanasia that withdraws extraordinary life support is called natural passive euthanasia.[[31]](#footnote-31) Failure to provide ordinary means to preserve life, for whatever reason, is usually regarded as direct killing.[[32]](#footnote-32) On the other hand, withholding extraordinary means leads only to indirectly to the individual’s death. So withholding ordinary means is equal to active euthanasia, because the act leads directly to the death of the individual’s.[[33]](#footnote-33)

Thus, when we talk about morally justified cases of passive euthanasia, we are referring only to those that fall into the category of natural passive euthanasia.

So, only in cases of irreversible disease and hopeless should a person be allowed to die naturally by withholding extraordinary life-sustaining equipment.

Discussion of Natural Euthanasia

Taking a human life by euthanasia is morally wrong no matter how well-intended the motives are doing so.[[34]](#footnote-34) However, it is not always wrong to allow someone to die, especially if it is a natural death. Of course, withholding food and water to starve a person to death murder, ever though it is by definition a form of passive euthanasia. This is because withholding these ordinary life-sustaining elements leads directly to death. As we have already seen, taking a human life by euthanasia is never right, but allowing someone to die is not always wrong. If we “allow” a person to die by deliberately withholding oxygen, food, and water, such as in the case of Butet, then it is murder, even though it is called “passive “euthanasia. This is because the action leads directly to death. But withholding extraordinary means sustaining life is not always wrong.

What is the different between the passive euthanasia that are justified and those that are not? The different is, it is never right either to take a life or to withhold ordinary life-sustaining means such as oxygen, food, and water. The only time allowing a death can be justified is when we are withdrawing extraordinary life-saving mechanism for cases of irreversible diseases and the proof should show that the situation really is hopeless.[[35]](#footnote-35)

Pastoral Action

A detail description of a possible pastoral action may not be practical at this point. But based upon the findings of the analysis and the interpretation chapters of this paper, basic guidelines on how to take decision in facing irreversible diseases could be recommended from pastoral viewpoint.

There are times when the use of extraordinary meansare a hindrance,[[36]](#footnote-36) not a help, to the process of natural death, which is under God’s sovereign hand (Eccles 3:2; Heb 8:27). This is when extraordinary human efforts are really prolonging death rather than prolonging life.

When artificial life supports are interfering with the natural process of death, rather than enriching the person’s natural life, then their use is wrong. It is resisting the hand of God involved in the very process of death.

Keeping a comatose person who has incurable diseases alive on a machine when he si irreversibly dying is unnecessary. In fact, it could be viewed as unethical because it is opposing the very processes of natural mortality that God has ordained. God has appointed that all must due (Gen 2:16-17; Rome 5:12). He has declared that there are natural limits to life (Ps. 90:10). Extraordinary efforts to fight the divinely appointed limits of our mortality are really working in opposition to God.

Usually the most important decision is the one made to put a person on a life-sustaining machine. Sometimes this is unnecessary, and it creates a later ethical dilemma concerning when the machine should be disconnected. Hence, an important moral decision should be made at a very early stage concerning whether it is necessary to put someone on a life-support machine or not.

Guidelines for Decision

In a critical situation, who makes the crucial decisions to disconnect a patient from life-sustaining machine? As a pastoral action, there are some guidelines that I suggest to follow:

First, the disease must be irreversible*[[37]](#footnote-37)*– No one should be allowed to die if we have the means at hand to save his life. If possible, correctable situations should be corrected. Ellen G. White said that, “those who seek healing by prayer should not neglect to make use of the remedial agencies within their reach.”[[38]](#footnote-38) Unless the process of the disease is irreversible, even natural passive euthanasia is not justifiable.[[39]](#footnote-39)

Second, the patient has veto power – If the patient is conscious and rational, then he has veto power over any decision not to extend his life by artificial means. If the patient is not conscious then all other things being equal, his living will on the matter should be respected. If the patient is not conscious and has expressed no will on the matter previously, then others responsible for him must make the decision. In short, then others responsible for him must make the decision. In short, representative decisions can be made regarding procedures. In the case of Butet, although she was conscious but could not express her will because she just newly born baby, we need to respect her living will. Because “it is never an act of mercy to the individual to take away his or her life when it is truly human.”[[40]](#footnote-40)

