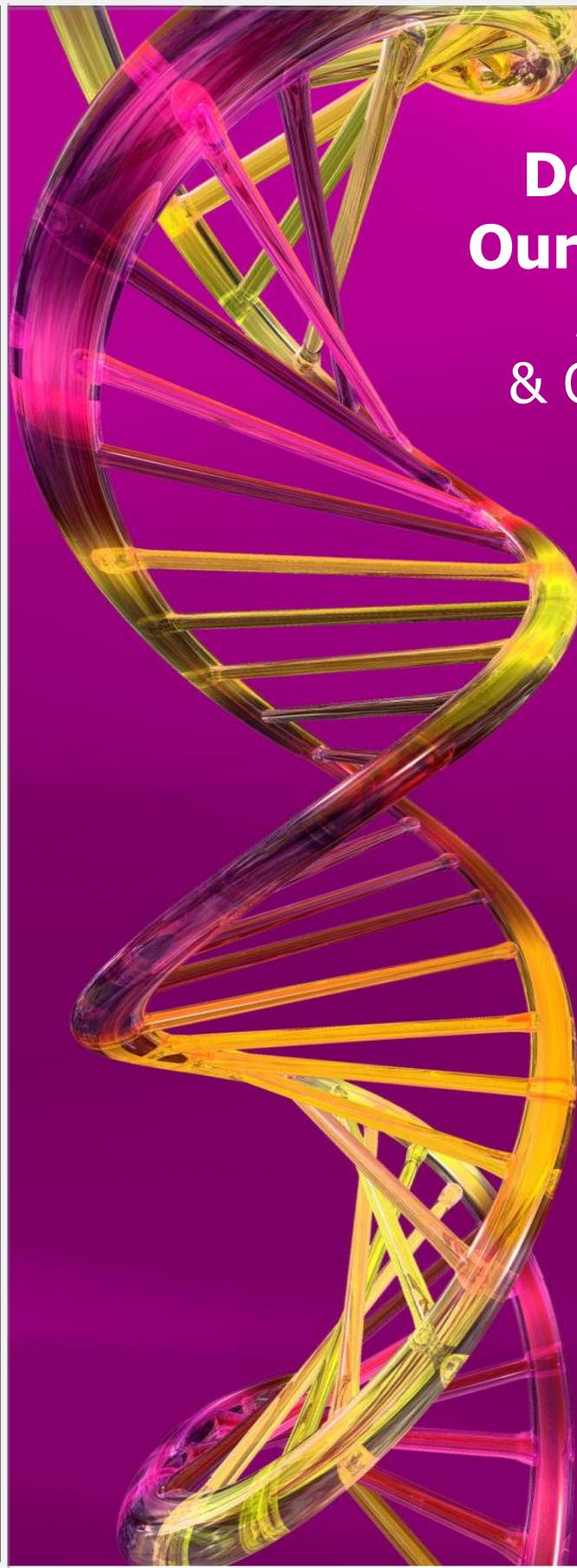


# LEADER'S GUIDE



## **Does God Need Our Help?** Cloning, Assisted Suicide, & Other Challenges in Bioethics

THE CENTER FOR  
**BIOETHICS**  
& HUMAN DIGNITY  
TRINITY INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

# ***A Leader's Guide for Does God Need Our Help? Cloning, Assisted Suicide & Other Challenges in Bioethics***

Provided by The Center for Bioethics & Human Dignity, Deerfield, Illinois

## **Why read and discuss *Does God Need Our Help?***

Almost everyone has heard of stem cell research, cloning, assisted suicide, euthanasia, and in vitro fertilization. Some have even heard of cybernetics, nanotechnology, and transhumanism. For most, however, a true understanding of these procedures, processes, and their far-reaching moral ramifications is sadly lacking. The harsh reality is that while bioethical issues are increasingly confronting us on the evening news, in the Sunday paper, at the ballot box, and in our own lives, relatively few people grasp the science involved in the “bio,” or the moral dilemmas involved in the “ethics” of bioethics.

