

BIOETHICS

CHRISTIANITY

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BIOETHICAL DECISIONS

A CHRISTIAN FRAMEWORK

1. ANALYSIS

Begin with a clear understanding of the issue.

What facts are in question?

Inc. current scientific data and the nature of the proposed interventions

What concepts need clarification?

- Preciseness of language
- Meaning of central terms. Without this clear communication may not always occur
- Examples:
 - Is artificial insemination using sperm donor adultery'?
 - Is withdrawal of life support the same as euthanasia?

What values are in conflict?

- Identify the values at stake
- Example:
in caring for a dying patient, is there a conflict between extending life and alleviating pain?

What human relationships will be affected?

- How will decisions affect personal relationships?
- Example:
how would artificial insemination affect relationships within a family?

What is the appropriate realm of moral authority

- Who is the appropriate person to make the decision?
- Example:
- it belongs to the patient if they are a mentally competent adult.

Otherwise who decides? Family? Medical personnel? Society?

The Bible acknowledges various types of authority according special roles for parents, church leaders, and government officials

2. ALTERNATIVES

- What courses of action exist?
- God has given us the ability to think outside the square....
- Example:
In caring for the dying are there better ways to preserve the person's dignity and alleviate pain rather than resorting to euthanasia?

What are the likely effects of various options?

- Consider the probable/possible effects of a decision

- Example:

What are the likely complications of having a woman provide surrogate gestation for another woman?

3. PRINCIPLES

- Mature, Christian decisions are guided by God's principles.

What relevant principles can be derived from a study of God's Word?

- As we search the scriptures the Holy Spirit will empower us to discern principles to guide us in our decisions.
- This is clearest in the ministry of Jesus.

Can the shared experience of the faith community assist us?

- The sharing of moral insights in an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect. This includes reflections now and in the history of the church.

4. DECISIONS

- Prayer and study of Biblical texts should give confidence to make decisions and the humility to change them when necessary.

What decision best fits with relevant Biblical principles?

- God has given us sufficient resources to make courageous decisions and to take appropriate action.

Sometimes obstacles must be overcome in order to implement the decision?

Use relevant strategies to implement decisions, including principal measures for surmounting hindrances

5. EVALUATION

Learn from past decisions and make adjustments as needed

What is our honest assessment of the decision?

- God continues to work with and through us even when we make mistakes. Christian humility leads to new understanding and admission of past mistakes.
- God's grace is liberating