

God has mercy on those who commit suicide

Dear Billy Graham: My husband took his own life after a long fight with severe depression and other mental problems. A friend told me that suicide is the unforgivable sin, and that I'll never see my husband in heaven (he was a Christian). This has upset me. Is he right? — Mrs. H.C.

Dear Reader: Whenever I answer any question about suicide, I pray especially hard that God will give me the right words to say. I know that someone might be reading this who is thinking about that terrible act, and I never want to say anything that might encourage them to do it. God wants to help them, and no action brings greater pain to those who are left behind.

Nevertheless, I regret that your friend upset you by saying suicide is the unforgivable sin,

MY ANSWER

Billy Graham

because this is not what the Bible says. Only one sin can never be forgiven by God, and that is the sin of turning one's back on God and rejecting his offer of salvation in Christ.

God alone knows our hearts, and while suicide is never his will, he knows the pressures and difficulties your husband faced. Take comfort in Jesus' words: "He who believes in me will live, even though he dies" (John 11:25).

★ Write to Rev. Graham in care of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association, 1 Billy Graham Parkway, Charlotte, NC 28201. You also may call (877) 2-GRAHAM or visit his Web site at www.billygraham.org.

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