Bioethics is about all of us. We all make decisions about birth, death, and the stages of life in between. Bioethics involves distinguishing between what we should and should not pursue in matters of life and health. In short, does “can do” mean “should do?”

Our society currently is engaged in making significant decisions about how technologies such as cloning, genetics, and stem cell research will be developed. It is crucial that Christian perspectives inform these decisions. In order to promote a better understanding of bioethics and to provide a biblical framework for evaluating bioethical dilemmas, The Center for Bioethics & Human Dignity (CBHD) offers *Does God Need Our Help?*

## **About the Book**

This is not another academic book on bioethics. John Kilner and Ben Mitchell have written this introduction to bioethics for people who have little or no background in science, medicine, or ethics. The authors begin with the Hippocratic Oath, lay a foundation for thinking theologically about bioethics, move through beginning-of-life and end-of-life decisions, and conclude with emerging biotechnologies and the benefits and burdens they present. While no book could address every situation that might be encountered, *Does God Need Our Help* provides tools that will enable you to think more clearly about the issues.

*Does God Need Our Help* was designed both for those who are struggling with ethical decisions about their health care, and for those who want to know more about stem cell research, cloning, reproductive technologies, euthanasia, resource allocation, and other related issues. It includes suggested readings, resources for further study, and study questions that make the book useful for small group discussions.

## **About the Authors**

John F. Kilner, PhD, is a graduate of Yale University, Gordon-Conwell Seminary, and Harvard University. He currently is the Forman Chair of Christian Ethics and Theology at Trinity International University in Deerfield, Illinois, and is a Senior Fellow in CBHD's Academy of Fellows.

C. Ben Mitchell, PhD, is a graduate of Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and the University of Tennessee. He is Graves Chair of Moral Philosophy at Union University in Tennessee, and Editor of the international bioethics journal *Ethics & Medicine*. He is also a Senior Fellow in CBHD's Academy of Fellows.

## **Tips for Starting a Discussion Group**

*Does God Need Our Help* works well within the context of a Sunday School or a small group study. It is designed specifically to be useful and understandable not just for adults, but also for teens in your youth group.

By adding an introductory and a wrap up meeting to weekly meetings on each of the book's ten chapters, a group could meet for twelve weeks to discuss *Does God Need Our Help*. You might even choose to spend two weeks on one or more chapters in order to delve deeper into a particular topic. For a final, wrap-up meeting, you might consider inviting a healthcare professional or bioscientist from your church with whom your group could interact regarding what they've covered.

A group of 8 to 12 members is ideal—enough people to keep the discussion lively, but not so many that not everyone gets a chance to share.

## **Tips for Guiding a Discussion Group**

- Have everyone read the chapter ahead of time.
- Begin by giving a brief synopsis of the chapter, then move into a time of discussion.
- Use the discussion questions (beginning on page 213 of *Does God Need Our Help*) to spark conversation. These questions were crafted to bring out important points in each chapter, and to encourage deeper reflection.
- Allow everyone's opinion to be heard while keeping the discussion focused.
- As the leader of the group, consider doing some additional, outside research. In addition to the resources listed below, a list of recommended readings, arranged by topics that correspond to the book's chapters, can be found on page 207.
- As a class project, you might consider purchasing some of the recommended resources for your church library.

## **Conclusion**

It is our hope that this book will be useful to everyone who must make decisions about life and death. Every page was written with the view that people will use this as a tool to help them and their family members make some of the most important decisions they will ever make.

## **For More Information**

The Center for Bioethics & Human Dignity (CBHD) recognizes that developments in healthcare and biotechnology create amazing opportunities as well as serious threats to human dignity, and to human life itself. The Center brings distinctly Christian perspectives to bear on current and emerging bioethical challenges, by developing cutting-edge critiques and constructive alternatives to meet the real human needs involved.

Please feel free to contact us if we can be of any further assistance to you or your group. Our contact information is located below. We would be happy to hear from you!

