“You’ve Got Feminism All Wrong!”

Dear Sue Bohlin,

I’m writing about your response to “Probe Answers our E-Mail: Should a Woman Work or Stay Home with the Children?” I would like to express my extreme disappointment in your answer.

First off, I should say that I am young Catholic and a strong feminist. I believe that you have feminism’s mission all wrong. You stated that the “feminist viewpoint values materials above people.” I find this highly contradictory to feminism! Feminism is about equality. Plain and simple. It is difficult to debate the fact that men and women are equal. If so, what does it matter if the father stays home with the children? Why should the female sacrifice her goals in life and be “submissive” to her husband? What makes it okay for the male to follow his goals and watch his wife’s be thown away? Parenting is a two person thing. The idea that the man is the mightly breadwinner to whom the wife obeys without question passed in the 1950’s. It disgusts me to think that other young women like myself are reading your response. We’re living in the year 2001—the world has changed quite a bit since the time of the bible! Maybe Titus instucts women to stay at home, but we’re far from that. When the bible was written, women were treated badly. Virtually the only thing a woman was good for was cooking, cleaning, and childbearing. In case you haven’t noticed, women do quite a bit more than that today. The contributions women have made to society are immeasurable. If you ask me, Jesus would never say to a female with aspiring hopes and dream the same as her husband, “You stay home becuase you are a woman, thus the only thing that should do it take care of the children and the household.” I think Jesus would see the importance of strong parental roles in a child’s life—but equally, both mother AND father. Raising a child

where the mother is the only active parent in their life is as bad or worse then sticking the child in daycare their whole life!

There are two things that I would really like the reader to get out of this letter: first, feminism is about equality, not material things. Second, we are not living in the time of Jesus! We should try to be Christlike, not mimic the lifestyle of 33 AD!

Thanks for writing! I am anxious to reply to your letter, but I would like to know one thing first: Are you married? Secondly (I guess that's two things <grin>), how old are you?

Thanks so much,

Sue

Dear Sue,

Thanks you for your interest in my letter. After rereading it, I want to apologize for seeming…harsh. I'm just opinionated. I think your site is truly wonderful—I've had countless questions answered there.

As for your questions, no, I'm not married. I'm 14. I've never even had a boyfriend. (Actually, I spend most of my time at the library reading *Ms*. magazine! LOL)

Thanks again for your time—and your part in probe.org.

Thank you SO MUCH for your sweet message and apology and your honesty with me! I am truly delighted to hear that you like our web site and have benefitted from it, especially since you're 14 and there's so much to learn. It's great that you're reading things from a Christian perspective to help you form your opinions and your worldview!

OK, to answer your thoughts about feminism. . .

> *First off, I should say that I am young Catholic and a strong feminist.*

Not surprising, actually. Feminist philosophy has so permeated our culture that it's unusual to find people who haven't been brainwashed by its values and perspectives. Yes, "brainwashed" is a strong word to use, but it's just as true as the way Communists indoctrinated their students in the last century.

Of course, if you spend your free time in the library reading *Ms* magazine, you are doubly steeped in feminism!

> *I believe that you have feminism's mission all wrong.*

Is it possible that there might be more to feminism than the "public face" that it presents? Is it possible that someone who has spent time investigating the underlying philosophies and values of feminism might have a perspective different from what the rest of the culture accepts without question? And finally, ::::said in a low but respectful voice:::: is it possible that someone who's 48 might know more about this subject than someone who's 14?

> *You stated that the "feminist veiwpoint values materials above people." I find this highly contradictory to feminism! Feminism is about equality. Plain and simple.*

Uh. . . no. It's not that simple, _____. Have you ever seen pictures of icebergs? A mountain of ice rises out of the water, but there is another 9/10ths of the iceberg submerged below the water. Feminism is something like that: there are parts of this philosophy that remain hidden until you start digging. For instance, particularly as a Catholic, are you comfortable with feminism's strong insistence on unrestricted access to abortion for all women? Abortion is an essential part of true feminism. Are you comfortable with the strong link between feminism and a lesbian lifestyle? While there are

many many feminists who truly enjoy their femininity and their relationships with men, many of the movers and shakers in feminism have bought into the belief that men are the enemy. Do you plan on marrying and having children? Feminism has an anti-family agenda because it sees children as a drain on women and sees women who stay home to care for children as parasites, choosing a path that has no value because women are not paid for it.

> *It is difficult to debate the fact that men and women are equal.*

Equal in value, absolutely. Equal in function and role, no way! Equal does not mean "same." Men and women are not interchangeable. We have different strengths and gifts, and different perspectives. We not only have different bodies, we have different emotional and mental make-ups. The biology of maleness and femaleness is hard-wired into the brain. Feminism's mantra for many years has been that the only differences are those of plumbing and reproduction. (And those differences are despised. There is a contempt for a woman's capacity for carrying and nurturing babies because of the fact that it makes a woman more vulnerable and needful of care and protection. That's one reason feminists are so insistent on the need for across-the-board access to birth control and abortion, because getting pregnant is so distasteful and threatening to so many of them.)

