“You Promote Hate and Intolerance”

How can people who say they are God’s children stand in judgment of others. . . only God can judge man! “He who is without sin cast the first stone.” You promote hate and intolerance and I am quite sure that Jesus would be ashamed of your actions.

It would be helpful if we had any idea of what you had read on our website. I’m curious where you saw hate; intolerance is another matter altogether since today’s values, elevating a new kind of tolerance, say that everything is equally valid. I guess you don’t believe that, or you would have a live and let live attitude toward our position.

What did you read?

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries Webservant

This was written by you Sue Bohlin …… http://www.******.com Regardless on how you feel about homosexuality and I am a straight female by the way your complete lack of compassion by showing a man with AIDS and how he looks before and after death is sick. I am a Christian and ashamed that there are so called “Christians” out there that can be so cruel that is not what Jesus preached when he walked this earth. Remember he died on the cross for all of our sins and no one is without sin even YOU. So before you start judging others start with yourself for not being able to show compassion and love something that Jesus preached over and over again.**

You have your right to disagree with homosexuality but it is the manner in which you choose to disagree that makes me sick. I wonder if you have ever met a homosexual, believe it or not they are no different than you and me. They are human beings

and deserved to be loved and respected like everyone else.

I will pray for you and your "ministry" that you will come to find compassion for those who are different than you. Remember God loves us all …regardless….that is why his Son Jesus died on the cross.

Thank you for writing me back. I appreciate the time it took you to find the article you were referring to. I truly want to make sure that my heart for those dealing with homosexuality comes through, and if I have written something in a way that invites misunderstanding, I definitely want to fix it.

Which is why I was so puzzled by your reference to this: "by the way your complete lack of compassion by showing a man with AIDS and how he looks before and after death is sick."

I am so glad you said you found my article on the *********.com website, which provided the key to the mystery. The people who have that website republished my article on Homosexual Myths from our Probe Ministries website, Probe.org (and actually didn't even ask permission, as I recall). I am not connected with the *********.com people and didn't even know what else was on the website. No wonder you thought I agreed with them! I am quite sure that Dr. Throckmorton, a good guy with a HUGELY compassionate heart, whose article follows mine on their website, would agree with me that we are distressed to be linked to such unloving, uncompassionate people.

I am glad to be able to reassure you that you and I are on the same page. I have a huge, joyful passion for those dealing with unwanted homosexuality, and in fact minister on a daily basis to women dealing with same-sex attraction. It is one of the highlights of my life to watch God change lives of the sexually broken through the power of Jesus Christ, and I tell my struggler friends all the time that they are my heroes.

In fact, if you're interested, here's a link to a number of my

e-mail answers to homosexuality questions from real, hurting and questions people on the Probe website.

I am glad to be able to clear up this misunderstanding with one of my sisters in the Lord BEFORE we get to heaven! <smile>

The Lord bless you and keep you today!

Sue

"When Is It Wrong to Have Lust For Your Spouse?"

I read this in your article about God's plan for sex in marriage and I need some clarification.

Here's their list of what God prohibits in His Word:
Fornication (immoral sex, which is any sex outside of marriage)
Adultery
Homosexuality
Impurity
Orgies
Prostitution
Lustful passions
Sodomy
Bestiality
Incest
Obscenity and coarse jokes

Can you please give a more specific definition of impurity, and lustful passions? What is the difference between being attracted to your spouse, and lusting after your spouse? When does it become evil? I am really concerned about this because

I don’t know if the passion my husband has for me is too much, to the point of being evil lust…

Within marriage, there isn’t a problem with lust toward our spouses, since lust is a strong desire for something God hasn’t given us, and He HAS given us our spouse! In fact, I heard Linda Dillow (co-author of *Intimate Issues*) once suggest to wives that we pray for a “holy lust” for our husbands, which is a way of praying for greater sexual desire (a win-win for everybody).