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847-317-8180 | [info@cbhd.org](mailto:info@cbhd.org)  
[www.cbhd.org](http://www.cbhd.org) | [www.everydaybioethics.org](http://www.everydaybioethics.org)

# *Part I – Tools: Distinguishing Right from Wrong*

## **Chapter One – It Started with Hippocrates**

### **Overview:**

Since the ethic expounded in the Hippocratic Oath has shaped the course of Western medicine for over 2,500 years, it is important for us to understand something of the history and contents of the Oath. The remainder of *Does God Need Our Help* is an extended plea for a revival of the principles and values resident in the Judeo-Christian Hippocratic tradition in medicine.

### **Additional Resources:**

Cameron, Nigel M. de S. *The New Medicine: Life and Death after Hippocrates*. Rev. ed. Chicago: Bioethics Press, 2001.

O'Mathúna, Dónal P., et al. *Basic Questions on Healthcare: What Should Good Care Include?* Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2004.

### **Online Resources:**

The Importance of Theological Understanding

<http://cbhd.org/content/importance-theological-understanding>

Thinking Theologically About Bioethics

<http://cbhd.org/content/thinking-theologically-about-bioethics>

Thinking Theologically About Bioethics Revisited

<http://cbhd.org/content/thinking-theologically-about-bioethics-revisited>

CBHD Articles on Bioethics

<http://www.cbhd.org/resources>

<http://everydaybioethics.org/resources>

## Chapter Two – Then Along Came Bioethics

### Overview:

Bioethics is the application of ethics to matters of healthcare and biotechnology. Ethics is about distinguishing between good and bad, right and wrong. The first role for ethics is to help us understand the various ways people determine who they should be and what they should do. The second role of ethics is to tell us the best way to do this. When people come to different ethical conclusions, it is for one of four reasons: there is a difference in facts, beliefs, loyalties, or reasoning. The three most common methods of reasoning involve appeals to consequences, principles, or virtue. In the end, each form of reasoning comes up short. The next chapter will cover a biblical approach to bioethics that retains the strengths of other approaches and avoids their problems.

### Additional Resources:

Hollinger, Dennis. *Choosing the Good: Christian Ethics in a Complex World*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002.

Jonsen, Albert. *A Short History of Medical Ethics*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000.

Kilner, John F., Nigel M. de S. Cameron, and David L. Schiedermayer, eds. *Bioethics and the Future of Medicine: A Christian Appraisal*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995.

Rae, Scott B. and Paul M. Cox. *Bioethics: A Christian Approach in a Pluralistic Age*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999.

Vandrunen, David. *Bioethics and the Christian Life: A Guide to Making Difficult Decisions*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2009.

### Online Resources:

Autonomy and Community in Biblical Perspective

<http://cbhd.org/content/autonomy-and-community-biblical-perspective>

CBHD Articles on Bioethics

<http://cbhd.org/category/issues/bioethics>

## Chapter Three – Does the Bible Address Bioethics?

### Overview:

The Bible is relevant to today's bioethical dilemmas, and the distinctly Christian bioethics presented in this chapter avoids all of the shortcomings of other contemporary approaches to bioethics discussed in the previous chapter. A distinctly Christian bioethics has three characteristics according to the authors: it is God-centered, reality-bounded, and love-impelled. Recognizing the similarities and differences between a distinctly Christian bioethics and other contemporary approaches helps us understand why other approaches to bioethics are so intuitively appealing while alerting us to the major shortcomings of other approaches.

### Additional Resources:

- Kilner, John F. *Life on the Line: Ethics, Aging, Ending Patients' Lives, and Allocating Vital Resources*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992.
- Kilner, John F., Nigel M. de S. Cameron, and David L. Schiedermayer, eds. *Bioethics and the Future of Medicine: A Christian Appraisal*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995.
- Kilner, John F., Robert D. Orr, and Judith Allen Shelly, eds. *The Changing Face of Healthcare: A Christian Appraisal of Managed Care, Resource Allocation, and Patient-Caregiver Relationships*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998.
- O'Mathúna, Dónal P., et al. *Basic Questions on Healthcare*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2004.
- Rae, Scott B. and Paul M. Cox. *Bioethics: A Christian Approach in a Pluralistic Age*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999.
- Vandrunen, David. *Bioethics and the Christian Life: A Guide to Making Difficult Decisions*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2009.

