

Is Assisted Dying in opposition to religious and moral values?

<https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/news-and-events/news/archive/2023/care-for-others-is-at-the-heart-of-opposition-to-assisted-dying>

<https://freechurch.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/08/Assisted-Dying-for-Terminally-III-Adults-FCOS-Final.pdf>

In Scotland no religious group can enforce their views upon a general population which includes non-believers. Religious individuals can continue to live according to religious doctrine even if the law of the nation is contrary. For example a Christian can choose not to work on the sabbath, even if others do. Similarly, that individual can choose not to avail themselves of a right to choose an assisted death, even if others do. They can however also choose to do so.

Loewy¹ notes:

“An argument about an ethical question can be settled by “authority” only within an enclave of persons who accept the same “authority” without further question—a religious community that determines “right” and “wrong” as derived from a book or from the head of such an organization may be an example. To believers, such a “proof” will be convincing; to the non-believer it will be irrelevant.”

Influential religious organisations continue to oppose assisted dying. However, in strong contrast a majority of lay members support the introduction of Assisted Dying. A 2019 Populus poll found that 80% of religious people – and 84% of the general public – supported a change in the law to allow assisted dying.²

7.1 Opposition by religious bodies

¹ [https://www.academia.edu/113873484/Euthanasia Physician Assisted Suicide and Other Methods of Helping Along Death? email work card=view-paper](https://www.academia.edu/113873484/Euthanasia_Physician_Assisted_Suicide_and_Other_Methods_of_Helping_Along_Death_email_work_card=view-paper)

² Sherwood, Harriet (2023) *Religious leaders ‘out of step with flocks’ on assisted dying, says UK rabbi*. Guardian. <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2023/jul/03/religious-leaders-out-of-step-with-flocks-on-assisted-dying-says-uk-rabbi-jonathan-romain>

Kettell³ notes that:

“Strong links exist between higher levels of religiosity and more conservative attitudes towards assisted dying, indicating that religious opposition is driven by theological concerns”.

Some religious leaders argue for the sanctity of life insofar as it is not the right of men or women to take a life. Suicide is regarded as a sin by a number of religious organisations. The concept of purification through suffering, pain as karma or God’s will, and suffering as a test of faith is found within a number of the most influential religions, including Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism. Those who oppose assisted dying argue that they feel it is “playing god” or against God’s will. Under that logic, every medical intervention to help somebody, from anaesthesia to blood-transfusions to heart-transplants and beyond, could be seen to be against God’s will. A common refrain from supporters of AD is that we don’t force animals to die as badly as those we purport to care for, but as Kanellopoulou notes:

“In the Judaeo-Christian tradition human life is of special significance because God has set humans apart from other created beings in virtue of establishing the possibility of a personal relationship with them. The contention that human beings are their souls became a widely held Christian belief as a result of the influence of the Hellenistic thought. The Catholic Church holds that “ensoulment” is the basis for personhood but the justification it offers is not a philosophical but a moral one.”

However Kettell’s research indicates that there has been a clear strategic shift by larger religious organisations to couch their opposition around non-religious arguments, a ‘strategic secularism’ in order to promote an underlying religious agenda.

Most religious bodies give strong prominence to non-religious debate-points when making their arguments against assisted deaths⁴. In England Justin Welby, the Archbishop of Canterbury, before he resigned, argued instead for

³ Steven Kettell. How, When and Why Do Religious Actors Use Public Reason? The Case of Assisted Dying in Britain. *Politics and Religion*, Volume 12, Issue 2, June 2019, pp. 385 - 408 DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/S175504831800086X>
<https://wrap.warwick.ac.uk/id/eprint/112166/1/WRAP-how-when-why-religious-assisted-dying-Kettell-2018.pdf>

⁴ Steven Kettell. How, When, and Why Do Religious Actors Use Public Reason? The Case of Assisted Dying in Britain. *Politics and Religion*, Volume 12, Issue 2, June 2019, pp. 385 - 408 DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1017/S175504831800086X>

“properly fund and resource palliative care, community support services and mental health provision”⁵, and that “it does not serve dignity if in granting the wishes of one closest to me I devalue the status and safety of others.”⁶ He has argued that those who suffer neglect or abuse, along with the severely disabled may feel driven toward an assisted death. In the Daily Mail he wrote

“The right to end your life could all too easily – all too accidentally – turn into a duty to do so.”⁷

In 2005, the Chief Rabbi’s Office quoted a Jewish law expert Rabbi JD Bleich⁸ in evidence to a Westminster parliamentary select committee:

“Any positive act designed to hasten the death of the patient is equated with murder in Jewish law, even if the death is hastened only by a matter of moments...No matter how laudable the intentions of the person performing an act of mercy-killing may be, his deed constitutes an act of homicide.”

