“Why Won’t You Take a Stand on the Age of the Earth?”

Dr. Bohlin,

I just read over your article on the Age of the Earth to get Probe’s stand on the issue. Apparently, the official stand is officially no stand.

I was wondering after I read this statement of yours: “Biblically, we find the young earth approach of six consecutive 24-hour days and a catastrophic universal flood to make the most sense. However, we find the evidence from science for a great age for the universe and the earth to be nearly overwhelming. We just do not know how to resolve the conflict yet.”

How do you (we) know for sure that the earth is millions if not billions of years old? I have been looking into this issue for a while, and I have found that ALL dating methods suffer from one major problem. They are ALL based on Fallible (un-testable) Assumptions. Now that is a major problem to probe into because it seems that the main reason why Probe is not willing to hold to and defend the clear written revelation in Genesis is because you believe those dating methods are more trustworthy than Genesis 1.

I believe Rich Milne and I qualified our statement sufficiently. To say that we think the young earth position makes the most sense Biblically does not intend to suggest we believe it is the “clear” written revelation of Genesis 1. There are many conservative evangelical Old Testament scholars who do not hold to it. Men who certainly understand the OT and Hebrew much more than this molecular biologist. If I believed it was the clear revelation of Genesis, I would accept it regardless of the scientific evidence.

What you refer to in the assumptions of dating methods is true especially of the radioactive dating methods. But we explain one of our hesitations in the problem of starlight in the body of the paper. I also find it significant that most young earth geologists and physicists (Russ Humphreys is my source from personal conversations during our ICR Grand Canyon trips together) recognize that radioactive dating methods consistently portray an older-to-younger sequence when going from the bottom to the top. So much so that they are searching for a way incorporate this into their flood model. They don't accept the actual dates but the sequence seems real. Therefore the dating methods are not totally without merit. This is more than just suggestive.

I do understand that an international group, meeting through ICR, is working on a paper concerning dating methods which I anticipate with eagerness.

Respectfully,

Ray Bohlin, Ph.D.

"Help Me Figure Out Why My Relationship Hurts!"

I checked out the article where you and that guy were making comparisons between Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus, and the Bible. That discussion really interested me because I am reading *Men are from Mars and Women are from Venus,* and I began thinking as I was reading it and I developed a theory… First I thought about older people (ages 55 and up). I have seen so many of those older couples still holding hands and being very loving together. I found my self asking what is so

different in relationships today and relationships in the fifties and earlier? Why do so many relationships fail today and not in those yester years? I came to the conclusion that Christianity must have been the key. Not only does the Bible provide instruction for healthy relationships, it also provides people (believers) with a feeling of fulfillment. Never before have I ever really understood the real reason for the verse "Do not be unequally yoked." It causes a real strain on relationships, and I have been through many unmeaningful and heartbreaking relationships. I was wondering since you have read the whole book *Men are From Mars and Women are from Venus* if you could help me with my most recent relationship problem.

I have a great boyfriend—he is very beautiful on the outside and inside, he is considerate in fulfilling my needs, buying me gifts, and taking on his fair share of the cooking and cleaning responsibilities. I really love him for that. I know that he likes me or else he wouldn't be with me and he says that when I ask him how he feels about me. Actually he says you know how I feel about you why else would I be with you, and if I say how I feel about you too much it won't mean as much. How should I go about telling him that it means the world to me every time I hear (which is totally not enough and I feel unfulfilled because of it) him say how much he cares about me and I really need some reassurance right now about his feelings or I will have to leave him because I am very fragile right now and every day I grow more and more insecure in how I feel as to where I am in our relationship. I am even starting to question if he really wants me to go with him when he asks me if I would like to go out with him and a friend for lunch. Then he gets mad and says I wouldn't ask you if I didn't want you to come. I constantly wish he would just give me some reassurance, any kind, because I feel myself hurting soooo much, and I know he is hurting too because he doesn't like to see me sad. I think that he has a really hard time expressing how he feels towards me because he has been single