Impurity is having thoughts and engaging in actions that are directed toward the wrong person (i.e., someone other than one’s spouse), such as thinking about being sexual with another person, or dressing in a way to be alluring to anyone other than one’s husband.

The passion your husband has for you is God-designed and God-given. Men are visual creatures, and when you combine that with the testosterone that God created to flow through his body, it means he has a strong desire for sex—WITH YOU. When he directs that desire toward you and you alone, this is the safety net that marriage provides. God means for our sexuality to flow within the banks of marriage alone, and not overflow those banks into other relationships or a habit of physical masturbation (a temptation for men and a growing number of women) or emotional fantasy (a temptation for mainly women).

Speaking as one woman to another, we will probably never understand how strong a man’s sex drive is, or the power of his attraction for us and our bodies, but that’s the way God designed it, so you don’t need to worry about it being lustful in a sinful way. Being desired is one of the great joys of life (think about the opposite: not being wanted!!), and may I suggest that you enjoy it as the gift that God intends for it to be.

I hope this helps!

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

“How Do I Deal with My Prof Who Hates Christianity?”

I’m taking a class on the history of Antisemitism, but it has turned into the history of why Christians are the most terrible people on the earth. Can you help me refute my teacher? A few points I need to know about are: Why did the gospel writers present a central conflict between the Pharisees and Jesus? Why was such a conflict extremely unlikely? What would a Christian historian say about this? How can I argue with an overly zealous antichristian? She thinks the New Testament is completely false, only made up to morph Jesus into the Messiah the gospel writers wanted him to be, so I need evidence outside of the NT. I have read *Case for Christ*, which is awesome, but there’s still a lot of stuff from there that doesn’t help because she says the NT is false; the evidence that it was written in too short of a time for legend to creep in is false to her. Please help me with this problem.

I would personally not recommend arguing with an overly zealous anti-Christian for the simple reason that they are not presently open to what you have to say. I would rather pray for that individual, asking God to enlighten them to the truth of the Gospel. However, there is certainly a place for confronting error with the truth and for healthy dialogue about whether or not Christianity is true. With professors, this is usually best done one-on-one, in a friendly way, outside of class. Your professor will not like being made to

look foolish in front of the class. (Who would?)

As for the other questions you ask, they can be somewhat involved. For this reason, let me recommend some additional resources that will be helpful to you for future opportunities of this kind.

• F.F. Bruce, *Jesus and Christian Origins Outside the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1974).

• Gary Habermas, *The Historical Jesus: Ancient Evidence for the Life of Christ* (Joplin, Missouri: College Press Publishing Company, 1996).

• Craig Blomberg, *The Historical Reliability of the Gospels* (Downers Grove, Illinois: Inter-Varsity Press, 1987).

If you look under Probe's "Theology and Philosophy" section and our "Reasons to Believe" (Apologetics) section you can find many other helpful articles.

Also, bible.org has a number of excellent resources on their site. Articles on the Bible can be found at http://www.bible.org/topic.asp?topic_id=5 and articles on Christology can be found at http://www.bible.org/topic.asp?topic_id=6.

Finally, I have written a very short article dealing with some of the available evidence from Tacitus, Pliny the Younger, Josephus, the Babylonian Talmud, and Lucian which you can find at: www.probe.org/ancient-evidence-for-jesus-from-non-christian-sources-2/. My article is just a summary, written at a popular level for radio, and I don't know if you would find it helpful or not.

I hope this information will be useful to you.

Best wishes,

Michael Gleghorn
Probe Ministries

“How Can You Be Pro-Life and For the Death Penalty? Isn’t That Judging?”

In my college class, a girl asked the other day, “How can you be for the death penalty if you are pro-life?” She also said the Bible says don’t judge, so how can you use the death penalty (because you would be judging). I was trying to find out the correct way to let her know that you can be pro-life and for the death penalty.

