

Thomas Jefferson's Religious Beliefs

Post by “Cassius” of February 2, 2022 at 4:02 PM

[Quote from Matt](#)

I too follow his principle in that I'm linked to my kids preservation, therefore if I die I won't be present for them to continue my fatherly duties, but I would die for them if no options presented themselves. But I won't be performing any uncalculated heroic acts of bravery for strangers, for my children's sake.

I can't remember which conversation we were in but I recall someone (Joshua or Don) addressing the hypothetical of whether a young person would die to save the life of their 99 year old grandfather. Every situation is different and even there I would not suggest a uniform rule, but even with people we know it is plain (at least to me) that we would not always give up our lives even for people who are close to us, depending on the circumstances.

When you extend that reasoning the idea of dying for "humanity at large" when you might have a chance to save or alleviate the suffering of your child or spouse or someone close to you is pretty breathtakingly abstract and (at least for me) a non-starter on the gut-level scale of the way I think I would personally act. And I suspect that Epicurus would well understand that argument.

My gosh there are reasonable arguments that he said something about living alone, and away from the crowd, and not paying attention to their lack of understand. I seriously doubt he would entertain the idea that he ought to be willing to give up his life for any number of strangers when he could preserve those of his family and friends.