### Online Resources:

- Ethical Method in Christian Bioethics: Mapping the Terrain  
<http://cbhd.org/content/ethical-method-christian-bioethics-mapping-terrain>
- Thinking Theologically About Bioethics  
<http://cbhd.org/content/thinking-theologically-about-bioethics>
- Thinking Theologically About Bioethics Revisited  
<http://cbhd.org/content/thinking-theologically-about-bioethics-revisited>
- CBHD Articles on Bioethics  
<http://www.cbhd.org/resources/bioethics/>  
<http://www.everydaybioethics.org>

## *Part II – Healthcare: Across the Lifespan*

### **Chapter Four – Embryonic Ethics: Stem Cell Research, Abortion, and Beyond**

#### **Overview:**

Many of the most challenging bioethical issues in healthcare arise at the beginning of life. Some of the issues—like stem cell research—center on the kinds of research that are acceptable in order to develop new medical treatments. Other issues, such as abortion, have to do with the kinds of medical procedures that are acceptable in order to benefit patients.

#### **Additional Resources:**

Best, Megan. *Fearfully and Wonderfully Made: Ethics and the Beginning of Human Life*. Kingsford, NSW, Australia: Matthias Media, 2012.

Bevington, Linda K., et al. *Basic Questions on Genetics, Stem Cell Research, and Cloning*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2004.

Gushee, David. *The Sacredness of Human Life: Why an Ancient Biblical Vision Is Key to the World's Future*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013.

Jones, David A. *The Soul of the Embryo: An Inquiry into the Status of the Human Embryo in the Christian Tradition*. New York: Continuum, 2004.

#### **Online Resources:**

Stem Cell Research Overview

<http://cbhd.org/stem-cell-research/overview>

CBHD Stem Cell Research Position Statement

<http://cbhd.org/stem-cell-research/position-statement>

An Update on the Frontlines of Alternatives to Embryonic Stem Cell Research

<http://cbhd.org/content/update-frontlines-alternatives-embryonic-stem-cell-research>

An Open Letter to the Open Minded

<http://cbhd.org/content/open-letter-open-minded>

CBHD Articles on Stem Cell Research

<http://cbhd.org/category/issues/stem-cell-research>

<http://everydaybioethics.org/issue/emerging-technology>

CBHD Articles on Beginning-of-Life Issues

<http://everydaybioethics.org/issue/beginning-life>

Website of Do No Harm

<http://stemcellresearch.org>

## Chapter Five – Life on the Line: End-of-Life Treatment and Resource Allocation

### Overview:

We need some basis for making the tough decisions on how to care for people when their health seriously deteriorates, particularly when death may be approaching. This chapter explains two ethical requirements for end-of-life decision making and concludes with a look at how financial considerations complicate the picture.

### Additional Resources:

- Advance Directive Kit* – Available from The Center for Bioethics & Human Dignity
- Kilner, John F. *Life on the Line: Ethics, Aging, Ending Patients' Lives, and Allocating Vital Resources*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992.
- Mitchell, C. Ben, Robert D. Orr, and Susan A. Salladay, eds. *Aging, Death, and the Quest for Immortality*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004.
- Moll, Rob. *The Art of Dying: Living Faithfully into the Life to Come*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2010.
- Orr, Robert D. *Medical Ethics and the Faith Factor: A Handbook for Clergy and Health-Care Professionals*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009.
- Stewart, Gary P., et al. *Basic Questions on End of Life Decisions*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1998.
- Verhey, Allen. *The Christian Art of Dying: Learning from Jesus*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011.

### Online Resources:

- Liver Transplants: How Do We Choose Who Should Live When Not All Can?  
<http://cbhd.org/content/liver-transplants-how-do-we-choose-who-should-live>
- Age-Based Rationing of Health Care  
<http://cbhd.org/content/age-based-rationing-health-care-0>
- CBHD articles on End-of-Life Issues  
<http://cbhd.org/category/issues/end-life>  
<http://everydaybioethics.org/issue/end-life>

## Chapter Six – Breathtaking Decisions: Assisted Suicide and Euthanasia

### Overview:

When faced with difficult end-of-life situations, we may wonder if it might be compassionate to enable the dying person to end his or her life right away. In order to address this question fully, this chapter poses and answers three other questions: what is at stake in assisted suicide for healthcare, what is at stake for patients and their loved ones, and why does all of this matter to God? True compassion in end-of-life care involves suffering with those who are dying, not assisted suicide or euthanasia.