Third, there should be collective decisions – who should make the decisions when other cannot make it for themselves? The bible says there is wisdom in joint decisions. (Num. 35:30; Prov. 24:6). Since there are spiritual, legal, moral, and family implications to the decision, it seems wise to consider all aspects. So the decision should not be made until there is consent from pastor, doctor, lawyer, and family members. But even before this – pray. God should be consulted first before any decision is contemplated. After all, he is sovereign and supernatural. It may be his will to heal, and he is waiting for us to ask (James 4:2; 5:14-15). God is able to perform miracles, and he should be sought first on behalf of the sufferer. But if after fervent and repeated prayer, medical science is not able, nor is God willing, to perform a miracle, then we must rest assured that God’s grace is sufficient (2 Cor. 12:9).[[41]](#footnote-41)

Conclusion

The result of this study comes into conclusion that euthanasia is a kind of human effort to make a “good or painless death.” There are two kind of Euthanasia: active and passive. Active Euthanasia is taking human life and passive Euthanasia is simply allowing death to occur in order to avoid suffering.

From the point of Christian perspective, active Euthanasia is morally unjustifiable, but passive Euthanasia may be morally justifiable, as long as it is natural and irreversible death. In the case of Butet, even though some people suggested to withholding mechanical means and oxygen from her, but from the Biblical point of view it is unjustifiable because she was still conscious and could cry and breathe by the help of mechanical tools (lines 5, 6).

Natural passive Euthanasia is allowing death to occur naturally withholding extraordinary means of sustaining life, such as heart and lung machines. Natural means of sustaining life include food, water and oxygen. Deliberating withholding these things is unnatural passive Euthanasia and it is morally unjustifiable from a Christian perspective.

Even in morally justifiable natural passive euthanasia, there are still difficult decisions. It should be exercised only when a person is irreversibly dying and then it is not his expressed will.

Also, the decision should be taken be consensus of pastor, doctor, lawyer, and family. God should be sought first in prayer and healing. And when the course of death is medically irreversible and no divine inter version is forthcoming, it is morally justified to stop unnatural efforts to prolong the process of dying.

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1. S. Carol Berg, “Euthanasia, “International Encyclopedia of Ethics, ed. John K. Roth (Chicago, Il: Salem Press, 1995), 286.  
    [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Ranann Billon, “Acts and Omissions: Killing and Letting Die,” British Medical Journal 292 (1986), 126-127. Cited by David C. Thomasma and Glan C. Craber, Euthanasia (New York: The Continuum Publishing, 1990), 2. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Names in this paper have been changed to protect the privacy of the individual who have shared their story.  
    [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. The term Orang Batak refers to an Indonesian who is native to the Central part of North Sumatra Province. Most of Orang Batak are Christian. Batak culture still holds the concept of the superiority of man over woman, since man is considered as family’s name bearer and as generation successor.  
    [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Euthanasia is “the act of actively or passively bringing about the death of a person in order to prevent suffering.” It is “the act of painlessly putting to death persons suffering from incurable conditions or deseases.” See Carol Berg, “Euthanasia,” International Encyclopedia of Ethics, ed., John K. Roth (Chicago, Il: Salem Press), 286, and Ranaan Billon, “Acts and Omissions: Killing and letting Die,” British Medical Journal 292 (1986), 126-127, cited by David C. Thomasma and Glan C. Craber, Euthanasia (New York: The Continuum Publishing, 1990), 2.  
    [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. For information about the content and form of this research method see Nancy Vyhmeister, Quality Research Papers for Students of Religion and Theology (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001), 14-151. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Berg, 286. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. 91Gloria Cyber Ministries “Belgia Izinkan Euthanasia” http: //www.glorianet. org/berita/b3662. Html. Accessed on February 2, 2003, Internet. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Norman L. Geisler, Christian Ethics: Options and Issues (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1989), 158.  
    [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Ibid, 159.  
     [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Ibid.  
     [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Ibid.  
     [↑](#footnote-ref-12)
13. Taking human life in order to avoid suffering.  
     [↑](#footnote-ref-13)
14. Allowing death to occur in order to avoid suffering, usually by withholding extraordinary means of sustaining life, especially when the condition of the patient is hopeless.  
     [↑](#footnote-ref-14)
15. Kartono Muhammad, “Euthanasia di Indonesia.” Theravada.net/regional/Indonesia/euthanasia/bunuh-diri.html-37k. Accessed in February 5, 2003.  
     [↑](#footnote-ref-15)
16. Passive euthanasia means to allow death to occur. Passive euthanasia that withdraws extraordinary life support is called natural passive euthanasia. See Geisler. Christian Ethics, 162.  
     [↑](#footnote-ref-16)
17. Trutz Rendtrorff, Ethics, trans., Keith Crim (Minneapolis, Minn: Ausburg Fortress, 1989), 210.  
     [↑](#footnote-ref-17)
18. Rendtroff, 210.  
     [↑](#footnote-ref-18)
19. Geisler, Christian Ethics, 160.  
     [↑](#footnote-ref-19)
20. There is a case of assisted suicide in the Bible, and it was not approved

