“Let Me Tell You About How I Know God Has a Sense of Humor”

I was reading Sue Bohlin’s blog post Does God Has a Sense of Humor?, and I have something to add. My name, Talitha, is from Mark 5:41. It means “Little Girl.” My mother told me that when she was pregnant with me, God told her to name me Talitha. Oh, and the kicker? I’m five-foot, and 108 pounds, roughly. God DOES has a sense of humor!

Love it! Thank you so much for sharing your story—and for making me smile!

Warmly,

Sue Bohlin

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Spiritual Exoskeleton

March 27, 2013



I was crippled by polio at six months old, paralyzed from the waist down on my left side. In order to stand or walk at all, I was fitted with a steel-and-leather brace from hip to shoe. This brace provided the external support I needed to stay upright and to walk. I was blessed to regain some use of my leg, and my muscles slowly grew stronger. I was able to go to a half brace; then, when I learned to lock my knee, they took away the brace altogether because the strength and support became internal rather than external.

I am grateful for the way my brace gives me a picture of grace-filled accountability. One of the reasons God wants us to live in community is because sometimes we need an external support system that provides structure and support while we learn new ways of thinking and living. That external support system, a “spiritual exoskeleton,” can take many forms.

It’s friends who ask how they can pray for you and then follow up with shame-free, no-condemnation questions about how you’re doing.

It’s giving a trusted friend your car keys and debit card for

safe keeping when you are struggling with the temptation to go off by yourself to indulge in destructive choices.

It’s knowing you need software to block your computer access to pornography, and asking someone else to choose the password.

It’s asking a friend to check up on you and ask how you’re doing at keeping a particular promise or fulfilling an obligation.

It’s inviting someone to text or call when you’re being tempted. Even at 2 a.m.

It’s being transparent, such as showing an accountability partner your bank records or cell phone records.

It’s the wisdom of AA and other recovery groups who strongly suggest that an addict seeking to become an overcomer attend ninety meetings in ninety days.

It’s discovering that seeking God through participating in a liturgical church’s daily worship and prayer services can produce the spiritual fruit of greater intimacy with Him.

It’s encouraging others in choices and habits that will help them grow spiritually, mentally, and emotionally. Asking, “What book(s) are you reading right now?” “What are you wrestling with or learning from God right now?” “What one thing would you like to be different a month (or three) from now, that I can pray for you about?” It’s living out the truth of Proverbs 27:17, “As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.”

All these means of external support can become the beauty of internal strength as we “grow up into Christ, who is the head. From him the whole body grows, fitted and held together through every supporting ligament. As each one does its part, the body grows in love” (Eph. 4:15-16). The “spiritual

exoskeleton" can become the internal "supporting ligament," not to mention core strength, of self-controlled people.

Here's to being able to take off the braces of our lives—but first, we give thanks for them!

This blog post originally appeared at
blogs.bible.org/tapestry/sue_bohlin/spiritual_exoskeleton

Cruise Ships, Roller Coasters, and Attitudes

Last month, an engine fire disabled the cruise ship Carnival Triumph in the Gulf of Mexico. Almost no electricity, only one working elevator, and worst of all, a handful of working toilets for 4000+ people. Crew members handed out bio-hazard bags to set inside trash cans as ad hoc commodes, then collected them from hallways. Suddenly, the luxury vacation turned into a nightmare for a lot of people, especially those on the lowest floors and those in inside cabins.

No one had any control over their circumstances. They only had control over their attitudes. Some screeched their rage at Carnival, threatening that they would "own" the company after their lawsuits were filed. Others, with grace, remarked that they had a three-day wonderful cruise followed by a four-day camping trip. Some passengers set up a "tent city" on the pool deck, moving their mattresses and bedding to an outdoor location away from the growing stench of human waste. Others left their hopelessly dark cabins to set up their new digs in the now-worthless elevator lobbies.

No one was seriously hurt and everyone made it back safely to the U.S. (the huge ship was towed to Mobile, Alabama).