for 30 years now (he has had long relationships that end badly) and like MAFMWAFV says that men start to love people and they pull away so they can find their own self because they are afraid they will lose their sense of independence. Do you think that he is really struggling with something like that or what do you think I should do to solve my problem? I really sincerely love him and I don't want him to slip away because I don't understand or know something that I should. When I am done my formatted and fully (to the best of my knowledge and understanding) completed correlation between the Bible and MAFMWAFV I will send you a copy. I know you probably get about a million emails a day so if you can't answer mine I want you to know that I feel a little better just having gotten all of this off of my chest. Thank You Sue!

Wow, sounds like you have your emotional plate full. Question: are you living with your boyfriend? (Otherwise, why would you mention "his fair share of the cooking and cleaning responsibilities"?) If you are, no wonder you're so insecure! Tell me, what are you getting out of this relationship? It sounds like you're giving him the benefits of having a wife without requiring that he give you the commitment of a husband.

That's a big reason why God wants us to be married before setting up house. It sets us up for major pain to give ourselves away without a foundation of trust.

Trust is everything, and trust is closely tied to commitment. If I were you, I would pull waaaaaay back and stop giving yourself away without a commitment. If he loves you, he will pursue you and marry you. If he's just "enjoying the milk without buying the cow," (to use an old expression), then if you leave and he doesn't pursue you then you will know he is using you. Even if he's fond of you, he's using you. With your permission. (Ouch!) Which is not a way to demonstrate self-respect.

I would also suggest that you read Gary Chapman's book "The 5 Love Languages," and ask him to read it or listen to it on tape. Sounds like your love language is verbal affirmation, and he needs to know that you need to HEAR verbal appreciation and affirmations of love to feel loved. I cannot tell you how disrespectful it sounds to hear the excuse "If I tell you all the time how I feel about you it won't mean as much." Ask him why he eats all the time instead of only at Thanksgiving. I mean, eating all the time diminishes the meaning of eating, right? Wrong! It nourishes his body, just as hearing "I love you and I appreciate you" nourishes your heart and your relationship.

I hope these observations help. I am concerned for you because it sounds like you're the one paying emotionally in this relationship, and you're treating yourself poorly. I like what psychologist Dr. Phil says: "We teach people how to treat us." Sounds to me like you're teaching your boyfriend that it's OK to get what he wants from you without any reciprocal commitment on his part. Doesn't sound fair—or healthy—to me! And for SURE it isn't what God commands in scripture, which is a way to protect and provide for women's fragility and need for security.

You might also want to read Dr. Laura's (Schlessinger) *The 10 Stupid Things Women Do to Mess Up Their Lives*. It's a good read because it is consistent with biblical values. . . such as the value of marriage and purity and commitment and servant leadership.

I hope this helps!

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

“Did Egypt Once Worship the One True God?”

Recently I heard somewhere, that there was an early period of time when Egypt worshipped our one true God. The person who said this, said it may have occurred immediately after the Exodus. Can you give me any support or documentation for this idea?

Thanks for your question. Most likely, the person who made this comment was referring to Amenhotep IV (Akhenaton), the “heretic” pharaoh of the Eighteenth Dynasty, who began to rule about 1380 B.C. He moved his capital from Thebes to a city he called Akhetaten (i.e. Tell el-Amarna). G. Herbert Livingston writes, “The new pharaoh replaced the high god Amun of Thebes with Aten (Aton), the sun disk, and replaced his throne name with Akhnaton (Ikhnaton)” (*The Pentateuch in its Cultural Environment*; 40).

Although some scholars refer to Akhenaton as Egypt’s first monotheistic pharaoh, it’s important to understand that his “monotheism” was definitely NOT the same as that of the Hebrews. The god Aton was essentially identified with the physical disk of the sun; the God of the Bible is not to be identified with anything in His creation (see Exodus 20:1-6). Livingston writes, “Aton was purely a nature entity and, curiously, the pharaoh continued to regard himself as a god, too” (119). Thus, Akhenaton did NOT worship the one true God. He was not a biblical monotheist.