The point of being pro-life is that we put the same high value of all life that God does, from the earliest pre-born baby to the last breath of an elderly, dying person. We derive our high value of life from the fact that every human being is made in the image of God. Thus, when someone takes the life of another in murder, they are treating the person they murdered as less important and valuable than they are. God instituted the death penalty Himself after the flood when He said, “Whoever sheds man’s blood, by man his blood shall be shed, for in the image of God, He made man.” (Gen. 9:6)

The reason the death penalty is pro-life is that it puts the highest possible value on the life of the person murdered by exacting the life of the person who violated that value by murdering. It’s a strong way to say, “It is not OK for one human being to take the life of another. If you murder, you forfeit your own life because the person you killed is so valuable.”

Concerning judging: yes, the Bible does say don't judge, but it also commands us to judge rightly. So you have to look at the context of commands such as "Judge not, lest ye be judged" (Matt. 7:1), which is about condemning others for doing the very same thing we do. Judging also means "be discerning" and "make a distinction between right and wrong." Jesus repeatedly taught men to judge rightly, insisting they "judge with righteous judgment" (John 7:24). He praised a man who "rightly judged" (Luke 7:43). Jesus also said, "And if your brother sins, go and reprove him, and if he refuses to listen, tell it to the church" (Matt. 18:15,17). Obeying such a command is only possible by making a judgment on one who sins. Jesus' apostle Paul later gave God's command to the church: "Do you not judge those who are within the church? . . . Remove the wicked man from among yourselves" (1 Cor. 5:12,13).

Also, the Bible tells us that governments (which are the only entities entitled to carry out capital punishment) are instituted by God for maintaining order: "[F]or [government] is a minister of God to you for good. But if you do what is evil, be afraid; for it does not bear the sword for nothing; for it is a minister of God, an avenger who brings wrath on the one who practices evil. (Rom 13:4)

Thus, I would argue that the Bible supports capital punishment, although it is extremely important to make absolutely sure that only the guilty are executed.

Hope this helps!

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

“Help Me Understand These Bible Contradictions”

I stumbled upon a website that has an exhaustive list of apparent contradictions in the Bible. Now, I can go through many of them and figure out that what is seen as an apparent contradiction is nothing of the sort, but many of them leave me searching vigorously for an answer. Can you help me on these?

God is tired and rests [Ex 31:17, Jer 15:6]
God is never tired and never rests [Is 40:28]

and:

God is the author of evil [Lam 3:38, Jer 18:11, Is 45:7, Amos 3:6, Ezek 20:25]
God is not the author of evil [1 Cor 14:33, Deut 32:4, James 1:13]

Let’s begin with the first difficulty:

> *God is tired and rests [Ex 31:17, Jer 15:6]*
> *God is never tired and never rests [Is 40:28]*

This alleged difficulty confuses the issues of being tired, on the one hand, and resting, on the other. Exodus 31:17 does say that God “rested” or “ceased” His creative work on the seventh day. It does not say that God was tired. Jeremiah 15:6 (at least the relevant portion) might be translated, “I am weary of relenting” or “I have grown tired of feeling sorry for you”. The idea is not that God is “tired” in the sense of “fatigued.” Rather, God is weary of holding back His righteous judgment. Note what He says right before this phrase, “So I have unleashed my power against you and have begun to destroy you” (Net Bible – netbible.bible.org). These are not the words

of a being who is tired in the sense of needing rest. These are the words of one who is tired of restraining His righteous judgment.

Thus, there is no contradiction with Isaiah 40:28, “He does not get tired or weary.” For Exodus 31:17 does not say that God was tired, and Jeremiah 15:6 does not mean that God was tired in the sense of being “fatigued.” The Bible does say that God rested, but it does not imply that this was due to tiredness on God’s part. The Net Bible comments on Gen. 2:2 as follows: “The Hebrew term (shabbat) can be translated ‘to rest’ (‘and he rested’) but it basically means ‘to cease.’ This is not a rest from exhaustion; it is the cessation of the work of creation.”

