



Pastor's Perspective — Letting Die or Causing Death?

Terry Schiavo is dead and gone, but the national debate over her death and the circumstances that brought it about are not.

What we witnessed over the final fourteen days of her life was not, as widely reported, a drama that's being played out across our nation in hospitals, hospices and nursing homes everyday. It was not in keeping with the long established Harvard criteria for death and dying, which allow for the withholding of extraordinary life-sustaining means from patients who are irreversibly, irreparably ill and whose death is imminent. Nor was it consistent with any advanced directive you or I might be able to give should we ever be incapable of deciding for ourselves. Terri Schiavo was murdered with the approval and protection of the state.

There's a huge difference between letting die and causing death. What Michael Schiavo actively sought and ultimately brought about was the death of his wife. In Terri's case, there were no extraordinary means being used to prolong her life. There was no cord to unplug, no life-sustaining medication to withhold or treatment to suspend. Instead, she was denied

the most ordinary and basic means of life-support—nutrition and hydration—and starved to death, because it was no longer convenient for her husband to be bothered with her care.

"We answer to a God who... expects us to make righteous decisions."

There would have been no downside in letting her family assume the responsibility for her care, but the courts of our land wouldn't hear of it—and that troubles me greatly. We answer to a God who is watching and expects us to make righteous decisions. He takes note of what our country (and any other) chooses to do. Consider the words of Psalm 82:1-3:

God presides in the great assembly (of judges); He gives judgment among the "gods" (the authorities of government): "How long will you defend the unjust and show partiality to the wicked? Defend the cause of the weak and the fatherless; maintain the rights of the poor and oppressed."

Much is at stake in the outcome of the current debate. It will affect our entire nation. There is a growing and insidious culture of death in our land. The challenge is to create a culture of life for all—even, and especially, for those, like Terri, who cannot speak for themselves.

International Student Ministry



On March 12-17 Fellowship had the privilege of hosting a group of 23 from Purdue University led by our missionary Paul Briggs. The students who came are from China, Taiwan and Poland. Fourteen church fami-

lies participated in this ministry, with nine provided housing. Every aspect of this ministry went well, including the times of sharing God's Word with the students. We continue to pray for their salvation.

Women's Ministries Activities

Therefore encourage one another, and build each other up... 1 Thessalonians 5:11

This past month Women's Ministries sponsored a ministry of encouragement to Fellowship's college students. Our church family donated \$420 dollars used to purchase gift cards for stores and restaurants.

All of the ladies of the church are invited to the home of Amy Mount on April 9 at 5:00 PM to share a meal and enjoy a time of fun and fellowship. Please bring a food item to share.

An ESL Milestone

On Sunday, March 27 John Chung and his wife Yoo Young Cho followed the Lord in believer's baptism and were added to Fellowship's membership. They are the first of our ESL students to be baptized and join the

church. We praise the Lord for His work in John and Yoo's lives, and pray that many more internationals would be reached for Christ and added to His church through Fellowship's ESL ministry.

Getting to Know Our Church Family

Jim and Rebecca Bythewood

Jim was born in Michigan, but moved with his mother to Beltsville, MD. He has three brothers and one sister. As a child Jim enjoyed swimming, skating, hiking, skiing, camping and biking. His family attended church regularly during his elementary school years. After his mother remarried Jim's family operated a small farm in Spotsylvania, VA. His stepfather also owned an ice cream shop and restaurant, where Jim worked.

*...if we love one another,
God lives in us and His love
is made complete in us.
1 John 4:12*

Rebecca grew up in the small town of Gloucester, VA. She has one older sister. As a child Rebecca was most interested in reading books and taking care of animals. Her father worked as an electrician, first in the Navy and then for many years at a paper mill. When a new church was started in their small town Rebecca's family began attending and later became members.

The strong faith and servant's heart of a close family friend and mentor was instrumental in Jim's decision to accept Christ at the age of 8. Rebecca's Sunday school teachers were great mentors and patiently answered her questions, helping her come to Christ when she was 9.

Jim's stepfather died suddenly just prior to his high school graduation. So Jim went to work as a messenger for ABC News, while earning a degree in computer

programming from Northern Virginia Community College (NVCC). He also took flying lessons, and served four years in the Army Reserve. For the last 8 years Jim has worked as a Programmer/Analyst and Network Administrator for two computer firms.

When she graduated from high school, Rebecca went to work because her father was unable to pay for college. Later she took night classes at NVCC before transferring to George Mason University where she earned a degree in criminal justice. While working for a criminal justice agency Rebecca was diagnosed with Crohn's Disease. After surgery for this disease she moved to a less stressful job as a Facilities Manager for NASA.

In 1989 Jim's friend married Rebecca's sister, with Jim serving as the best man and Rebecca as the maid of honor. God used that event to bring Jim and Rebecca together, and they were married 10 months later. They have one daughter, Kimberly (age 4).

Jim's interests include astronomy, science, psychology, skiing and most of all flying. Rebecca enjoys reading, crafts, animals, cooking and gardening, and hopes to one day get back to learning piano.

Jim and Rebecca began attending Fellowship in November 2003. They are thankful for Kimberly's involvement in Sunday school and AWANA, and enjoy participating in church activities. They have also helped out with AWANA and Vacation Bible School.

Money Matters

We continue to have every reason to praise the Lord for His provision as 1st Quarter general fund giving exceeded our budgeted need by \$172 per week.

March Giving Per Week (General Fund)	\$5,466
Weekly Need	\$4,691
Year-To-Date Giving (General Fund)	\$63,219
Year-To-Date Need	\$60,983
Year-To-Date 50@1 Giving	\$1,443



Calendar



Apr. 9	Ladies Fellowship @ Mount Home (5:00 PM)
Apr. 12	Nursing Home Ministry (2:00 PM)
Apr. 13	Missions Prayer Meeting (7:30 PM)
Apr. 16	Church Work Day (8:00 AM)
Apr. 23	Men's Prayer Breakfast (8:30 AM)
Apr. 23	Church-wide Fellowship in Homes
Apr. 27	Quarterly Business Meeting (7:30 PM)



Upcoming Events

A church workday will be held Saturday, April 16 at 8:00 AM. Activities will include clearing the yard of debris and spreading mulch. Please set aside a few hours to help us out.

A church-wide fellowship will be held on April 23 in the homes of several of our church families. Look for further details in the church bulletin.



Awana Events

Fellowship's Sparks and Truth & Training clubs excelled at the Sparks-A-Rama and Awana Games held on March 12. Each of our teams finished in first place, while displaying a Christ-like attitude. All who came heard the gospel.



Six Truth & Training clubbers participated in the Bible Quiz held on April 2. One clubber finished in 1st place, while the others earned 4th place ribbons. Most importantly, they all hid God's Word in their hearts.