Now, I am a self-professed "cruise queen." It's my favorite kind of vacation, and I've been on that ship twice. If I'd been on that cruise, I would have been one of the people most affected by the loss of power, since the handicap accessible room cabins are on a lower floor, and the ship is too big for me to navigate without a scooter—which is useless when the batteries run down and you can't recharge them, not to mention the elevator problem. So I thought about how choosing one's attitude makes all the difference in any situation. A lot.

One of my most vivid memories showed me how true this is.

Before my mother died, I went to Las Vegas with her and my sister for a family wedding. My sister Julie and I decided we wanted to go on the roller coaster at New York, New York. To our surprise, Mom indicated she wanted to go too. I had never seen our mom as a roller coaster kind of person . . .! I sat next to her, with Julie in front of us. It was fine when the lap bar was locked in place, but she looked at me quizzically when the workers secured us in heavy-duty shoulder harnesses.

"Mom," I asked, "You *DO* know that this thing goes upside down, right?"

Eyes wide open, she said, "*WHAT?????!*"

And we were off.

Mom did not have a good time. Every time I looked at her, she had her lips tightly pursed and her eyes narrowed. Julie and I were whooping and hollering with fun, and Mom was miserable. Mom was experiencing the exact same thing we were, but she had a very different attitude about it.

They take your picture while you're on rides like this, and I asked playfully, "Mom, you want our picture as a souvenir of

our trip?" She growled, "NO!" And I laughed. . . and bought it.



Attitude is everything!

This blog post originally appeared at blogs.bible.org/tapestry/sue_bohlin/cruise_ships_roller_coasters_and_attitudes on March 18, 2013

Self-Care: Stewardship, Not Selfishness

Remember the safety demonstration on airplanes? "In the unlikely event of a sudden loss of cabin pressure, oxygen masks will drop from the overhead area. Place the mask over your own mouth and nose before assisting children." Every time I fly, I am reminded that taking care of one's own basic needs is not selfish; it enables us to give selflessly to others. Consider what would happen if a mother first put oxygen masks on her children, but lost consciousness before donning her own because she waited too long. Quite traumatic to her children,

right?

We can’t give to others what we don’t possess ourselves. That includes mental and emotional energy, love, grace, and compassion. If we’re running on empty, and have nothing to give, that is neither loving nor kind.

God’s gift of the Sabbath in the Old Testament (Ex. 16:29), and His invitation to enter His Sabbath rest in the New (Hebrews 4), is His intention for us to be blessed by recharging our batteries, feeding our souls, refilling our tanks. It’s a form of self-care. That’s going to look different for various people, but it’s all God’s provision of what He knows we need.

For my husband, self-care means walking our dog, listening to his music on these walks, working out, and getting off by himself. For me, self-care is enjoying a cup of high-quality coffee first thing in the morning while I meet God in His word, leaving my phone in another room and unplugging from the world for several hours, and getting to a place where I can drink in the beauty of crystal-blue Caribbean water. Both of us have learned that we emerge from a time of self-care ready to focus on other people and the tasks before us. Self-care enables us to be self-forgetful, which is a wonderful place to be!

In the gospels, we see the Lord Jesus’ self-care as getting up early to spend time with His Father. He would no longer think of ministering in His own strength than we could successfully complete a road trip without stopping to refuel our gas tank. I think hanging out with His dear friends Martha, Mary and Lazarus may have been a form of self-care as well.

If God has created our bodies, minds and souls and thus they belong to Him, then we are responsible for taking care of them. Caring for His creation honors God and fulfills the duty of a steward: “Now what is sought in stewards is that one be

found faithful" (1 Cor. 4:2).

Self-care is not selfishness, it is stewardship. How are you caring for God's treasure that is you?

This blog post originally appeared at blogs.bible.org/tapestry/sue_bohlin/self-care_stewardship_not_selfishness on Feb. 26, 2013.

Happy Birthday to Jesus-in-Me!

Happy Birthday to Jesus-in-Me!