> *If so, what does it matter if the father stays home with the children?*

Because mothers and fathers are not interchangeable. They nurture children differently. When children are very young, they need their mothers more intensely than their fathers. (But please hear me: children need BOTH a mother AND a father. It's like asking, "Which do you need more, air or water?" We need both, but air is more immediately essential. It says no

more about us not needing water than the idea that children don't need their fathers.)

Furthermore, God's intention is for men to be providers and protectors, and for women to be caregivers and nurturers. This is only construed as an indictment on women because of the way the culture has de-valued the contribution of women. Since we don't put a dollar amount on caregiving and nurturing, those contributions are dismissed as unimportant. (That's why I made my point about feminism being materialistic. Only those things that have been given monetary value are worth doing.) Feminism's contempt for women who are "only a housewife" or "only a mother" has spread to the rest of the culture, where many people hear "caregivers and nurturers" and snort their disapproval of such a lightweight role.

Maybe we ought to ask the kids who have grown up without the caregiving and nurturing, the kids who have had to raise themselves because their parents were so busy doing things that "mattered," if caregiving and nurturing is so unnecessary. And to go back to your original comment, if a father stays home with the kids and the mom works, *when the kids are very small* they are going to feel abandoned by their mother. That's just the way it works. It might not sound fair, but that's because mothers and fathers are not interchangeable.

> *Why should the female sacrifice her goals in life and be "submissive" to her husband?*

OK, two subjects here: goals and submission.

If a woman sets her goals apart from God's values and intent for her life, they are worthless. Once we die and we stand before God, everything will be revealed for what it is. Those who have trusted in themselves and refused to submit to God and trust in Jesus will go to hell. Of what value will their goals be then? For those who HAVE trusted in Christ, if their

goals were self-serving instead of God-serving, then everything they accomplished to meet those goals will burn up in the flames of God's judgment. (You can read about this in 1 Cor. 3:9-15.)

It's like the person who climbed the ladder of success and discovered his ladder was leaning against the wrong wall!

Concerning submission. Why should a wife submit to her husband? Because submission is what we were created to do! We submit first to the Lord and then to those who are in authority over us. I think you have a misunderstanding of submission as "mindless doormat." Biblical submission is a deliberate choice to use one's strengths and gifts to serve another, to fill up what is lacking, to support and respect and yield to another. That is neither mindless nor subservient. (And I think, by the way, that many people hear the word "submissive" and think "subservient." They are not the same thing.)

> *What makes it okay for the male to follow his goals and watch his wife's be thrown away?*

Nothing. God's plan for husbands is that they love their wives the same way that Christ loves the church. That means serving her, supporting her, being her #1 fan, and, as one writer put it, stewarding his wife's gifts so that she becomes everything God wants her to be.

But some women think they ought to be able to pursue their own goals with no regard to what it will cost their family. Children grow up fast, and there is time for women to pursue all kinds of goals after the children are no longer so needy and dependent on her. Are you familiar with Maria Shriver's book *Ten Things I Wish I'd Known Before I Went Out into the Real World*? She says, "You CAN have it all. . . just not at the same time." Try to find a kid who will say to his or her mother, "I'm so glad you went out there and pursued your

goals, Mom—even though you weren't there for me and I was left alone to fend for myself so often, but that's OK, you're the only one who matters." Obviously, I'm being facetious, but the message of feminism is, "You're the only one who matters." It's tremendously selfish.

> *Parenting is a two person thing.*

Yes, I agree.

> *The idea that the man is the mightly breadwinner to whom the wife obeys without question passed in the 1950's.*

I will agree that the concept of the obedient wife who obeys without question was a fallacious concept that needed to be corrected. There is a difference between submission and obedience, although it's not a huge one. Wives are never commanded in scripture to obey their husbands, and there's a good reason for that. Obedience belongs in a relationship between non-equals because it's a power mis-match. I obey God and the governing authorities, my children obeyed me (…though not always. I gave birth to sinners <grin>). Those relationships are not between equals. If a husband-wife relationship, which Scripture explicitly says is one of spiritual equals, is one where the husband is authoritarian and the wife obeys him like a robot, there cannot be the emotional and spiritual intimacy that is God's plan for marriage.

> *It disgusts me to think that other young women like myself are reading your response. We're living in the year 2001—the world has changed quite a bit since the time of the Bible!*

We use a clock to tell time, not to tell truth.

The world may have changed, but people haven't. God's created order and His plan for human relationships hasn't changed. The

Bible's relevance to our lives is just as vibrant as it was the day each word was originally written, because when God inspired the authors of each book He knew what would unfold in human history in the years to come, and His book has timeless concepts that are just as valid today as when they were written.