However, your source is correct about the time period in which these events occurred. As previously noted, Akhenaton began to reign about 1380 B.C. Although there is some room for scholarly disagreement, the Exodus likely took place around 1446-1436 B.C. Thus, Akhenaton would have become pharaoh shortly after this time.

Almost any book on ancient Egyptian history will mention Akhenaton. I took some of the information above from the following source: G. Herbert Livingston, *The Pentateuch in its Cultural Environment* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1987).

Hope this helps.

Shalom,

Michael Gleghorn
Probe Ministries

"My Wife is Seriously Ill: Does That Mean No More Sex Forever?"

I have a serious problem I would like to ask your opinion about. My brain-damaged wife has been unconscious for 5 months and will remain so for the rest of her life. Is it a sin if I masturbate to overcome the sexual need? I have read "Is Masturbation OK When My Wife and I Are Apart?" Does that mean that I may not enjoy sex ever again?

Please accept my deepest condolences on the tragedy you and your wife are experiencing. I pray God's continuing comfort for you.

I know this is not what you want to hear, but let me ask you a question: if your wife is not available for sex because of her physical condition, how does that make you any different from unmarried men? How does that make you any different from the Lord Jesus, who lived His entire life without being married

and thus without any sexual experience?

The way you glorify God in your sexuality when you are unable to enjoy sex with your wife is by giving it to Him as an offering. Does it mean you will go without sex? Quite possibly, unless you remarry after your wife's death.

It is VERY difficult for those who have experienced sex to go without it after divorce or the death of a spouse, but God's plan and command is that sex be limited to marriage. I would also point out that while we do grapple with sexual desires and urges, it is not a NEED like food and water and sleep. Calling it a need only makes it worse because we buy into the lie that we must have it, when God has made it off limits for some people.

Again, I am so very sorry for your pain and the fact that you would even be in such a difficult situation that you'd have to wonder about this question.

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

"How Do You View the Age of the Earth?"

Dear Dr. Bohlin,

As a Christian, how do you view the age of the earth? I was wondering how scientists calculate the age of the stars and the earth.

Please see my article "Christian Views of Science and Earth History" which will give a fuller explanation of my view.

Briefly, I am currently undecided or uncommitted to any particular view of the age of the earth. I continue to find the six 24-hour literal day interpretation of Genesis 1 & 2 to be the most convincing, but I find great evidence for long ages for the universe and the earth. Basically I feel that there is not sufficient evidence either biblically or scientifically to decide the issue. We need more time and more data.

The age of the stars is principally determined by what is known as the red-shift. Light from galaxies that are moving away from us is shifted toward the red end of the light spectrum. The farther away the galaxy is the further toward the red, the light is shifted. If galaxies are moving towards us, their light would be shifted toward the blue end of the spectrum. The vast majority of galaxies are shifted toward the red and those which appear to be the youngest also demonstrate the strongest red-shift. There are Christian as well as a few non-Christian astronomers that are critics of this view of red-shifts but the majority find this explanation to be persuasive and authoritative. You may try visiting an astronomy web site from a planetarium for a fuller explanation.

Respectfully,

Ray Bohlin, Ph.D.

“The Difference Between

Religions and Jesus”

I want to thank you for the well written article “A Short Look at Six World Religions” and how they relate to Christianity. My small group has been studying this subject and this goes right along with what we have been studying. I would like permission to make printouts for the other members of my group (about a dozen people) since some do not have Internet access.

I recently had a chance to go through the “Contagious Christian” course and then to talk to two Jehovah’s Witnesses who came to my door. I did just as you suggested, talking to them boldly about my faith in Jesus as the Son of God but also as one of the three persons of God. It is difficult to help people understand how God can be Jehovah, Jesus and the Holy Spirit and not be three gods.. but I feel that if I can totally understand God then maybe He isn’t big enough to help me with all of my problems. And I know that God is big enough for all of my problems. Even big enough to give me the answers I need if I pray and seek.