Today is my spiritual birthday. 40 years ago I woke up in the morning a sophomore in college, disengaged with God, ignoring Him like I had for years, but when I went to bed that night my entire world and eternity had changed forever. In the middle of the day, a classmate handed me a flyer, inviting me to a performance of an illusionist/magician, André Kole. I was intensely interested, being a fan of illusion, but when the flyer revealed the event was sponsored by Campus Crusade for Christ, I said to myself, "Forget it." I was *not* interested in hanging with Jesus freaks! But as the day wore on, it felt like there was a string tied around my heart, drawing me to that evening's performance.

So I went.

And André Kole used magic to illustrate spiritual principles that made sense to me, especially when he talked about every human being having a God-shaped hole in our hearts that we try to stuff with anything *but* God: good grades, reputation, relationships, appearance, money, attention, achievements. He

explained how God had sent Jesus to earth to show us what He was like, and then Jesus died on the cross to deal with our sin once and for all. Three days later God raised Him from the dead and He's still alive today, unlike the founder of any other world religion. If I trusted in Jesus, He would come to live inside me forever and He, being God, would fill that God-shaped hole and I could experience the "abundant life" He came to bring us (John 10:10). I remember thinking, "YES!!" and threw open the door of my heart to Him, placing myself in Jesus' hands and trusting Him with my life and my future.

I had no idea what that meant. I just knew it was right.

Life became a perpetual surprise box as God started making changes in me from the inside out. To my delight, I discovered that all the things I really liked about myself then, and even moreso as forty years have unfolded, were the things that God put in me. He gave me a depth of joy that I didn't know was possible. He planted spiritual gifts in me that were the manifestation of His Holy Spirit shining through the window of my life: gifts of shepherd/teacher, of encouragement, of word of wisdom, all of which came straight from His heart into mine. He continued to shape the personality and temperament He had given me with maturity and seasoning. He made my heart a big pipe through which He poured His love into other people.



I remember one time a couple of months into my new life, discovering a different kind of fellowship with other Christ-followers and a love for God's word as I started being taught the Bible and learning to teach others what I was learning, wondering if this cool new life would last or if it was just some sort of fad. I didn't know that God was *transforming* me, giving me a taste for His life and His kingdom that would spoil me for any counterfeit the world had to offer. He opened my eyes to be aware of the spiritual realm, not just the physical realm I lived in, and enlarged my understanding to

include the Big Picture of life on earth and in eternity. I learned that my life wasn't about me at all, it was about Jesus, and because He loved me, He had drawn me into His life, His circle of delight and fellowship with His Father and His Spirit—that I was now included into the "holy hug" of Father, Son and Spirit who had adopted me, and I was now a daughter of the King—which makes me a forever princess! Forty years later, I still revel in that gift, and I love to pull out a tiara and pop it on my head when I'm sharing my story of grace with people.

When I was a little girl I just wanted to be happy when I grew up. Who doesn't, right? But what I discovered is that God had His definition of happy—blessed—plus so much more. He gave me Himself, and all the good things of life are found in Him.

Happy birthday to Jesus-in-me! My heart is overflowing with unspeakable gratitude!

This blog post originally appeared at http://blogs.bible.org/engage/sue_bohlin/happy_birthday_to_jesus-in-me on Feb. 12, 2013

Don't Judge Me?

The 14-year-old daughter of a friend recently responded to her mother's correction with, "Don't judge me, Mom." The same week, a friend of mine asked my opinion on something, and as I was mentally running it through the grid of "what does God say about this in His word," she said, "Now, don't you go judging me!"

Tolerance and acceptance—the *new* tolerance, which says that

every value, belief and behavior should be embraced as equally valid—are the highest values of our culture. Which makes judging the most hideous and unacceptable of sins.

Now, to be fair, there is a lot of ugly judging in the world. Before a friend became a Christ follower, she was on the receiving end of a lot of hateful judging when she would protest at gay rights events, hearing "You're going to hell!" and other ugly epithets. People who didn't know her at all made judgments about her character and her destiny. I have personally received my share of hate mail from strangers accusing me of not being a Christian because I disagree with them on a cherished position.