> *Maybe Titus instucts women to stay at home, but we're far from that.*

_____, are you in a public school? Are there metal detectors at the doors of your school? Does your school have a lockdown plan for what happens if someone starts shooting a gun like at Columbine? Does your school have a problem with drugs? How many girls are pregnant? Are there any who bring their babies to school?

This is the world we live in—the world that is so far from the place of safety that it used to be. Yes, you're right, moms don't stay home much anymore. . .and the kids are paying for it. Families don't stay together much anymore. . . and the kids are paying for that, too. The amount of respect between family members has dropped dramatically as women demanded to be treated like men, so they are no longer respected the way they used to be, and kids don't respect their parents, and parents are afraid of their kids. . .who are paying for that, as well.

> *When the bible was written, women were treated badly. Virtually the only thing a woman was good for was cooking, cleaning, and childbearing. In case you haven't noticed, women do quite a bit more than that today.*

Yes, I have noticed. The Probe web site you tell me is "truly wonderful" is a woman's creation and responsibility—mine. Among my women friends are published authors, speakers, company owners, entrepreneurs, engineers, marketers, trainers,

teachers, real estate investors, and doctors. And the Bible's pattern for wise living is just as relevant and life-giving to these women as it ever was.

> *The contributions women have made to society are immeasurable. If you ask me, Jesus would never say to a female with aspiring hopes and dream the same as her husband, "You stay home because you are a woman, thus the only thing that should do is take care of the children and the household."*

I agree. The Bible doesn't limit women to only caring for children and homes. There are many ministry opportunities that women are called to give themselves to regardless of family status. There are ways to have a home-based business that does not sacrifice the best interests of a family and smoothly running home. You might want to read Proverbs 31.

> *I think Jesus would see the importance of strong parental roles in a child's life—but equally, both mother AND father. Raising a child where the mother is the only active parent in their life is as bad or worse than sticking the child in daycare their whole life!*

I think perhaps you're either engaging in hyperbole or you really haven't thought through what you're saying. There is no way that a mother's input and love is more harmful to children than the stress of daycare. (Assuming the mother is not evil or mentally ill. It's too bad I have to mention exceptions like this.) You might not know what daycare centers are like. They cannot come close to the power of a mother's love and just "being there" with and for her child. Talk to me about this 15 years from now!

I'm glad you wrote, and I hope you think about these things. I invite you to read another article I wrote, "Ten Lies of Feminism," and see what you think. God bless you, _____!

Warmly,

Sue

“What is Inductive Reasoning?”

I took an aptitude test, in fact two of them, in which I tested very low in inductive reasoning. Apparently, this is a reasoning in which lawyers, doctors, and scientists, among other people, tend to have very strong aptitudes. What do you know about this reasoning process? What does it look like? If God has not made one strong in it, how should one compensate for it? (In one of the two tests I took, the administrator told me I needed to seek out people who were gifted in this area before I made major decisions.) I figured you may a lot more about this and use it quite often considering your scientific background.

Inductive reasoning uses facts and observations to reason to a general conclusion.

Induction: The reasoning process in which generalizations, laws, or principles are formed from the observation of particular cases; reasoning that moves from the part to the whole, from the particular to the general. Most human reasoning is inductive or empirical in character since it consists of generalizations based on our sense experience.

Ray Bohlin is a person
Ray Bohlin has feelings
Joe Blow is a person
Joe Blow has feelings

Sue Bohlin is a person
Sue Bohlin has feelings
Therefore, probably all persons have feelings.

The conclusion is not certain but likely. The premises provide some support for the conclusion

The conclusion is not itself a fact but a generalization or trend. For instance, Darwin observed that the shapes of the carapaces (shells) of the tortoises on the Galapagos were specific to each island. From this he reasoned (inductively) that perhaps they were all related and the specific differences were due to initial variations present in the first tortoises that occupied each island. His conclusion was just an idea, an analysis of a possible trend or connection. From this he would need to derive experiments designed to gather more specific data from which he would hopefully reason deductively to a specific conclusion. If this is true, and if this is true, and if this is true, then this must be true.

Deduction: The reasoning process in which conclusions are drawn from accepted premises. The premises are more general than the conclusion, so deduction is often defined as reasoning from the whole down to the part or from the general to the particular.

All humans are mortal.		Very general
Aristotle is human.		More specific but still general
Therefore, Aristotle is mortal.		Aristotle will die! Quite specific

If the first two are true, the conclusion must be true. The conclusion is certain.

Deductive reasoning reasons to an obvious conclusion that follows logically from the premises. Inductive reasoning takes the observations (facts) and reasons to a possible or general

conclusion that is more tentative. Lawyers, doctors, and scientists need this kind of reasoning to solve problems, to take the available facts and determine which direction to take their investigation next. They then need to collect additional facts to confirm their earlier conclusion or even deductively arrive at a definite, firm conclusion.