Although the phrase ‘qatalur-rahmah’ or mercy-killing exists within Islamic culture and texts, the concept remains opposed by Islamic organisations. The British Board of Imams & Scholars (BBSI) cites⁹ a variety of quotations from the Qur’an indicating for the sanctity of life and against the taking of one’s own life. Their position is that suicide and euthanasia are forbidden by Allah:

“Islam is unequivocal in its prohibition on suicide, and assisted dying. The BBSI holds strongly to this position. We underscore Islam’s deep care and consideration for those who suffer from illnesses. This compassion does not grant us the right to end the great gift of life.”

The BBSI argues that all that happens is the will of Allah:

“Allah does not burden a soul beyond that it can bear.”

⁵ <https://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/about/meet-justin-welby/archbishop-justins-priorities/archbishop-canterbury-warns-against>

⁶ <https://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/speaking-writing/speeches/archbishop-justin-speaks-assisted-dying-bill-house-lords>

⁷ “The right to end your life could all too easily – all too accidentally – turn into a duty to do so.”

⁸ Jewish Chronicle November 7, 2024. <https://www.thejc.com/news/uk/what-does-judaism-say-about-the-assisted-dying-bill-surprisingly-rabbis-argue-t87z7z8u>

⁹ <https://bbsi.org.uk/portfolio/assisted-dying-bill/#:~:text=Islam is unequivocal in its,the great gift of life.>

Dr Musharraf Hussain expands upon this point:

“Suffering as a test and submission to Divine Will: Suffering in Islam has spiritual significance, serving as a test of faith and character.”¹⁰

As far back as 1994, the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland agreed that:

“..the General Assembly opposes the introduction of legislation on Euthanasia, abhors its practice, and rejects the principles on which it is proposed”¹¹

In a detailed 2009 review of end-of-life options, the Church of Scotland states:

“The command from God which says 'you must not kill' is usually interpreted as meaning 'you must not murder'. However, a broader interpretation is that you must not take human life. This rules out euthanasia (and assisted suicide), as carrying these out would be against God's commandments, and would be an attack on the sovereignty of God.”¹²

The Church of Scotland however recognised that:

“However, for those with different, or indeed no religious beliefs, many would claim the right to exercise autonomy in taking this final decision.”¹³

In Scotland, the Church of Scotland, Roman Catholic Church, and the Scottish Association of Mosques have opposed assisted dying and euthanasia.¹⁴ In May 2023, Bishop John Keenan, the Rt Rev Iain Greenshields, and Imam Shaykh Hamza Khandwalla, Imam of Dundee Central Mosque signed a statement¹⁵ urging MSPs to vote down Liam McArthur’s proposal.

¹⁰ <https://www.musharrafhussain.com/the-muslim-perspective-on-the-assisted-dying-bill/>

¹¹ https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/3877/end_of_life_ga09.pdf

¹² Church of Scotland: Church and Society Council. End of Life Issues, 2009. https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/3877/end_of_life_ga09.pdf

¹³ *ibid*

¹⁴ <https://rcpolitics.org/scottish-faith-leaders-speak-out-against-assisted-suicide/>

¹⁵ <https://democratonline.net/2023/05/18/religion-scottish-faith-leaders-speak-out-against-assisted-suicide/>

The Roman Catholic Church in Scotland remains opposed to assisted dying. In 2024, Scottish Bishops urged Catholics to reject the 'dangerous' assisted dying proposal.¹⁶ Bishop John Keenan stated:

“Assisted suicide sends a message that there are situations when suicide is an appropriate response to one’s individual circumstances, worries, anxieties. It normalises suicide and accepts that some people are beyond hope.”