But if we get pulled over for speeding, and the officer points out that we were going twenty miles over the speed limit, nobody says, "Don't judge me, officer!" He's not judging our character, he's comparing our behavior to the law.

Judging is assuming you have all the facts and making an assessment of condemnation out of ignorance. It's about smugly believing "I'm right and you're wrong. You are lesser-than."

There is a huge misunderstanding about judging both outside and inside the church, and it comes from not knowing what the Bible teaches about judging. Everybody seems to be familiar with "Judge not, lest ye be judged" (Matt. 7:1). That is the Lord Jesus' call not to judge hypocritically. But in John 7:24 He also calls us to judge rightly. And remember the passage about pulling the plank out of our own eye so we can see clearly to remove the speck from our brother's eye (Matt. 7:5)? That's about judging as well. The point there is about examining ourselves first before dealing with another's sin, not to ignore other people's behavior.

But then there's the "big daddy" passage of 1 Corinthians 5:9-13:

> I have written you in my letter not to associate with

> sexually immoral people-not at all meaning the people of this world who are immoral, or the greedy and swindlers, or idolaters. In that case you would have to leave this world. But now I am writing you that you must not associate with anyone who calls himself a brother but is sexually immoral or greedy, an idolater or a slanderer, a drunkard or a swindler. With such a man do not even eat.
>
> What business is it of mine to judge those outside the church? Are you not to judge those inside? God will judge those outside. “Expel the wicked man from among you.”

This passage clearly says that we are to judge those inside the Body of Christ. Judging doesn’t mean condemning, though; often it’s a matter of comparing one’s behavior with what is right, and pointing out the dangers of one’s choices, the way we would want to warn someone in a burning building to get out, or urge someone headed toward a cliff to turn around.

Comparing someone’s beliefs and actions to a standard can be a loving thing to do. A lady working in an after-school program noticed that one little girl was clearly not doing well on her homework, but she also seemed to not be working very hard at it. The teacher said, “I think your brain is switched off! May I touch your head? I think I can find the switch and turn it back on!” The wide-eyed little one gave permission and the teacher said with a smile, “Oh, here it is! Right under one of your braids! Let’s turn your brain back on!” What a lovely, eloquent way to call a child to live up to her potential without shaming or judging her for being lazy or stupid.

Challenging someone to be better than they are can be a gift. One of the best-ever movie lines is in “As Good As It Gets” when Jack Nicholson tells Helen Hunt, “You make me want to be a better man.” When parents ask their children at report card time, “Did you do your best? Only you can know,” they are giving them a chance to honestly compare their ability to their potential. It honors another to say something like, “I

think you'll be happier with yourself if you live out your gifting" rather than shaming them with something like, "What a loser." Now *that's* shaming.

And judging.

And ugly.

And unlike Jesus.

This blog post originally appeared at blogs.bible.org/engage/sue_bohlin/dont_judge_me on January 28, 2013.

A Golf Lesson for Non-Golfers

Jan. 16, 2013

Recently my husband and I, along with two friends, took a golfing excursion in Jamaica while on a cruise. Two of them golfed while the other two of us rode in a cart taking pictures of the golfers and the breathtaking beauty of the mountainous course that provided ocean views from almost every hole.



This course required a caddy (a golfing-savvy helper) to accompany every golfer, and it was the first time our friend Pam had ever golfed with a caddy. She kept marveling at the Christian life lessons she was learning from the specialized help she

received throughout the game. At dinner on the last night of the cruise, the eight people at our table each shared the highlight of our week; Pam's was definitely "golfing with a caddy."

Pam realized that her experience on the golf course was a picture of how the Holy Spirit would love to bless us, as a kind of "internal caddy," if we would just allow Him to:

Giving instruction: the caddy would suggest ways to shift her stance, her grip on the club, or the way to swing. When she followed through on what he said, it helped her game—and it helped her have more fun.

The Holy Spirit knows the best way to approach and execute every detail of our lives, and will gently prompt and nudge us if we will just listen expectantly to His suggestions.