Some people have a hard time seeing connections between seemingly isolated facts that others see a clear trend from. The tests you took apparently put you in that category.

In my work I see a lot of evidence for intelligent design in the universe and life but the evidence is not so clear as to be able to draw a certain conclusion. I believe I am right, but not 100% certain. I continue to look for additional evidence to make my conclusion more reliable.

This was perhaps more than you bargained for, but I hope it helps. You may need to take some time and read it several times and come back to it again after a few days to let it percolate a little. I had to do some checking to make sure I got it right so let me know if I can help further.

Respectfully,

Ray Bohlin
Probe Ministries

"Can You Suggest Reasons Why I Am a Lesbian?"

I just read Kerby Anderson's article on Homosexual Theology. Very well written, although I do disagree on some points. I consider myself homosexual. I am a 36 year-old female. As far

back as I can remember, from the age of 2 or 3, I've have "felt" like a boy. This goes beyond just same-sex attractions. It goes into wanting to play army and trucks as a child, rather than play with dolls and, eventually, being sexually attracted to females (even in grade school), rather than males. For me, as I can only speak for myself, it is not all about sex. I would rather share my life with a female, even if we never had sex. I want the same thing I assume most heterosexuals want; a home, family, decent job, vacation time, and hope for a healthy, happy future.

I guess my question for you is, what do you think caused my homosexuality? I grew up in the "All-American Family." Stay at home mom, dad who always worked, middle-class, church on Sundays. I am the youngest of three, and the only girl. I was always encouraged to act and dress like a female by my parents. I had no doubt about my parents love for me and felt very secure and safe in my environment. I grew up about as "normal" as anyone can in American. So, can you shed any light? Thanks, _____

Dear _____,

Kerby Anderson forwarded your e-mail to me because I am very familiar with the homosexuality issue.

The difficulty in trying to explain the foundations for another person's same gender attraction is always increased when we are only given selective details. What you wrote to Kerby isn't your whole story, and you couldn't possibly be able to GIVE your whole story, especially when the most important parts are what happened inside your head and heart.

One of the things we have discovered over the past several years is that the contributing factors to homosexuality include not only events (such as sexual abuse) and relationships (especially with parents), but how a child PERCEIVES events and relationships. For example, dads can show

and tell their love in one way, but if his son or daughter doesn't hear it or see it, s/he can feel unloved even though the love was there. Parents can feel that they are accepting their children, but sometimes the kids don't feel that acceptance. And that makes sense, since we are all broken people living in a fallen world, and sometimes our "love receptors" are broken just like a radio can be broken and not receive the radio waves that would translate into sound if it weren't broken.

There is an intriguing detail you DID include, which was being sexually attracted to females, even in grade school. Emotionally healthy children do not experience sexual attraction until adolescence. (Kids sometimes develop crushes on other kids, but it's an intense emotional attraction, not a sexual attraction.) Becoming sexual at an early age isn't normal; all the examples I ever heard of were the result of sexual exposure (which is actually sexual abuse) at an early age.

So I would suggest there are parts to your story—your true relationship with your parents, possible experiences you don't mention—that are a big part of what you have experienced. Having boy-like interests at an early age, in and of itself, doesn't say that anything was wrong; there is a wide spectrum of what it means to be a female, just as there is a wide spectrum of what it means to be male. And that, I believe, is by divine design, because God is delighted to make people with great variety. But that doesn't mean He gave you same-gender attraction, and it doesn't mean He made you gay. It means something happened, even if you don't know what it is. Homosexuality is really about gender confusion, and something interfered with you embracing your femininity if you have closed yourself off from wanting intimate relationships with men.

I hope this helps.

Most respectfully,

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

“Help! I’m a Gay Christian”

Thanks for being willing to help me. Here’s the deal:

I’m 18 and I’ve known for a while now that I’m gay. Yep, GAY!!!!! But I’m also a Christian, and those two don’t usually mix well. I don’t have a boyfriend or anything. The problem is I don’t know whether I should accept my nature and try and be both a Christian devoted to others and God who just happens to like men, or to fight my nature and be alone for all my life.

What is your opinion on gay people? What do you think?

1. The world tells you that you have two choices: Accept that you’re gay and find a way to be a gay Christian even though the Bible says not to, or be alone and lonely forever. I would suggest those choices are a lie.

You can’t glorify God in gay relationships, especially sexual relationships. Sex was created (among other reasons) to show us what “unity within diversity” is, so we can see a physical demonstration of the unity of Christ and the church. Just as Jesus is very different from us (the church) as His bride yet the two become one, God-glorifying sex can only be between two very different (i.e., male and female) people who become one. The very biology of sex shows us that sex was intended to be heterosexual.

