

**Group Study on Dying Well**

*What you will need:*

* A print out of this document
* A Bible

*Read aloud the following excerpt and use your Bible to look up the passages cited in the text*

When it comes to dying, all of us hope to die well. The question is, what does this mean and look like?

The word euthanasia means 'a good death' and, for some, this is what ‘dying well’ looks like. Euthanasia advocacy groups sometimes refer to euthanasia or physician-assisted suicide as 'dying with dignity'. The premise behind this thinking seems to be that to die well is to die on our own terms, to assert our autonomy at the end of life and to die how we want and when we want.

The Christian tradition, however, has a very different understanding of what it is to die well. A good death is not one on our own terms, but one which submits itself to God's will. More specifically, to die well for the Christian is to die with faith in Christ, and thus to die in the grace of God.

The Bible speaks of the ‘*fear of death which subjects us to a life long slavery*’ (Hebrews 2:15). It is this fear which leads us to try to assert ourselves in the face of death by taking matters into our own hands. However, as Christ has taken on our flesh and blood and has died in our place to give us eternal life, we need not fear death, and can die well as we trust in Him.

*Discussion questions*

* What is a good death? Have you ever considered which would be the best way to die (not planned death, but thought of a quick death versus a slow one etc)?
* Has anyone that you have known well died? How did it affect you?
* Why do you think that death is a common fear? Do you fear death? Should we fear death? See John 14:1-4.
* In Christ, we are dead to sin but alive to righteousness (see Romans 6:1-14). Does this affect the way that you feel about death?

*Close with prayer*

*Further resources*

* Website: ‘The Art of Dying Well’: <http://www.artofdyingwell.org>
* Palliative Care Australia: <http://palliativecare.org.au>
* Informative and accessible website on why to oppose euthanasia and assisted suicide (including definitions, outline of concerns, videos from experts and further resources) by the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne: <http://www.cam.org.au/euthanasia/>