

## The Problem with Medicine

by Dr. Allister Stone, M.D.; M.Div. from WRS in 1995

Strangely enough, the problem with medicine is that there has been much great advancement. Diseases or infirmities that would have killed a person years ago are preventable and manageable now. On the other hand, people who would have died peacefully now can be “tortured,” connected to machines and drips. Frequently the natural progression of things has become quite unnatural. Often I hear, “What should we do?”

First, we must affirm the sanctity of life—every life is precious. But then we must pause to consider. I usually ask two questions: “Are you trying to *preserve life*? Or are you trying to *prevent death*?”

Although some of the things you would do are the same, the motivation is different. If the case is determined to be terminal, why prevent death when someone is actively dying? If you start down that path of intervention, when do you stop? It is not a lack of faith to watch and wait. With adequate pain management, watching might be the most loving thing that you can do.

If the case is not terminal or has a good probability of recovery, then why hold back? God has provided so many advancements in medicine so that we will be grateful for His mighty power. He is without question the Greatest Physician.



Dr. Stone at a medical mission in Liberia in 2009.

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