Our pastor recently preached a sermon that was brought back to me by your article. His words (paraphrased) were:

> **Religions promise to show a way to God…**
> **Jesus says, “I am the Way.” Religions say that there are many truths…**
> **Jesus says, “I am the Truth.” Religions promise to show light…**
> **Jesus says, “I am the Light of the world.” Religions promise a chance for eternal life…**
> **Jesus says, “I am the resurrection and the life.” Religions offer guides…**
> **Jesus says, “I am the Good Shepherd.” Religions offer to show us god (or gods)…**
> **Jesus says, “I AM.” Besides that, Christianity is the only “religion” with a living Founder. I say, why follow a**

loser?!

Guess that about breaks down the differences!

Thank you for your kind words. I'm so glad my article is helpful to you! Of course you may make printouts, for as many people as you want—that's why we have them online, and I am honored that you want to do this!

I am familiar with the list your pastor offered, and think it's one of the best supports for our faith in Jesus as Savior. Especially as we just celebrated Resurrection Day—why would anybody want to serve any religion founder other than a Risen God? No placing flowers on Jesus' tomb for us! Praise the Lord!

The Lord bless you and keep you.

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

"Can a True Believer Commit the Unforgiveable Sin?"

Can a true believer turn away from God at some point and eventually commit blasphemy against the Holy Spirit? I don't believe a true Christian would be capable of that no matter how far they strayed because one saved, always saved, but I need verses to support my opinion to share with someone else.

Thank you for your question. The "unpardonable sin" of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is mentioned in the three synoptic Gospels: Matthew 12:31-32, Mark 3:28-29, and Luke 12:10. Historically, these verses have aroused a great deal of

anxiety and fear, especially in those with a sensitive conscience. But what do these sayings mean?

In my opinion, the two best positions are the following:

1. This sin is committed when someone willfully attributes the work of God the Holy Spirit to Satan.
2. This sin is simply willful and persistent rejection of, and lack of faith in, the person and work of Christ.

If the first option is correct, some would hold that it is not even possible to commit this sin today. In this view, this sin could only have been committed while Christ was physically present on earth and performing miraculous feats through the power of the Holy Spirit. Others would hold that the sin can be committed today; nevertheless, there is a pretty large consensus among evangelical Christians that a true believer could never commit this sin. After all, Peter says that all true believers "are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time" (1 Pet. 1:5). And Paul tells the Philippian believers that he is "confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus" (Phil. 1:6).

Although I may certainly be wrong, I honestly prefer the second view. Please notice that if this view is correct, a true believer could not possibly commit this sin by definition. While I could list many reasons why I prefer this view, let me mention just a few.

First, it is by far the easiest way to make Scriptural revelation self-consistent. For instance, we know that persistent unbelief is an unpardonable sin. But Jesus says that all sins and blasphemies will be forgiven except blasphemy against the Holy Spirit (Mark 3:28-29). Logic, then, seems to require that blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is persistent unbelief.

Second, notice the progression of ideas in Matthew 12:30-33. Jesus begins by stating the importance of being rightly related to Him (v. 30). He then describes the unpardonable sin (vv. 31-32). He then seems to present His listeners with a choice: "Either make the tree good…or make the tree bad; for the tree is known by its fruit" (v. 33). Could Jesus be offering those who had spoken against Him in v. 24 (they are the ones He is speaking to – v. 25), an opportunity to repent (i.e. change their minds about His identity) and become rightly related to Him in v. 33? If so, it would seem to indicate that blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is persistent unbelief. And the cure is faith, leading to forgiveness.

