

## The Vine This Month

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# Brother Martin Writes

A 104-year-old Australian scientist, David Goodall, a respected botanist and ecologist who had campaigned for the legalization of assisted dying, died Thursday, May 10, at the Life Circle clinic in Basel, Switzerland, after administering a lethal drug under the guidance of doctors. Goodall was not terminally ill; he wanted to die because he could no longer do most of the things he enjoyed doing.

**Is long life a blessing?** *The fear of the LORD prolongs days: but the years of the wicked shall be shortened.* Proverbs 10:27

*Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you.* Exodus 20:12

*With long life I will satisfy him and show him my salvation.* Psalm 91:16

There are many other verses in the Bible which seem to suggest that God will bless you with a long life if you keep His commands. My wheelchair bound mother who is almost 90 always pray that God will take her home. My prayer is that she will really know Jesus as Saviour before that day comes. I believe that long life is a blessing only if you are living according to God's purposes and plans for your life and if you have good health.

**Is it right to assist a person to die?** *Saul said to his armor-bearer, "Draw your sword and run me through, or these uncircumcised fellows will come and abuse me." But his armor-bearer was terrified and would not do it; so Saul took his own sword and fell on it.* 1 Chronicles 10:4

We may not do it consciously but certainly some of us may do it unconsciously when we pressurize a person until his back is against a wall and suicide seems to be the only solution, for example a loan shark's tactics. On one hand the death penalty is illegal in some countries and yet assisted suicide is acceptable and legal in other countries. Man does not have a conclusive answer.

**What does the Bible say?** God is the only one who is to decide when and how a person should die. We should say with the psalmist, *"My times are in your hands"* Psalm 31:15. Some people in Scripture felt deep despair in life. Solomon (Ecclesiastes 2:17), Elijah (1 Kings 19:4), Jonah (Jonah 4:8), and even Paul (2 Corinthians 1:8). However, none of these men committed suicide. I pray that God will grant you the strength to live to a good old age in His service.