### Additional Resources:

- Dyck, Arthur J. *Life's Worth: The Case against Assisted Suicide*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002.
- Kilner, John F. *Life on the Line: Ethics, Aging, Ending Patients' Lives, and Allocating Vital Resources*. Deerfield, IL: CBHD, 1992.
- Kilner, John F., Arlene B. Miller, and Edmund D. Pellegrino, eds. *Dignity and Dying: A Christian Appraisal*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996.
- Stewart, Gary P., et al. *Basic Questions on End of Life Decisions*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1998.
- Stewart, Gary P., et al. *Basic Questions on Suicide and Euthanasia*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1998.

### Online Resources:

CBHD Articles on Death and Dying

<http://cbhd.org/category/issues/end-life>

<http://everydaybioethics.org/issue/end-life>

## ***Part III – Biotechnology: Shaping the Human Race***

### **Chapter Seven – Thirty-eight Ways to Make a Baby**

#### **Overview:**

More than six million couples are unable to become pregnant. Modern technology offers a variety of options for remedying this situation. How do we decide what is right and what is wrong when it comes to getting help starting a family? This chapter explains the various reproductive technologies available, ethical and theological considerations, and practical advice for responding to those who are experiencing infertility.

#### **Additional Resources:**

Best, Megan. *Fearfully and Wonderfully Made: Ethics and the Beginning of Human Life*. Kingsford, NSW, Australia: Matthias Media, 2012.

Kilner, John F., Paige C. Cunningham, and W. David Hager, eds. *The Reproduction Revolution: A Christian Appraisal of Sexuality, Reproductive Technologies, and the Family*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000.

Rae, Scott, and D. Joy Riley. *Outside the Womb: Moral Guidance for Assisted Reproduction*. Chicago: Moody, 2010.

Stewart, Gary P., et al. *Basic Questions on Reproductive Technology*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1998.

#### **Online Resources:**

An Ethical Perspective of Reproductive Technologies

<http://cbhd.org/content/ethical-perspectives-reproductive-technologies>

CBHD Articles on Reproductive Technologies

<http://cbhd.org/category/issues/reproductive-ethics>

<http://everydaybioethics.org/issue/infertility-reproduction>

## Chapter Eight – Send in the Clones?

### Overview:

In the years since the birth of the cloned sheep Dolly, debate has intensified over whether or not cloning of human beings should be allowed or even encouraged. This chapter sets forth the answer to one of the pressing questions of our time: why is human cloning wrong?

### Additional Resources:

Bevington, Linda K., et al. *Basic Questions on Genetics, Stem Cell Research, and Cloning*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2004.

Kilner, John F., Paige C. Cunningham, and W. David Hager, eds. *The Reproduction Revolution: A Christian Appraisal of Sexuality, Reproductive Technologies, and the Family*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000.

### Online Resources:

An Overview of Human Cloning

<http://cbhd.org/content/overview-human-cloning>

CBHD Position Statement on Cloning

<http://cbhd.org/content/human-cloning-need-for-a-comprehensive-ban>

CBHD Articles on Cloning

<http://cbhd.org/category/issues/cloning>

Website of Americans to Ban Cloning

<http://cloninginformation.org>

## Chapter Nine – Who’s Splashing in the Gene Pool?

### Overview:

The launch of the Human Genome Project inaugurated the age of genomic medicine. Along with great promises, however, come great challenges. In order to embrace a future that is truly human, the authors argue that we must use such scientific advancements in a way that is God-centered, reality-bounded, and love-impelled.

### Additional Resources:

Bevington, Linda K., et al. *Basic Questions on Genetics, Stem Cell Research, and Cloning*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2004.