2. If God’s intention in His creation is holy heterosexuality, then all of us have the *capacity* for it. That’s why there are

people ministering to those with same gender attraction (SGA), showing them how to move out of what feels normal but isn't, into heterosexual attraction. It's not fast, it's not easy, but it IS possible. It's about finding ways to relate in a healthy, nonsexual way with other men, and doing it in the power of the Holy Spirit. Which He is happy to give as we abide in Christ. (That's the key, but it's easier to talk about than to live, moment by moment. Nonetheless, that's how others have moved from being strugglers to being overcomers.)

There are a number of websites where you can read stories and get real help, including online message boards for encouragement. Here's a good place to start: Living Hope Ministries. This one has a lot of other sites listed, as well as a web forum where you can find people to talk to. http://www.livehope.org

The bottom line is, THERE IS HOPE. You don't have to live with the false choice of either being separated from God because of your sexuality, or alone and lonely because of it.

3. In terms of my opinion of gay people? Well, God passionately loves gay people, so who am I to argue with that? :::smile::: He grieves when men are attracted to men and women are attracted to women, because it means that something went wrong somewhere, whether biology or psychology or whatever. But it doesn't make the PERSON bad!!! I think that the reason gay people are in so much pain isn't because the world hates gays and is homophobic, which is the politically correct explanation you get these days, but it's because something went wrong and it's painful not to be able to relate correctly and healthily to people of the opposite sex.

And God has power to help us with problems like that, even though it's not easy—by ANY means—to change.

4. One last thing. Until their mid-20's or so, some people's sexuality is fluid. It's changeable. Surging hormones can

create some alarming and disturbing feelings. It doesn't necessarily mean someone is hard-wired to be gay. That's a good reason not to act on it, totally apart from the moral issue of being sexually active outside of marriage.

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

"How Can I Help My Gay Friend?"

I have a friend who confessed to me that she was gay. I was shocked…but yet…something inside of me knew that there was something different about her. I have been searching of ways to tell her about the truth. Please understand….it has been so easy for me to lead others to the truth…but with her…I'm baffled. I have been speaking to her over the Internet mostly. She has had close family members that have been diagnosed with cancer, etc. I've been helping her stand on the word by giving her Biblical scriptures on healing. I "gently" tell her in a roundabout way (when given the opportunity) about sins in our lives etc…etc…etc…

I'm trying to tell her that God loves her but not the way she's living her life. As you can tell… I'm even having a hard time explaining it to you. I wish I knew of a book that helps Christians talk to gays to lead them to the truth. She once told me that men were so iffy and that her girlfriends treated her better. I should have caught on then…but I didn't. I don't think she's ready to give up this lifestyle…but I can't go on acting as though it's not a problem. I try to stay away from talking about this issue with her. She has a girlfriend at this time and lives about 3 hours from where I live. I just

thought you may know of something that may help me minister to her or help me to understand before I leap out there and push her further away from knowing the truth. She is always sending me thank you notes saying that she knows that there was a reason why we met and that she would not be where she is with God if we didn't meet. Honestly…I couldn't believe her attitude. She started going to a Christian church…joined a Bible study from Genesis to Revelation… stood in faith for a job (when she lost hers). It's like God is doing all He can to show her He's real, but deep down in my heart…I feel she's lost in another way. Before I keep going on….I'll close and ask again…. Do you know of anything that will help me to reach her God's way?

I am so glad to hear of your friendship with this dear lady who needs the freedom Jesus offers!! You should know that almost all the people involved in ministries to those with unwanted homosexuality (you can check out Restored Hope Network and Living Hope Ministries) did so because of friends and family who showed a willingness to BE THERE for them and love them through the process of change.

Yes, there is a book I would recommend for women, *Out of Egypt* by Jeanette Howard. May I suggest that a good way to offer it is to say, "If you ever get to the point where your life isn't working for you, you might want to read this book." It's not threatening, and it leaves the door open to pursue something different when the Lord reveals truth to her. And nothing will change apart from HIM allowing her to see the truth instead of being deceived by the enemy. Which is why your prayers for her are of utmost importance.

If you want to educate yourself to better know how to minister to her, read *Someone I Love Is Gay* by Anita Worthen and Bob Davies. It's written for friends and family of those in the lifestyle.

I hope this helps; I know these resources have helped many,

many other people in exactly your shoes.

In His grip,

Sue

“How Should We Deal With Gay Activist Groups?”

I have been reading your articles on homosexuality. But I still didn’t see anything on how we are to follow Jesus’ commandment about loving your neighbor regarding homosexuality in the “institutionalized” church, and homosexual weddings and pastors. I don’t want to judge others, and I don’t want to see homosexuality forced into public schools as a “normal” lifestyle. How do I have mercy AND stand up for what I believe in my heart to be wrong according to my interpretation of the Bible? Where does mercy end and judgment begin in dealing with activist groups?