Third, although Mark's parenthetical explanation in 3:30 could be taken as evidence of the first view; nevertheless, I see in it evidence for the second view as well. After all, if they were saying that Jesus "has an unclean spirit" (v. 30), it certainly indicates that they did not believe Him to be who He actually was (and is). Thus, this statement is consistent with simple unbelief in the person of Christ.

Finally, why doesn't John mention this sin? It certainly seems like it would have been important. But what if he did mention it, but simply described it differently? Look at John 16:8-9. Jesus is speaking of sending the Holy Spirit after His ascension. Notice what He says of the Holy Spirit: "And He, when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin, and righteousness, and judgment; concerning sin, because they do not believe in Me…." The Holy Spirit convicts the world concerning the sin of unbelief, or lack of personal faith, in Jesus! Could the persistent rejection of the Holy Spirit's conviction, and the willful refusal to believe in Jesus, thus be blasphemy against the Holy Spirit? That, at any rate, is my opinion. Thus, by definition, it is absolutely impossible for a true believer to commit this terrible sin. It can only be committed by someone who persistently rejects the convicting ministry of the Holy Spirit, choosing to remain in their

unbelief.

Additionally, this ties in very well with what is said in other parts of the New Testament concerning the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer. All true believers receive the Holy Spirit (Rom.8:9, 14). The Holy Spirit testifies that believers are God's adopted children (Rom. 8:16). The indwelling ministry of the Holy Spirit in the believer's life is said to be permanent (John 14:16-17), a pledge or "down-payment" of an eternal inheritance (Eph. 1:13-14). Indeed, the Holy Spirit is said to "seal" believers "for the day of redemption" (Eph. 4:30)!

Just a very few of the many good passages on the security of the believer can be found in Rom. 8:28-39; John 10:27-30; and 1 John 5:9-13. But my own favorite is John 6:35-40. Read this passage carefully. Notice v. 37, that the one who comes to Jesus will certainly not be cast out. Notice that Jesus came to do the will of His Father (v. 38). But what was His Father's will? That the Son lose none of those who come to Him (v. 39)! But think about this. If Jesus loses even a single one who truly comes to Him for salvation, then He has not fulfilled the Father's will! But this is impossible for Jesus always does what is pleasing to His Father (John 8:29). Thus, it is impossible that Jesus will lose any who come to Him for salvation. Thus, Christians cannot commit the unpardonable sin.

Hope this helps. God bless you!

Michael Gleghorn
Probe Ministries

“I Have Some Basic God Questions”

Question #1: In John 1:3 it says, “All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.” Did God made Satan?

Question #2: Where was God when heaven and earth were not yet created?

Question #3: In John 10:30 Jesus said, “I and my Father are one.” Does this mean that Jesus is the Father also?

Question #4: Does this mean that Jesus knew all the events as the same as the Father also?

Question #5: In Ephesians 2:9 it states, “Not of works, lest any man should boast.” Does this mean “good works” is not necessary?

Question #1: Did God made Satan?

“Satan” means adversary. God created the angel who became Satan (i.e. the Adversary), but God created this angel (and everything else) good (Genesis 1:31). The fall of Satan may be described in Ezekiel 28:11-19. If so, note that before his fall he was created perfect and blameless (vv. 12, 15).

Question #2: Where was God when heaven and earth were not yet created?

Where was God before the creation of heaven and earth? Since God is omnipresent (i.e. present everywhere – See Psalm 139:7-12), He was present “everywhere.” Of course, prior to the creation of the universe, it’s difficult to know precisely what this might mean. However, since God is eternal, He has always existed; since He is omnipresent, He has always existed “everywhere” (whatever this might mean).

Question #3: Does this mean that Jesus is the Father also?

No; Jesus is the incarnate Son of God. The Father and Son are both God, but they are distinct Persons within the Godhead. John 1:1 helps us to see this. Notice that the Word (God the Son) was WITH God (i.e. the Father). This implies a distinction between the Father and the Son. But we also read that the Word WAS God. This implies that the Son, like the Father, is fully God. This obviously leads us into the mystery of the Trinitarian nature of God. God is one in essence, but subsists as three distinct Persons – the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Christians do NOT believe in three Gods. They believe in ONE God who subsists as THREE distinct Persons.