Kilner, John F., Rebecca D. Pentz, and Frank E. Young, eds. *Genetic Ethics: Do the Ends Justify the Genes?* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997.

Kilner, John F., C. Christopher Hook, and Diann B. Uustal, eds. *Cutting-Edge Bioethics: A Christian Exploration of Technologies and Trends*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002.

Mitchell, C. Ben, Edmund D. Pellegrino, Jean Bethke Elshtain, John F. Kilner, and Scott Rae. *Biotechnology and the Human Good*. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2007.

### Online Resources:

CBHD Articles on Genetics

<http://cbhd.org/category/issues/genetics>

<http://everydaybioethics.org/issue/emerging-technology>

## Chapter Ten – Remaking Humans: The New Utopians versus a Truly Human Future

### Overview:

This century can accurately be described as the age of biotechnology. The great scientific and medical advancements currently unfolding bring great promise for the future of humanity. Some people even predict an earthly utopia, which will, they say, be brought about by merging humans and machines and by fully exploiting every biotechnological capability. Such attitudes present serious challenges to the community of Christ-followers. This chapter urges readers to take up a role in influencing the direction of medicine and biotechnology.

### Additional Resources:

Cameron, Nigel M. de S., Scott E. Daniels, and Barbara J. White, eds. *BioEngagement: Making a Christian Difference through Bioethics Today*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000.

Kilner, John F., C. Christopher Hook, and Diann B. Uustal, eds. *Cutting-Edge Bioethics: A Christian Exploration of Technologies and Trends*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002.

Mitchell, C. Ben, Robert D. Orr, and Susan A. Salladay, eds. *Aging, Death, and the Quest for Immortality*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004.

Mitchell, C. Ben, Edmund D. Pellegrino, Jean Bethke Elshtain, John F. Kilner, and Scott Rae. *Biotechnology and the Human Good*. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2007.

Waters, Brent. *This Mortal Flesh: Incarnation and Bioethics*. Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2009.

### Online Resources:

CBHD Articles on Biotechnology, Emerging Technology, Human Enhancement, and Neuroethics

<http://www.cbhd.org/resources>

<http://everydaybioethics.org/issue/emerging-technology>

## Appendix – Additional Resources for Leaders and Participants

In addition to the variety of resources listed in the sections previous sections, including the wide range of topics we have made available through [www.cbhd.org](http://www.cbhd.org) and [www.everydaybioethics.org](http://www.everydaybioethics.org), the Center also provides these online resources:

***Bioethics.com*** – a bioethics news blog managed by CBHD, and includes the latest news and events on the wide spectrum of bioethical issues.

***The Bioethics Podcast*** – audio transcripts of featured bioethics articles available at [cbhd.org/audio](http://cbhd.org/audio).

***The Christian BioWiki*** – an online guide to the statements and positions on bioethical issues from the wide spectrum of denominations and movements that self-identify within the Christian Church through the world. Available at [christianbiowiki.org](http://christianbiowiki.org).

***Dignitas*** – the quarterly publication of The Center for Bioethics & Human Dignity. *Dignitas* is available by becoming a member of the Center. To learn more about *Dignitas* or becoming a member of the Center, please visit: [cbhd.org/membership](http://cbhd.org/membership).

***Everyday Bioethics Audio Commentary*** – three minute audio addresses geared towards engaging bioethical issues at the level of everyday experience. Episodes air on Moody Radio and are released with transcripts including references at [everydaybioethics.org/podcast](http://everydaybioethics.org/podcast).

***Social Media*** – connect with us and stay informed about the latest developments from the Center on Facebook, Google+, Twitter and LinkedIn.

***Video Resources*** – visit our YouTube account at [youtube.com/bioethicscenter](http://youtube.com/bioethicscenter) for videos from past events.

Do you or your participants have additional questions? The Center fields numerous information requests each month including speaking requests and specific questions regarding the wide spectrum of bioethical issues. Visit our contact form at [cbhd.org/contact](http://cbhd.org/contact) or email us at [info@cbhd.org](mailto:info@cbhd.org).

# Notes



## **The Center for Bioethics & Human Dignity**

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