After a 2024 consultation, the Church of Scotland reiterated concerns on issues such as capacity, vulnerability, coercion, and the possibility of the law broadening the scope of eligibility in the future. The response noted:

“The Church is "partially opposed" to the legislation becoming law due to its historic opposition to assisted dying while recognising that this position is currently under review following debates and decisions made by the General Assembly in 2023 and 2024.”¹⁷

A joint statement in 2023 from Rev Dr Iain MacLeod Greenshields, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, and Rev Bishop John Keenan, Bishop of Paisley, reiterated that the churches:

“do not believe that this is the correct approach to the alleviation of suffering....The ways in which similar laws in other countries are being applied, and the effect that its introduction would have some of the most vulnerable in our society, including older people and people with disabilities, would be extremely detrimental. Society is called to care for those who are suffering, not to end their lives.... The Church of Scotland and the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland remain firm in their opposition to assisted suicide and euthanasia.”¹⁸

The 2025 Church of Scotland General Assembly received a Joint Report of the Theological Forum and the Faith Action Programme Leadership Team on Assisted Dying. The Report¹⁹ noted that:

¹⁶ <https://scmo.org/news-releases/perma/1714032000/article/bishops-urge-catholics-to-reject-dangerous-assiste.html>

¹⁷ https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0005/125978/2024.08.16-Assisted-Dying-for-Terminally-Ill-Adults-Scotland-Bill-Stage-1-Call-for-Evidence.pdf

¹⁸ <https://www.scottishlegal.com/articles/churches-oppose-scottish-bill-on-assisted-dying>

¹⁹ Church of Scotland. Joint Report of the Theological Forum and the Faith Action Programme Leadership Team on Assisted Dying. 2025. https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/133645/Volume-of-Reports-2025.pdf

“The Church of Scotland had been consistent in its opposition to assisted dying and euthanasia for decades....However, a countermotion recognising opinion in the Church was more diverse than outright opposition was moved. This countermotion also instructed that this diversity of views be explored further. On a vote, 103 voted for the original motion to reaffirm the Church’s blanket opposition to assisted dying, while 225 voted for the countermotion, which then passed 238–71, with five commissioners recording dissent.”

The subsequent report cites a number of examples of self-killing in both Christian and Jewish religious texts that pass without criticism:

“The closest biblical example to assisted dying, that of Saul asking his armour bearer to deliver the coup de grace, falls under the criterion of avoiding capture on the battlefield. Other criteria include when one’s death is demanded by the authorities or by the gods, to restore honour, to avoid shame, or to end intolerable suffering.....Indeed, a number of Christians recognised as martyrs die at their own hand.”²⁰

In relation to the sovereignty of God, the Report notes:

“Job says in acknowledgment of God’s sovereignty, “A person’s days are determined; you have decreed the number of his months and have set limits he cannot exceed” (Job 14:5). Ecclesiastes 8:8 speaks in similar terms: “As no one has power over the wind to contain it, so no one has power over the time of their death” (see also Psalm 139.6). Some would interpret these texts to mean that God’s sovereign rule implies that any intervention to shorten one’s life is an assault upon that sovereignty. In this view, only circumstances can legitimately shorten life, not human intervention. Others would argue these are descriptive of the limits of human understanding in an ancient context, and to take them as prescriptive for contemporary ethics is merely proof-texting. Moreover, taken literally, texts such as these could be used to rule out medical intervention....medical interventions such as vaccines, surgery, and pharmacology already influence the length of our lives. We have the right to withhold or withdraw a life sustaining treatment, which will hasten an inevitable end, or to refuse a treatment such as resuscitation,

²⁰ Church of Scotland. Joint Report of the Theological Forum and the Faith Action Programme Leadership Team on Assisted Dying. 2025. https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0004/133645/Volume-of-Reports-2025.pdf

but these are not viewed as controversial or a denial of God's sovereignty."²¹

In the conclusion to the Joint Report of the Theological Forum and the Faith Action Programme Leadership Team on Assisted Dying acknowledges that:

“the range of views in the Church explored above may lead to three broad positions:

- People who would continue to support the historic opposition to assisted dying.
- People who would not choose assisted dying for themselves for theological or other reasons, but would support a change in the law as they recognise the ethical legitimacy of that choice for others.
- People who would support a change in the law and would be at peace in their Christian faith to consider and/or choose assisted dying if they received a qualifying terminal diagnosis.

Having explored the theological and ethical reasoning behind this spectrum of belief, we conclude that they can all be held with theological integrity within the Church of Scotland.”²²

The subsequent General Assembly vote however determined that the Church of Scotland would formally retain opposition to assisted dying.