I turned to two friends for help in answering your excellent question. One is the director of an outreach to those wanting to leave homosexuality, a man who is a former gay activist himself. The other is a pastor who was convicted of his judgmental attitude toward homosexuals, and sought the Lord’s heart by involving himself in Exodus International and a local ministry to those dealing with unwanted homosexuality. Both of them wrote such great answers that I’m just going to paste them in here.

Sue Bohlin

The director:

Unfortunately for us, because it makes it more difficult, mercy and judgment go hand in hand. The challenge is to know where to apply them both in situations that require both. With judgment, the Bible clearly calls us to judge sinful behavior. Especially if we are judging the behavior of other Christians. It isn't an option according to Matthew 18, and the Lord has blessed us with a model of how to approach one who is in sin. What we cannot judge are the motivations of the heart or a person's worth to God. It is hard for modern Americans to see that calling something sinful is an act of mercy. God was very merciful to us to show us not only the good things of Himself, but also the things He will not accept—which is also good. Others use the same words to condemn, but if we are mindful of our own sin and the mercy extended to us, when we are called to speak the truth in a situation, it will be delivered with such compassion and mercy that it will be an effective witness. Judgment comes in the words; mercy comes in the delivery of the message.

Here's an example of how to communicate:

"According to my spiritual convictions, homosexuality is sinful. I don't know what it is like to be gay or to have the feelings you do but I do know the loving character of my God. If He says, which I believe He does, that a certain sexual activity is sinful, then I believe that He says so because He wants you to have the very best in life and will make a way to meet the deep cries of your heart. I know for myself and my struggles with different issues, that what seems impossible to me is very possible for a holy and loving God."

As far as institutionalized Christianity, I don't know that any institution will change until the hearts of individuals change. Of course we must vote our conscience and speak what the Lord tells us to, but I think the main focus should be the person next to us. When we can look them in the face with love and compassion, nothing but positive change can occur. They may not like it at first, so we must be prepared to receive at

least rejection and at most hostility—neither of which should move us past love.

With regard to activist groups, I don't suggest dealing with them as a group is a good idea. To be an activist means you are sold out to whatever you are fighting for, and as a group I think it would take another group to deal with them. If one is dealing with an activist, don't see them as an activist but as a saint of God in the making. Turn the other cheek, love them enough to hurt at the thought of their pain. I have learned that saying a small amount of appropriate truth and being a steadfast witness is the best way to witness to activists.

The Pastor:

I am assuming from the tone that the writer believes homosexual conduct to be sin. S/he also seems to fear that if we aren't strong enough in our denunciation that gays will take over the public arena. If we show too much love and mercy it will be construed as acceptance. I understand that.

I just read a response J.P. Moreland made to Charles Templeton who was asserting that it is intellectually impossible to believe in God. Moreland pointed out that how the argument is framed is extremely important. If we accept a faulty premise we've already lost. This is what gay activists, with the collusion of much of the media, have done—for example, all those who do not accept homosexuality as normative are "homophobic." Of course this is linguistically and logically wrong. If you and I were homophobic we would never be around homosexuals willingly. But we also frame the argument incorrectly if we accept that.

So I would begin by saying that God showed me I wasn't responsible for how the world viewed what I do and say as long as it squares with His Word. Of course going by that Word can be dangerous; it can get you crucified. People, even religious

people, may misinterpret what you do and say. As a fundamentalist I was always bothered by Jesus telling His disciples that the world would know they belonged to Him by the way they loved each other. I've come to see that I can love people without condoning or approving their actions—or their positions. But if my loving them consists of telling them "I am speaking the truth in love" or something similar it will not ring true. We absolutely must learn to see gays—and all other people—as people whom Jesus loves dearly. He cries out for them to come to Him. He wants them to know that no matter how far they drift, He longs passionately for them to come to Him. So, I began by realizing how much Jesus loved homosexuals—including activists—and then because He was so pained by their sin and the cruelty of others, I found myself wanting to serve Him by helping to show them His love. I had to be Jesus in the flesh. I couldn't do that if my "love" was a veneer or simply putting on an act so I might get them to listen to my arguments. I had to decide if I really believed what God says about people who are separated from Him. Are they really basically empty spiritually? Can they really find true Joy apart from Him? If I really accept that then I don't have to argue with them that they really are or aren't happy, etc. I can simply proceed with the assurance that it is the task of the Holy Spirit to do that. My job is to love and speak the truth—gently for the most part.