Question #4: Does this mean that Jesus knew all the events as the same as the Father also?

While incarnate on the earth, there were some things that were known by the Father, but not the Son (see Mark 13:32). I see this as a temporary and voluntary limitation of the Son's exercise of His Divine attributes while incarnate upon earth. Philippians 2:5-11 indicates that Jesus "emptied Himself" by becoming a Man. He did not give up His Divine attributes (for then He would no longer be God), but He freely consented to a temporary limitation of the exercise of these attributes while incarnate upon earth. As God the Son, He knows everything that the Father knows. Both the Son and the Father are omniscient (i.e. all-knowing).

Question #5: Does this mean "good works" is not necessary?

Good works are not necessary for salvation, for salvation is a *gift* of God (Ephesians 2:8). Nevertheless, good works are important, for as Paul says in Ephesians 2:10, believers are "created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them" (see also Titus 3:8). In other words, we are saved by God's grace through faith in Christ, completely apart from our works. But we are also saved

“for good works” (Ephesians 2:10). Genuine salvation (which comes first) produces the fruit of good works (which come after salvation).

The Lord bless you,

Michael Gleghorn
Probe Ministries

“Is it a sin for a married couple to masturbate during sex?”

Is it a sin for a married couple to masturbate during sex? In many cases a woman can’t get an orgasm without proper stimulation.

If a married couple is making love, then nothing they do together is considered masturbation. It’s all part of holy sex. (Masturbation is self-pleasure by oneself.)

You’re right, most women can’t have an orgasm without stimulation, which is how God planned it, I think. . . .the idea being that her husband would be the one to give her pleasure that way. The Song of Solomon even has a verse about the wife asking her husband to do exactly that: “Let his left hand be under my head, and his right hand embrace me.” (SoS 2:6).

Nothing a married couple does in the marriage bed is sin as long as it is mutually acceptable and it doesn’t involve anyone else (for example, porn movies or fantasies that involve another person). I think God intends for us to

experience far more freedom and enjoyment than a lot of people think! May I suggest you get an EXCELLENT book for married women called *Intimate Issues* by Linda Dillow and Lorraine Pintus. Absolutely the best book on the subject for women out there, I think. Please also see our article What's God's Plan for Sex in Marriage?"

Hope this helps!

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

"What About the Super-Secret Skull and Bones Society at Kerby Anderson's Alma Mater Yale?"

Both George W. Bush and John Kerry are members of a satanic secret society known as Skull and Bones. When both George W. Bush and John Kerry were asked about their involvement in Skull and Bones on the Tim Russert – Meet The Press show, both laughed it off as it was too secret to talk about… What are they hiding???

I wonder since Mr. Kerby Anderson is a Yale University graduate, will he dismiss the Skull & Bones secret club on Yale University as just a frat house like all the others fraternities??

Thank you for your question about Skull and Bones. From time to time we have received questions about this organization. When I was at Yale University, I passed by the building but

never really knew much about the organization.

Fortunately, David Aikman (former Senior Correspondent for *Time* Magazine) has written a book *A Man of Faith: The Spritual Journey of George W. Bush.* The following is an excerpt from his book about George Bush's involvement with Skull and Bones.