But what about the second alleged difficulty?

> *God is the author of evil [Lam 3:38, Jer 18:11, Is 45:7, Amos 3:6, Ezek 20:25]*
> *God is not the author of evil [1 Cor 14:33, Deut 32:4, James 1:13]*

Geisler and Howe have an excellent discussion of this issue in their book, *When Critics Ask: A Popular Handbook on Bible Difficulties*. I would heartily recommend this book, along with Gleason Archer’s *Encyclopedia of Bible Difficulties*. Both books deal with just about every Bible difficulty which critics raise against the Bible. So what do they say about this difficulty?

God is NOT the author of evil in the sense of “sin” or “moral evil” – at least not directly. God created free morally responsible creatures (like human beings) who chose to misuse their freedom to do what was morally evil. However, God is not the author of this evil; human beings are. God made such evil possible (by creating free moral creatures), but the creatures made such evil actual (by sinning, etc.).

However, God is sometimes the author of evil in the sense of "calamities" or "non-moral evil." Such calamities might also be caused by Satan or demons (e.g. Job 1-2). However, God can also bring about calamities as a form of judgment against sin, etc. God does punish sin, sometimes through various calamities. But God is not the author of moral evil or sin.

I hope this makes sense. I would definitely recommend the books mentioned above by Archer and Geisler. I would also recommend the Biblical Studies Foundation website at www.netbible.com. They have hundreds of articles on a variety of biblical and theological issues.

The Lord bless you!

Michael Gleghorn
Probe Ministries

"The Bible Has Been Changed and Corrupted Over Time"

You Bible-thumping Christians are so deluded and stupid. The Bible has been so changed and translated and mistranslated over time that it can't be trusted. Didn't you play the telephone game when you were a kid? Whatever the first person whispered to the second person, is going to be very different from what the last person hears. Stop acting as if you have all the answers—your Bible is a book of myths.

You're in good company; a lot of people think that way because they simply don't know the facts about how trustworthy the Bible really is. When you find out the truth about how the Bible has been handed down from one generation to the next,

your charge will have as much significance as proclaiming that courts have no basis for determining the constitutionality of issues since the Constitution was written so long ago we can't know what it originally said.

But we can go back to the original Constitution and check, right?

We don't have the original biblical documents, but we have the next best thing: thousands of copies of the original New Testament manuscripts, by which we can determine what *was* originally said. The Center for the Study of New Testament Manuscripts (www.csntm.org) tells me that the current number is about 5500 copies of just the Greek New Testament, and when we combine the Greek with all translations in the various languages before the printing press was invented, there are a staggering 15,000 copies of NT manuscripts in existence, with more being found every day!

Greg Koukl of Stand to Reason (www.str.org) helps illustrate how Bible scientists (the discipline of textual criticism) can assure us of the Bible's accuracy:

> **RECONSTRUCTING AUNT SALLY'S LETTER**
>
> Pretend your Aunt Sally learns in a dream the recipe for an elixir that preserves her youth. When she wakes up, she scribbles the directions on a scrap of paper, then runs to the kitchen to make up her first glass. In a few days Aunt Sally is transformed into a picture of radiant youth because of her daily dose of "Sally's Secret Sauce."
>
> Aunt Sally is so excited she sends detailed, hand-written instructions on how to make the sauce to her three bridge partners (Aunt Sally is still in the technological dark ages—no photocopier or email). They, in turn, make copies for ten of their own friends.
>
> All goes well until one day Aunt Sally's pet schnauzer eats

the original copy of the recipe. In a panic she contacts her three friends who have mysteriously suffered similar mishaps, so the alarm goes out to the others in attempt to recover the original wording.