_____ (an outspoken gay activist) has been good for me in that regard. He has even asked me to appear with him at a PFLAG (Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays, a pro-gay support and activist group) meeting next year. He wants his side to see that someone can totally disagree with him (and them) and not be harsh or obnoxious. He and I have kind of a running joke that "I love _____ but we disagree totally on homosexuality." I do love him. He is well aware that I oppose gay marriage or adoption and acceptance of what we believe to be sin by the culture at large. I grieve over his views on homosexuality. But I am encouraged that thru lots

of conversations and e-mails with some of the ex-gay folks, he has for the most part let go of his anger and bitterness toward the church and indirectly toward God. He now once again identifies himself as a Christian. I still pray that one day he will see the whole truth. But I know he wouldn't even be in a position to consider it if he had not seen God's love in the flesh.

I have heard the same kind of testimony over and over since getting involved with Exodus. Many of the leaders in Exodus ministries came to Christ because some Christian loved them. Most had experienced a lot of anger and rejection from the church and were bitter and antagonistic. It is imperative that we not allow ourselves to put homosexuality into a separate category from other sins. If we slip into that it will show in the way we relate and those to whom we are trying to minister will know it. For instance, do we oppose adultery and adulterers in public life with the same standard we use for homosexuality? I think we think we do, but I haven't seen consistency there. The bottom line is that we are in the business of reconciling ALL sinners to our Father. We must see ALL people as God sees them.

"Teen Rebellion is Just Individuality"

I read your article on teen rebellion When Your Teen Rejects Your Values. What you call "rebellion" is actually called individuality, not wishing to conform to society's opinions. Don't get me wrong, some people just like to go with the flow, nothing wrong with that. It's just that I don't think parents should inadvertently squish their son/daughter's individuality

by believing that there is something wrong with them and therefore punishing them for simply being who thay want to be and believing what they want to believe. My name is _____ and I'm a High School Student.

Dear _____,

You're right that some parents define any individuality as rebellion, and that is incredibly sad. The teenage years are a time for you to find out who you are and who you want to be, and it requires people to pull away from their parents in order to do that healthily.

However, the point of our article isn't to have parents squash individuality, but to deal with truly harmful rebellion. Taking drugs is something more than simply finding out who one is. It causes harm to body, mind and soul. If a girl whose parents have taught her to respect her body and wait for marriage sleeps around with boys, or even "services" them with oral sex in junior high (something which has become an epidemic), that's not expressing her individuality, that's being rebellious. (However, it may also be an expression of her need for her daddy's affection and approval that she didn't get when she was younger.) And if a teen raised in a Christian home declares herself a Wiccan, that's way more than individuality, that is rebellion.

Expressing individuality is saying "I want to wear my hair long and green," which is something our son did when he was in high school. It may be uncomfortable for parents, but there's no harmful after-effects. Rebellion can be (and usually is) harmful, either to body or soul or both. Rebellion also tends to be disrespectful toward parents and other authority figures, and that is very painful and destructive to the relationship(s).

I just want you to know I DO hear your request that parents honor their teens' desire to be different from them, but

please don’t dismiss the heartbreak of true rebellion as something innocent and necessary for emotional growth.

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

“Should a Woman Work or Stay Home with Children?”

Dear Sue,

I was wondering if you could help me to understand more about your studies from the Bible on the lies of the church. From my understanding from Titus women are called to be at home and bring up the children. Of course some single mothers have to work. But, when the husband is the bread winner, the women is called to bring up the children, and maintain the home. Of, course our society tells us for a women to be productive she must work to be fullfilled. Can you explain a little bit more about what the implications are from the Bible. Thank you. Because I don’t know what to think? My mother has taught me to work, and the church teaches to stay home.

I’m so glad you wrote me!! I can understand why you might be confused since there are MAJORLY conflicting views on the role of women in our society and even in many churches.

You’re right, Titus does instruct women with children to be industrious and to take care of our children. It’s important for women to keep our “Focus on the Family,” so to speak, because God has ordained for the family to be the place where children are loved and taught and raised to become the people He intends for them to be. I think that whenever possible, in

whatever way possible, mothers should be the caretakers of their children because no one can do as good a job as a parent.

But feminism has changed the view of the wife and mother. That worldview says that the only work that matters is work for which you get paid money. It says that the only way to be fulfilled is to produce something that has economic value, either products or services. That's because the feminist viewpoint values material things above people. And the feminist viewpoint really disrespects children and the women who care for their own children. For a philosophy that is supposed to empower women, it's actually very disrespectful toward women unless they agree with feminism's very narrow perspective on what is acceptable.

A big reason for that is that feminism is, at its heart, humanistic. That means that they value mankind as the highest thing there is. No room for the God of the Bible or for God's values and commandments, nor for His heart toward women and the family. So feminism doesn't care that God longs for children to feel safe and loved and cared for, and the best place for that to happen is with a mom who's intensely THERE, with and for her children, instead of a daycare center. Feminism also doesn't understand that a Christian woman who invests her time and energies and gifts into her family will receive eternal rewards. The only thing that matters to a feminist mindset is money and the approval of the world.