Kerby Anderson

> *In his junior year, George W. was "tapped" (invited by existing membership) for Skull and Bones, the well-known Yale senior-year secret society that was founded in 1832 and has been the focus of wild, indeed sometimes paranoid, conspiracy theories ever since. Skull and Bones is the most famous of the Yale societies, which admit a dozen or so juniors as lifetime members. Since the intake is so small, there are only around eight hundred Bonesmen (women were admitted for the first time in 1992) at any time, and Yale being already an elite institution, it is hardly surprising that Bonesmen have risen to be United States cabinet secretaries, Supreme Court justices, and even, on three occasions, presidents of the United States—most recently, Bush Senior and George W.*
>
> *The prestige of Skull and Bones membership and the fear of its alleged power among many of the society's critics are products of the secrecy in which the society has operated from the outset and the unmistakable achievement of generation upon generation of Bonesmen. President and Supreme Court Justice Howard Taft, Ambassador W. Averill Harriman, Secretary of State Henry Stimson, Massachusetts senator and Democratic presidential aspirant John Kerry, conservative political commentator and author William F. Buckley, and of course Bush Senior's father, Prescott Bush, later himself a U. S. Senator, were all Bonesmen. But while the first century and more of the Skull and Bones tradition was heavily Waspish from the 1950s onward, both African Americans and foreigners were admitted.*

Among those tapped along with George W. were an Orthodox Jew and a Jordanian Arab. Bonesmen traditionally are supposed to leave the room anytime a "barbarian" (i.e., non-Bonesman) even mentions the name of the society or the numeral by which it is also sometimes known, 322, In A Charge to Keep, George W. is dutifully reticent, writing, "My senior year I joined Skull and Bones, a secret society, so secret I can't say anything more. It was a chance to make fourteen new friends."

The Skull and Bones initiation ritual—which appears never to have been fully and credibly penetrated by outsiders—does seem to involve some hocus-pocus ceremonials, but almost certainly not of any genuinely "spiritual" significance. It focuses on stripping initiates of any pretense or barriers of reserve about who they really are—a process that, in its turn, is likely to reinforce a sense of bonding among the fifteen "knights," as the newly tapped members are called, for the rest of their time at Yale and, for many Bonesmen, for the rest of their lives.

In his important 1951 book, God and Man at Yale, William F. Buckley, a Bonesman, denounced the socialist and atheistic leanings of much of the Yale faculty, even as several bonesmen from earlier classes vigorously defended the university against Buckley's attack. They included McGeorge Bundy and none other than William Sloan Coffin, later to be a thorn in the flesh of freshman George W. In effect, if there had ever been some nefarious, anti-Christian plot cooked up within the "Tomb," as the Skull and Bones building is called, it does not seem to have made much imprint in the Bonesmen of the late twentieth century.

As for George W. Bush, Bonesmen reportedly never saw him return to the Tomb for reunions or dinners, unlike his father who was at a Bones Tomb celebration as recently as 1998. Though George W. certainly kept in touch with some of his fellow Bonesmen, he has affected an almost insouciant unawareness of the institution's recent or current

activities. According to Alexandra Robbins in her informative history of Skull and Bones George W. responded to a question about Bones by ABC News by saying "Does it still exist? The thing is so secret that I'm not even sure it still exists."

Bush's ambivalence about Skull and Bones probably is in part explained by the general suspicion of alleged East Coast supra-governmental conspiracies against American freedoms concocted by Ivy League elitists like Bonesmen, by members of the New York-based Council on Foreign Relations, or by the Trilateral Commission. When Bush Senior was running for U.S. Senate from Texas in 1964, critics said that he seemed tarred with the brush of East Coast elitism. The same charge—hardly possibly to disprove—was later to be used against Geroge W. when he ran unsuccessfully for Congress in Texas in 1978.

There are two other possible explanations for Bush's seeming lack of interest in the secret society of his senior year at Yale. One is that his own Christian experience later in life, an experience replete with deep and lasting spiritual relationships over many years with close Christian friends, has eclipsed whatever friendship bonding occurred at Skull and Bones. The second is George W.'s apparently lifelong distaste for the pretensions of much of the predominantly liberal world-view of many of the students and faculty on Ivy League campuses.

"I always felt that people on the East Coast tended to feel guilty about what they were given," he told an interviewer years later. "Like, 'I'm rich; they're poor.' Or 'I went to Andover and got a great education, and they didn't.' I was never one to feel guilty. I feel lucky. People who feel guilty react like guilty people."