HEALING THE CULTURE

Four ways to view *Quality of Life*

Quality of life issues are being widely discussed in the news. Many people are troubled that our culture's view has become exceedingly shallow, and that we are missing the real point about what gives human life quality and value.

With rising elderly populations, increasingly complex and expensive medical technologies, the push for physician-assisted suicide, the prevalence of abortion for disabilities or gender, and the starvation and dehydration of severely disabled persons, making quality of life distinctions is very important in protecting vulnerable populations.

An unhealthy culture will become utilitarian, believing that the disabled and marginalized are better off dead because they are not useful. A healthy culture values each one of us regardless of what we look like or what we can do.

How do YOU measure quality of life?

Visit **healingtheculture.org** for free resources

Quality of Life Level 1

Ratio of pleasure to pain

From a Level 1 view, quality of life depends on how much wealth and pleasure a person has. If a person is healthy and comfortable, his "quality of life" is good. But hardship, illness, or poverty can make life no longer worth living. We end up judging not only whether our own life is worth living, but also whether other people's lives are worth living.

Quality of Life Level 2

Ratio of independence to dependence

Level 2 measures quality of life by how well we function. A good "quality of life" means we are independent, in control, and powerful. We often treat those who are dependent, less accomplished, or powerless as less human. We miss what it means to be human - having the capacity for compassion, love, virtue, empathy, courage, understanding, and faith.

Quality of Life Level 3

Ratio of contribution to burden on others

Level 3 quality of life focuses on our ability to reach out to others, and contribute to the common good. It allows us to value ourselves and others for who we are, not for what we have or can do. We are valuable because we can give and receive love. However, without Level 4, we may end up trying so hard to save the world that we can forget our own limitations and even overlook virtues such as humility, authenticity, or generosity.

Quality of Life Level 4

Everyone has dignity and worth because we are made in the image of God

Level 4 quality of life recognizes that the worth of a human being does not come from ourselves. It comes from God. Therefore, our worth is unlimited. All human life has quality simply because God made us for Himself. We will work to improve the physical condition of all people, and never abandon them to despair.