Should a woman work? I don't know any who don't. Some get paid for their labor in dollars, and others get paid in other ways. Like the joy of creating a well-run, balanced home for a family that's not stressed out all the time because there's never enough time to get everything done.

In Proverbs 31, the "excellent wife" has several home-based businesses. She keeps a well-run home, is a great wife and mother, and she works at a business. The biblical pattern is

that godly women are industrious workers (as opposed to busybodies who gossip and chatter all day). There are business women mentioned in the New Testament whom Paul praises as godly women. And then, young women are instructed to be homemakers, taking care of their children and homes. (There weren't many choices for employment for women in that culture.) There is no one-size-fits-all pattern for all women.

God's plan is that we all work. It's a sin to be a lazy do-nothing. The question isn't about working or not working, it's WHERE you work and how you get paid. The other question is, will your children suffer because you work? Or does the fact that you work mean your children will have food to eat and clothes to wear? It's not a cut-and-dried answer. What you need to do is what God leads YOU to do after praying and seeking His face.

I heard a pastor say on the radio recently that a young mother came to him and said, "I would love to stay home and care for my toddler, but I have to work. We don't have enough money for me to stay home." He had occasion to visit her and was stunned; they lived in a large, new home, with two late-model luxury vehicles in the driveway. Their problem wasn't that they didn't have enough money for her to be her child's caretaker; their problem was that they had chosen a standard of living that put things above people. If they moved to a smaller house and older, less expensive cars, they could have done it.

But then, there are people who literally cannot make it on the husband's salary because it really isn't enough. God understands that, too. And in that case, a wife's outside job is His gift and His provision for a family. That's why it's not a cut-and-dried issue.

If you have children, you might ask why working outside the home is so important. Because you can? Because you're smart? Because you're trained? Because Mom thinks you should? It's

pretty cool when gifted, smart, capable women pour all those strengths into their children instead of the workplace. The whole family benefits. Especially in the long run. Because, now that my children are young adults, I see the benefits of pouring myself into them, and I am so very glad I did.

I hope this helps. Feel free to write back if I didn't really answer your specific needs or questions.

Sue

"Is It a Good Idea to Marry Someone I'm Not Attracted To?"

I've been dating a long time friend of mine for three years, and the subject of marriage came up. She is my best friend and we are both saved. Both of us have never married and are 45 years old. We enjoy each other's company, and go to church together. But sometimes I don't think she is pretty. I find myself looking at other girls at times. Would this be hindrance to marriage? I realize that beauty and brawn change over time. But I can't date her forever and don't want to lose her friendship. Do you have any advice?

It sure sounds like the Lord has blessed you with a wonderful friend. It's quite possible you would be better off friends than spouses. If you don't think she's pretty, does that mean you're not really attracted to her? If you're not attracted to her after three years of dating, it's probably not going to happen. And marriage to someone who only makes a good friend can range from empty and colorless to downright miserable when

your heart longs for passion.

The fact that you find yourself looking at other girls is not a problem. It would be a problem if you LUST after other girls. And it would be a problem if your girlfriend catches you looking at other girls in her presence because I assure you, women's egos are really just as fragile as men's.

Read the Song of Solomon. Do you experience that kind of intense love and longing for your girlfriend? That's God's intention for marriage. If what you have is nothing more than a comfortable friendship that has been a convenient base for dating, and if it hasn't developed into real romance after three years, then do yourself and your girlfriend a favor and find someone that you CAN feel that kind of passion for. I'll tell you a secret about women: we long to be wanted. We long to be thought of as beautiful. We long to be lusted after with a holy lust. If you can't give that to your girlfriend, you are cheating both yourself and her. And that's no way to treat a friend.

Hope this helps.

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

"What Does the Bible Say about Interracial Marriages?"

What does the Bible say about interracial marriages, and what are your thoughts on this subject?

The Bible does not prohibit interracial marriages, but that has not stopped people in the past from trying to "make" the

Bible teach that it is wrong.

Here are some biblical principles that apply to race and interracial marriage:

1. We are one in Christ Jesus. The Bible teaches that in Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek. Galatians 3:28 – "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus."

2. We are one in creation. Acts 17:26 – "He made from one, every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined their appointed times, and the boundaries of their habitation."

We know that racial differences amount to very small changes in skin color (amount of melanin in skin), eye shape, hair color and texture. The differences that exist are often created by those with prejudices against particular groups of people.

The Bible does teach that Christians are not to be unequally yoked (2 Cor. 6:14). But that applies to the spiritual condition of your intended marriage partner.

Mixed marriages (due to cultural or social differences) may face problems. So it would be wise to seek premarital counseling to consider how these differences might affect your communication in marriage and other important issues.

I hope that answers your question.

Kerby Anderson

Probe Ministries

See Also *Probe Answers Our Email*:
"My Racist Parents Disapprove of My Boyfriend"