7.2 Differing opinions of religious observers

As Jackson²³ observes:

“God's monopoly on determining the moment of death has already been substantially usurped by modern medicine.”

²¹ Church of Scotland. Joint Report of the Theological Forum and the Faith Action Programme Leadership Team on Assisted Dying. 2025. https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0004/133645/Volume-of-Reports-2025.pdf

²² Church of Scotland. Joint Report of the Theological Forum and the Faith Action Programme Leadership Team on Assisted Dying. 2025. https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/data/assets/pdf_file/0004/133645/Volume-of-Reports-2025.pdf

²³ Jackson, Emily and Keown, John. Debating Euthanasia Hart, Oxford, 2012 (reprinted 2013 & 2014):

Other religious observers interpret their God's will differently in relation to the intractably suffering, and indeed interpretations of each religion differ. As Kenan Malik notes:

“As social attitudes to slavery and witch-burnings transformed, so Christians came to interpret the Bible differently – which is another way of saying that they chose different values as making more sense within their religious perspective....Today, some Christians, reading passages in Leviticus and in Paul, think that the Bible justifies the execution of gay people. Others, reading the same Bible differently, celebrate the ordination of gay priests. Similarly with controversies from abortion rights to the treatment of asylum seekers. Each side reads the Bible as they wish to fit into their own moral framework. God is not the designer of that framework but comes to be its justification. And what is true of Christians is true also of Muslims, Jews, Hindus and believers in every other faith....Insisting that God mandates particular political and moral views, and so makes them unchallengeable, is equally to close off political debate and to ignore the variety of perspectives within any faith.”²⁴

Rabbi Dr Jonathan Romain has argued that:

“it is possible to be both religious and in favour of assisted dying.”²⁵

As the Church of Scotland Joint Report of the Theological Forum and the Faith Action Programme Leadership Team on Assisted Dying ²⁶ notes:

“some theologians reject the notion that God wills anyone to suffer.”^[xxxiii]
Hans Küng rejects as “religious rigorism without compassion” the view that intolerable suffering should be borne as an act of submission to God, as if that suffering has been inflicted by God. Instead, Küng argues, “for the terminally ill our theological task is not spiritualizing and mystification of suffering or even a pedagogical use of suffering (‘purgatory on earth’) but – in the footsteps of Jesus, who healed the sick – one of reducing and removing suffering as far as possible.””

²⁴ <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2024/dec/01/who-should-have-the-last-word-on-assisted-dying-in-a-secular-britain>

²⁵ Watt, Nicholas (2014) *Former archbishop lends his support to campaign to legalise right to die*. Guardian. <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2014/jul/12/archbishop-canterbury-carey-support-assisted-dying-proposal>

²⁶ https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/133645/Volume-of-Reports-2025.pdf

Some who support assisted dying feel that those denying AD to others are not demonstrating their god's love and mercy, but that it is in fact cruelty masquerading as piety on purely religious dogmatic grounds. As Thomas Paine wrote, "belief of a cruel god makes a cruel man".²⁷ Any religious-based preference to deny the choice of AD to others and to impose suffering on others is by no means uncontroversial within current religious debate. As the Church of Scotland Joint Report of the Theological Forum and the Faith Action Programme Leadership Team on Assisted Dying²⁸ acknowledges:

"The disagreement does not lie in the call to be compassionate, but rather how that compassion is lived out. This may mean that while we may personally recognise some value in end of life suffering, we may not wish to impose this theology on others, or in the words of Stanley Hauerwas, who nonetheless opposes assisted dying, "it is one thing for us to make our own suffering part of our life in service to God, it is quite another to make another's suffering part of his or her service to God."

Supporters of AD argue that helping a consenting person who is incurably suffering, for whom other remedies have failed, and who requests help in ending their life is analogous to acting as a good Samaritan who refuses to pass on the other side of the road in the moment of greatest need for the sufferer. In view of the work of the Samaritan service in the UK, this is an awkward analogy, but textually accurate. It can be argued that beneficence, and indeed non-maleficence can be seen to be achieved by ensuring greater harm, i.e. unnecessary suffering, is actively forestalled.