    by God. Abimelech’s armor-bearer responded to his mortality wounded master’s request to kill him” (Jud 9:54). King Saul’s armor-bearer refused his wounded, master’s request to kill him, “for he feared greatly” (I Sam 31:4). [↑](#footnote-ref-20)
21. Helmut Thielicke, Theological Ethics, trans., John W. Doberstein (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964), 3:266.  
     [↑](#footnote-ref-21)
22. Hendry C. Thiessen, Lectures in Systematic Theology (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1949), 153.  
     [↑](#footnote-ref-22)
23. Aecio Cairus, “Doctrine of Man.” Chap. In The Hand Book of Seventh-day Adventist

    Theology, commentary Reverence Series, Vol 12, ed. George W.

    Reid (Hagestown, MD: Review & Herald, 2000), 208.  
     [↑](#footnote-ref-23)
24. [Gerald P. Damsteegt], Seventh-day Adventist Believe….: Biblical Exposition of 27 Fundamental Doctrines (Washington, DC: Ministerial Association, General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist, 1988), 85.  
     [↑](#footnote-ref-24)
25. Gerald A. Kelly, Medico-Moral Probles (St. Louis, Catholic Hospital Association of the U.S and Canada, 1985), 128. Cited by Jerry B. Wilson, Death by Decision (Philadephia: The Westminster Press, 1975), 83.  
     [↑](#footnote-ref-25)
26. Geisler, Christian Ethics, 162.  
     [↑](#footnote-ref-26)
27. Ibid.  
     [↑](#footnote-ref-27)
28. Kelly, 129.  
     [↑](#footnote-ref-28)
29. Wilson, 68.  
     [↑](#footnote-ref-29)
30. Geisler, Christian Ethics, 163.  
     [↑](#footnote-ref-30)
31. Ibid, 162.  
     [↑](#footnote-ref-31)
32. Wilson, 71.  
     [↑](#footnote-ref-32)
33. Ibid. [↑](#footnote-ref-33)
34. Geisler, Christian Ethics, 167.  
     [↑](#footnote-ref-34)
35. J. Philip Wagoman, Christian Moral Judgement (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster Press, 1989), 7.  
     [↑](#footnote-ref-35)
36. Extraordinary means involve “nonstandard treatment, the new and rare” include a respirator, an artificial heart, or a kidney machine. See Carol S. Berg, “Euthanasisa.” International Encyclopedia of Ethics. Ed. John K. Roth. Chicago, IL: Salem Press, 1955. [↑](#footnote-ref-36)
37. in practical term a condition is “irreversible” when there are no known available medical means to correct the injury or disease process leading to death. In other words, there is no medical hope for recovery, and it is only a matter of time before a person dies. Medically this means that even the best extraordinary (medical) means will not stop death. See Geisler. Christian Ethics, 169.  
     [↑](#footnote-ref-37)
38. Ellen G. White, The Ministry of Healing (Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press, 1942), 231.  
     [↑](#footnote-ref-38)
39. Geisler, Christian Ethics, 168.  
     [↑](#footnote-ref-39)
40. Norman I. Geisler, Ethics: Alternatives and Issues (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1971), 235.  
     [↑](#footnote-ref-40)
41. Geisler, Christian Ethics, 168. [↑](#footnote-ref-41)