Sally rounds up all the surviving hand-written copies, twenty-six in all. When she spreads them out on the kitchen table, she immediately notices some differences. Twenty-three of the copies are exactly the same. Of the remaining three, however, one has misspelled words, another has two phrases inverted ("mix then chop" instead of "chop then mix") and one includes an ingredient none of the others has on its list.

Do you think Aunt Sally can accurately reconstruct her original recipe from this evidence? Of course she can. The misspellings are obvious errors. The single inverted phrase stands out and can easily be repaired. Sally would then strike the extra ingredient, reasoning it's more plausible one person would add an item in error than 25 people would accidentally omit it.

Even if the variations were more numerous or more diverse, the original could still be reconstructed with a high level of confidence if Sally had enough copies.

This, in simplified form, is how scholars do "textual criticism," an academic method used to test all documents of antiquity, not just religious texts. It's not a haphazard effort based on hopes and guesses; it's a careful linguistic process allowing an alert critic to determine the extent of possible corruption of any work.{1}

When the thousands of copies of manuscripts (far more than for any other document of antiquity) are compared, we can know that the New Testament is 99.5% textually pure. In the entire text of 20,000 lines, only 40 lines are in doubt (about 400 words), and none affects any significant doctrine.{2}

Even if all the manuscripts in the whole world were to disappear, the New Testament is so comprehensively quoted by early church letters, essays and other extra-biblical sources that we could still reconstruct almost the entire testament.

We have a much fuller explanation of this in our article "Are the Biblical Documents Reliable?" at www.probe.org/are-the-biblical-documents-reliable

The historical evidence for the reliability of the biblical documents is so great that we can rest assured that the Bible we read today is the same Bible that God intended for us to have from the very beginning.

Wishing you well,

Sue Bohlin

Probe Ministries

Notes

1. Greg Koukl, *Solid Ground*, Jan/Feb 2005, Stand to Reason.

2. Norman Geisler and William Nix, *The Text of the New Testament* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968), p. 475.

"Should I Pray to God or Jesus? What About the Holy

Spirit?”

When I pray, I pray to God and I pray in Jesus’ name. Others I know pray solely to Jesus. Should I be praying to Jesus as well as God? Furthermore, should I also be praying to the Holy Spirit?

It’s really not such a matter of “should,” but more like “get to.” There is only one God, but He consists in three Persons (which I’m sure you know). So, since there is only one God, no matter to which Person you address your prayers, the one God hears them.

Here’s how I look at it: Sometimes I address the Father, for example thanking Him for sending Jesus to die for me and live in me. Sometimes I address the Son, inviting Him to be present in an event or a job I’m about to be engaged in. Or thanking Him and praising Him for dying for me and calling me to be His bride. Sometimes I address the Spirit, asking Him to impress His presence on the heart of someone hurting, or asking Him to call the heart of someone who is lost. Most of the time I just say “Lord”!! <smile>

I hope this helps.

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

“Are Nocturnal Emissions (Wet Dreams) Sinful?”

I have question about nocturnal emissions or wet dreams. As a Christian seeking to to be released from sexual temptation,

your writings have helped me center my thoughts on truth and gain victory over my temptations through the power of Christ's blood. Despite these victories, and perhaps in spite of them, I am being plagued by nocturnal emissions.

Six months ago I gave my homosexuality over to Christ and am no longer living as a gay man. I have, however, struggled with the temptation to masturbate. It took me a while to recognize masturbation as sexually immoral. So I am no longer masturbating either.

At this point I began having frequent nocturnal emissions. It is somewhat embarrassing because it usually seems to be a problem that adolescents have; I am 22.

There have been some noticeable differences in how my nocturnal emission are occurring now than in the past. The biggest difference is that my dreams are often not sexual in content, where as in the past they usually were.

Scripture surprisingly seems to mention this more directly than masturbation, or at least in the Old Testament. It tells us that it is unclean, but compared to the verbiage used to describe homosexuality, it would seem it is not as bad. Is it wrong, though? Am I sinning, and if so, how do I keep from sinning when I am asleep? Do you think that they could be caused by spiritual attacks, or is it simply my body wanting to relieve tensions? I am truly concerned and very confused about this.