Governor Jerry Brown, a committed Catholic who had formerly trained as a Jesuit, wrote about signing Assisted Dying into law in a letter addressed to the California State Assembly:

"In the end, I was left to reflect on what I would want in the face of my own death. I do not know what I would do if I were dying in prolonged and excruciating pain. I am certain, however, that it would be a comfort to be able to consider the options afforded by this bill. And I wouldn't deny that right to others."²⁹

²⁷ Paine, Thomas. The Age of Reason.

²⁸ https://www.churchofscotland.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/133645/Volume-of-Reports-2025.pdf

²⁹ McGreevy, Patrick (2015) *After struggling, Jerry Brown makes assisted suicide legal in California*. Los Angeles Times. <https://www.latimes.com/local/political/la-me-pc-gov-brown-end-of-life-bill-20151005-story.html>

Speaking to the Jewish Chronicle, former senior rabbi of West London Synagogue Baroness Neuberger said her rabbinical experience brought about a change of mind on the issue:

“I had always been opposed to any form of assisted dying but I have changed my view in that in that I think given the way healthcare has gone, and given that we are ageing longer, I think there are times when individuals find their suffering unbearable.”

Reverend Canon Rosie Harper has stated:

“God surely does not insist on extreme suffering when there is a different, better way? There is no condemnation in the bible for someone who is too compassionate...by failing to support the change you personally are requiring other people to suffer extreme agony on behalf of your own conscience. That is neither moral or Christian.”³⁰

In a sermon Rev. Scott McKenna notes that:

“We must move beyond the theology which says that God alone will choose the hour of death and what kind of suffering is to be endured and for how long. God gives us moral responsibility, the gift of choice, along with sense, reason and intellect. We are to use our gifts and leave behind a theology which portrays God as distant, brutal and unloving.”³¹

Rabbi Jonathan Romain, the chair of Inter-Faith Leaders for Dignity in Dying and George Carey, former Archbishop of Canterbury state:

“Some mainstream faith leaders might claim that this is contradicted by the verse from Job: “God gives and God takes” (1:21), and we cannot usurp that prerogative. Yet the God barrier has long been pushed aside both at the beginning and end of life, with humans acting in lieu of God, whether by doctors’ efforts to create life using test tubes or to postpone death through heart transplants. If the religious ideal is to imitate God’s ways, then it is our duty to use our God given abilities as much as possible. We could argue, therefore, that assisted dying is part of the constant act of playing God in the sense that God wants us to help

³⁰ Harper, Rosie (2022) *Written evidence submitted by Revd Canon Rosie Harper* (ADY0066). UK Parliament. <https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/114616/pdf/>

³¹ McKenna, Scott (2012) Reverend Scott McKenna Mayfield Salisbury Sermon 28-Oct-2012: 4. https://christiansforvad.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/Reverend_Scott_McKenna_Mayfield_Salisbury_Sermon_28-Oct-2012.pdf

people in distress: to heal where possible, to comfort when needed, and to help let go of life when desired—this is what being religious means.”³²

The Religious Alliance for Dignity in Dying members represent major faith groups in the UK and numerous denominations: Church of England, Church of Scotland, Church of Wales, Church of Ireland, Catholicism, Baptism, Evangelism, Methodism, Unitarianism, United Reformed Church, Quakerism, Scottish Episcopal, Pentecostal, New Life Church, Jehovah's Witness and Mormon along with Liberal Judaism, Reform Judaism, Modern Orthodox, Masorti and United Synagogue, plus Islamic, Hindu, Zoroastrian and pagan faith groups. They have made representations to the Westminster Parliament³³ in support of Assisted Dying. As Rabbi Dr Jonathan Romain states:

“We can believe in the sanctity of life - how precious it is - but that does not mean believing in the sanctity of suffering, or disregarding steps to avoid it. There is nothing holy about agony.”³⁴

Rev Craig Kilgour notes:

“You occasionally hear opponents to the Bill use the slippery slope argument, but this argument has been used for every social advance we have made in society: giving emancipation to people of colour, votes for women – we celebrate 125 years in New Zealand – decriminalizing homosexuality, same sex marriage. We are making society more permissive but more humane....“if God is love – and love is shown, yes God is present.”³⁵

³² Carey, G & Romain, J (2021) *There is nothing holy about agony: religious people and leaders support assisted dying too*. BMJ 2021; 374 doi: <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.n2094> (Published 09 September 2021). BMJ 2021;374:n2094

