



Conversations That Matter

The Crossroads of Science and Human Dignity

A Discussion on Bioethics

Discussion Questions

1. Do you think that there can be some other basis for fundamental human dignity and equality besides a theological one? If so, what is it? If not, what does this mean for the place of theology in bioethics? The place of theology in our broader public discourse about values and policies?
2. Camosy focused on human beings that simply lack the requisite traits for counting (in our secularized context) as full persons with legal and social equality. But now think about human beings who have these traits, but in a diminished capacity. Given the values which currently guide contemporary bioethics, can these disabled people be considered the equals of those who are able-bodied? What are the implications of your answer?
3. Beyond being more confident about speaking theologically about fundamental human dignity and equality, what else can the Church do to resist the current path on which we find ourselves in the consumerist, ableist West?
4. Do you think of a 48-year-old business man, who is in the hospital with a heart attack, the same way you think of a 91 year old woman with end stage dementia in the hospital with pneumonia? Why or why not? Who does society often view as being “more important” and what is this based on? As Christians, how do we view someone's “worth” or “value”?
1. During the pandemic, many hospitals restricted visitor policies with the goal of reducing infection risk to staff and patients. This (reducing infection risk) is one of many 'goods' that are at stake when people are in the hospital. What other goods are at stake here? How should we, as Christians, properly think through the ordering of such goods when many goods are at stake in a particular situation?



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Resources

1. Lecture: "[Losing Our Dignity: How Secularized Medicine is Undermining Fundamental Human Equality](#)," by Charles Camosy and Gerald McKenny
2. Article: "[Covid-19 has exposed serious problems with how we train doctors to value the elderly — and all human life](#)," by Kristin Collier, America Magazine
3. Article: "[The Anthropology of Expressive Individualism](#)," by O. Carter Snead, Church Life Journal
4. Article: "[The Next Big Picture in Bioethics](#)," by Charles Camosy, Church Life Journal
5. Article: "[Aiming at the Death of Disabled Children](#)," by Charles Camosy, Church Life Journal
6. Article: "[The Sacrifice of Sagging Flesh](#)," by Jeff Bishop, Church Life Journal
7. Article: "[Disability Debunks the Late Modern Myth of Radical Autonomy](#)," by Susan Selner-Wright, Church Life Journal
8. Article: "Love to the Very End: A Theology of Dementia," by Xavier Symons, Church Life Journal
9. Book: [Losing Our Dignity: How Secularized Medicine is Undermining Fundamental Human Equality](#), by Charles Camosy (New City Press, 2021)
10. Book: [In Search of the Good Life](#), by Daniel Callahan (MIT Press, 2012)
11. Book: [The Story of Bioethics: From Seminal Works to Contemporary Explorations 1st Edition](#) (Georgetown University Press, 2003)
12. Book: [What It Means to Be Human: The Case for the Body in Public Bioethics](#), by O. Carter Snead (Harvard University Press, 2020)
13. Book: [Rights Come to Mind: Brain Injury, Ethics, and the Struggle for Consciousness](#), by Joseph J. Fins (Cambridge University Press, 2015)