Thank you for a most open and encouraging email. You have made some tremendous strides forward in His grace that are humbling to read for one who has not struggled with the intensity you report.

To answer your major question, nocturnal emissions are universally understood to be a normal bodily response to accumulated semen. You never really stop producing semen and when you are not providing an outlet either through sexual

intercourse or masturbation your body must expel the excess. I find it quite interesting that the content of your dreams associated with the emissions have changed as you have responded in obedience. What an incredible confirmation that God is honored by your choices. It should also be of interest to you that God has provided a moral release of these fluids apart from sexual activity. God has provided for abstinence and obedience!

Concerning the uncleanness issue, remember that a woman's menstrual period was also considered a time of uncleanness in the Law of Moses. It is still normal and not sin, just unclean. Part of the reason for ceremonial uncleanness in the Old Testament was for simple hygienic reasons that early Israel would not fully understand so God gave laws for them to abide by.

In regard to their frequency, though I am not a medical doctor, I would expect for the frequency of emissions to diminish over time as your body adjusts to your abstinent choices. Our bodies are quite flexible and will adjust to most changes we institute. For instance, as you eat less, your stomach will eventually shrink a bit and it actually takes less to fill you up. As you begin to eat more, your stomach can begin to expand to accommodate the larger volume. So too with nocturnal emissions. I suspect that as your "demand" is reduced, production of semen will eventually slow down though never cease altogether.

Therefore I would not consider your emissions as sinful at all, just a natural bodily response to your current obedient choices. Be assured brother, you are not in sin! Not in the least! This is actual confirmation of correct choices. I rejoice with you and pray your unnecessary guilt will melt away.

Respectfully,

Ray Bohlin, PhD
Probe Ministries

Addendum by Sue Bohlin, August 2010

Recently I had the privilege of speaking to a group of young people at a conference about unwanted homosexuality. In a breakout session dealing with replacing the lies we believe with the truth from God's word and God's world, I was addressing the lie "I can't live without sex," replacing it with the truth that sex is not a basic requirement like food, water and sleep. I supported my argument with the verse from Psalm 139 that says we are "fearfully and wonderfully made," explaining how nocturnal emissions are God's design for expelling the buildup of seminal fluid.

One young man told us a fascinating story:

"I had never experienced a wet dream. I was reading one of the discussion threads on the Living Hope Youth Forum (www.livehope.org) about the '6 Week Challenge.' That's where people challenge each other to go six weeks without masturbating. [The original poster wrote, "The hope is that by abstaining for this period of time, we can break the cycle of continually running back to P & M (pornography and masturbation) as "medications" for our problems and struggles, and instead learn to run to Jesus and other healthy replacements.']

"I decided to take the six-week challenge. After I reached six weeks, I kept going. After no sexual activity for eight months, one night I had an incredibly intense dream. I was in the throne room of God. There was glory and beauty and light everywhere. Suddenly I realized God was showering me with such delight and favor. Somehow in the dream He was letting me know that He loves me, He delights in me and He's proud of me. I had this amazing sense of incredible joy that exploded inside me. Then I woke up, and I realized I'd had a wet dream."

One of the other students said, “Dude, are you kidding me? You’re saying that your wet dream was connected to this spiritual dream that God was, like, *proud* of you?”

He replied, “Yeah, that’s exactly what I’m saying.”

I thought that was *most* interesting.

“Am I Committing Adultery?”

I got married right out of high school (34 years ago), and my husband committed adultery and divorced me a year later. Neither of us were Christians. I married someone else four years later, and two years into our marriage, my husband and I became Christians.

Is it considered “committing adultery” if:

–My previous husband had committed adultery while we were married?
–We weren’t Christians when we did all this?