³³ Religious Alliance for Dignity in Dying (2023) *Written evidence submitted by Religious Alliance for Dignity in Dying* (ADY0241) <https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/116339/pdf/>

³⁴ Romain, Jonathan (2023) *It's time to legalise assisted dying, in the name of compassion*. The Jewish Chronicle. <https://www.thejc.com/lets-talk/its-time-to-legalise-assisted-dying-in-the-name-of-compassion-ulchmt7t>

³⁵ Wood, Ian (2020) *Rev Craig Kilgour, New Zealand. Sermon – My nephew had an assisted death in Canada: it was compassionate, it was humane, it was right and good*. Christians Supporting Choice for Voluntary Assisted Dying. <https://christiansforvad.org.au/rev-craig-kilgour-new-zealand-sermon-my-nephew-had-an-assisted-death-in-canada-it-was-compassionate-it-was-humane-it-was-right-and-good/#more-560>

The Oxford Institute for British Islam states³⁶

“from the Qur’anic perspective - in contrast to the popular but fabricated ecclesiastical dogmas - there is no scriptural prohibition for devout Muslims enduring endless agony and inoperable suffering to terminate their lives if they so desire”.

Dr Taj Hargey, Imam to the Oxford Islamic Congregation and Director of the Oxford Institute for British Islam, reflected that Qur’anic teachings on suffering and ending one’s own life must be assessed in light of modern medical advances, which can often prolong the dying process. He asks:

“when the quality of a person’s life has deteriorated to such an extent and reached a point of no return in terms of endless pain and gratuitous anguish, should an empowered individual not have the right to depart this life?”.³⁷

Archbishop Desmond Tutu argued:

“Dying people should have the right to choose how and when they leave Mother Earth. I believe that, alongside the wonderful palliative care that exists, their choices should include a dignified assisted death....In refusing dying people the right to die with dignity, we fail to demonstrate the compassion that lies at the heart of Christian values.”³⁸

Former Archbishop of Canterbury Lord Carey said:

"The fact is that I have changed my mind. The old philosophical certainties have collapsed in the face of the reality of needless suffering.”³⁹

³⁶ Oxford Institute for British Islam (2023) Written evidence submitted by Oxford Institute for British Islam (ADY0449). UK Parliament. <https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/117055/pdf/>

³⁷ <https://www.dignityindying.org.uk/news/disability-rights-campaigner-palliative-care-doctor-rabbi-and-imam-speak-out-in-support-of-assisted-dying-law-as-lords-and-holyrood-prepare-to-debate-prospective-legislation/>

³⁸ Tutu, Desmond (2016) *Archbishop Desmond Tutu: When my time comes, I want the option of an assisted death*. Washington Post. https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/global-opinions/archbishop-desmond-tutu-when-my-time-comes-i-want-the-option-of-an-assisted-death/2016/10/06/97c804f2-8a81-11e6-b24f-a7f89eb68887_story.html

³⁹ Carey, George (2014) *Assisted dying: Ex-Archbishop of Canterbury Lord Carey backs bill*. BBC News. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-28274531>

Lord Carey further stated:

"I would have paraded all the usual concerns about the risks of 'slippery slopes' and 'state-sponsored euthanasia'. But those arguments which persuaded me in the past seem to lack power and authority when confronted with the experiences of those approaching a painful death. It fails to address the fundamental question as to why we should force terminally ill patients to an unbearable point. It is the magnitude of suffering that has been preying on my mind as the discussion over the right to die has intensified."⁴⁰

In a submission to MPs, Lord Carey said Assisted Dying was instead an

“act of great generosity, kindness and human love to help those when it is the will of the only person that matters... It is profoundly Christian to do all we can to ensure nobody suffers against their wishes. Some people believe they will find meaning in their own suffering in their final months and weeks of life. I respect that, but it cannot be justified to expect others to share that belief.”⁴¹

⁴⁰ Watt, Nicholas (2014) *Former archbishop lends his support to campaign to legalise right to die*. Guardian. <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2014/jul/12/archbishop-canterbury-carey-support-assisted-dying-proposal>

⁴¹ Carey, George (2023) *Written evidence submitted by Lord Carey George Carey* (ADY0293). <https://committees.parliament.uk/writtenevidence/116625/pdf/>