Are we STILL committing adultery by remaining married?? A few years ago, we wanted to join a church, and they said we couldn’t because I had been married before. And they said we needed to seperate because God did not recognize our marriage and we are still committing adultery by staying married. We have been happily married for 26 years now, with two wonderful children. What should we do??????

Dear friend,

I’m sitting here shaking my head at the insensitivity, not to mention the biblical misunderstanding, of the church that gave you such lousy counsel. It sounds to me like that was God’s

way of saying, “This is not the place for you, beloved!”

Bottom line: neither you nor your husband are committing adultery.

God specifically says in His word that when one person commits adultery, the other is free to remarry without committing adultery. Your first husband broke your marriage covenant, giving you freedom to marry your present husband to the glory of God. (And it would appear that God is glorifying Himself through your present marriage!)

In Matt 5:32 and 19:9, Jesus says that if someone divorces a spouse for any reason other than adultery, they commit adultery when they remarry. This is because the divorce is illegitimate, and the second marriage is bigamy since the first marriage is still in force regardless of what the civil authorities say. But if the other spouse has committed adultery, then that act has broken the sacred covenant, and it is not bigamous (and thus not adulterous) for the sinned-against spouse to remarry.

That church may have been standing on the second part of Matt. 5:32, which says “whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery.” It’s important to understand the culture of that day. There was a popular movement in Jewish culture that said a man could divorce his wife for any reason at all, including burning the toast. (I am not kidding.) Such a wife, thus divorced, was single in the eyes of the culture, but still married in the eyes of God, so any man who married her committed adultery since she was still a married woman.

You did not fall in that category. When your first husband committed adultery, that dissolved the marriage in God’s eyes (in a manner of speaking), and you were free to remarry. I am so sorry that church refused to check into the circumstances of your divorce. If Jesus made an exception for adultery, and then Paul, writing with the very words God gave him, made an

additional exception for abandonment by an unbelieving spouse (1 Cor. 7:15), then the church needs to follow ALL of scripture and not just one verse.

You did not commit adultery when you married your present husband, and you are not committing adultery by remaining married to him, and the Lord bless you for staying together for 26 years! Way to go!!! <smile>

I wish you were in Dallas. I'd invite you to our church where you would be honored and affirmed.

I hope this helps!

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

P.S. I do want to make a distinction here: adultery does not *mandate* divorce, but God does allow divorce as a consequence of adultery. It's even better for the unfaithful spouse to repent, for the violated spouse to forgive, and for them to forge a new, stronger relationship. This isn't always possible due to the hardness of some people's hearts, and God understands and allows for it.

"Who Controls the World—God or Satan?"

A friend and I were discussing whose rule the world was under, God's or Satan's. Of course we disagreed because I said God ruled the world and allows Satan to take us through suffering to make us strong and to test our faith. My friend feels that the world belongs to Satan because Eve succumbed to Satan in the Garden of Eden. Please clarify who controls the world

today.

Thanks for your letter. Satan has been temporarily granted a tremendous amount of power over this world, as can be seen from the following passages:

> *John 12:31 – Now judgment is upon this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out.*
>
> *2 Cor 4:4 – …in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.*
>
> *1 John 5:19 – We know that we are of God, and that the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.*

But God is the One who ultimately rules and reigns over all things. He is the Creator of all that exists (other than Himself of course) and all things are ultimately subject to His will and power. Many passages of Scripture bear this out – e.g. Psalms 9:7; 22:28; 47:8; 59:13; 66:7; 97:1; 99:1; 103:19; 146:10, as well as passages such as Gen. 1-2; Job 1-2; John 1; Eph. 1; Col. 1; Rom. 9-11; Rev. 19-22; etc.

Satan is a creature; God is his Creator. Satan cannot do anything that the Lord does not permit him to do (see Job 1-2) and God will one day cast Satan into the lake of fire for all eternity (Rev. 20:10).

Shalom,

Michael Gleghorn
Probe Ministries