Giving direction: out of his knowledge of the challenging terrain of the course, the caddy would suggest which club to use. Sometimes Pam would disregard the suggestion and "lean on her own understanding" (Prov. 3:5) and it never worked out as well as when she followed his advice. He never shamed her when she chose a different club, just allowing the consequences of her choice to speak far more eloquently.

The Holy Spirit knows the terrain of every step of our journey through life, and He knows how to direct our paths (Prov. 3:6). As we learn to listen to His voice, He whispers, "This is the way; walk ye in it" (Is. 30:21). When we quench Him instead (1 Thess. 5:19), He never shames us; He allows us to learn from the more painful teacher of consequences.

Encouragement: when Pam made a bad swing, she defaulted to what many women do, saying, "I'm sorry." Apologizing for not being perfect, right? How many times do we do that? Then she would hear the powerful words of encouragement, "Look, you hit the ball! Good for you!"

The Holy Spirit is the ultimate encourager, comforter and counselor. He reminds us of truth from God's word and will often whisper (sometimes even thunder!) to us exactly what we need to hear: things like, "I will take care of you," "You are not alone, I am here," and "I love you."

Trust: several times, Pam's caddy would look at her and say, "Trust me." He had the confidence of years of experience, but she had to choose to place herself in his hands by following his advice. He never steered her wrong.

The Holy Spirit is constantly engineering circumstances that invite us to trust Him. As I come up on 40 years of walking with Jesus, it seems to me that every life quiz or test from God has the same answer: "Trust Me."

In the space of a five-hours golf game, Pam made some amazing discoveries about the Christian life that will last for a long, long time. Instead of a white jumpsuited-clad caddy helping her golf, her big takeaway was that the indwelling Holy Spirit wants to be even more involved in every aspect of her day, her life, her choices, her sorrows, her joys.

Fore!

This blog post originally appeared at
blogs.bible.org/engage/sue_bohlin/a_golf_lesson_for_non-golfers

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LET IT GO

Tweet

January 1, 2013

Most people's New Year's resolutions involve things to add or incorporate into your life: losing weight, reading through the Bible, decluttering your house, filing your income tax before April 15. (I hereby make a public commitment on that last one. Feel free to ask me about it.)

But some people don't need to add anything else, they need to LET GO.

Judy's ex-husband made some horrifically sinful, deceived, foolish choices that culminated with sex-change surgery. For months she has been tormenting herself daily with false guilt: if she had loved him more, if she had changed this or that, he wouldn't have mutilated himself, now preening before a mirror at how beautiful he thinks he is. She needs to let go of the fantasy that it was within her power to fix him or change him. She needs to let go of the refusal to accept reality.

Polly is married to a difficult man. Neither one knew the other well when they married after a short internet courtship. She believed that marriage was an endless supply of unconditional love, acceptance and conversation. He believed that marriage was an endless supply of sex multiple times a day. Fifteen years later, she sees women she thinks are released from their sin-wracked marriages and doesn't understand why God keeps telling her to stay put and trust Him. She needs to let go of the fantasy of an easy out that would solve her problems.

Diane dances at the brink of disaster, focusing on how wonderful it would feel to nuzzle and cuddle the other women she's attracted to. When she crosses the line into flirting, touching inappropriately, and making suggestive small talk, she destroys one friendship after another. She needs to let go of the resentment that God says same-sex relationships are wrong and let go of the fantasy that if He would just say it's

okay, she could cross the line with impunity and she could get what she's sure would make her happy. Finally.

Colleen bought into the lie that she could get away with cheating on her husband. When she came to her senses after the divorce was final and her husband had custody of their children, she begged for forgiveness and reconciliation. But he had given himself permission to move on, and refused to consider it. Now she beats herself up regularly: "I can't do this! I want my family back! What can't I have my family back?" She also needs to let go of her refusal to accept reality, pushing back with, "I don't want reality! Why can't I have my family back?"

Brae carries deep wounds from her family. Unrelenting shame often erupts in rage, but Brae cannot imagine being able to express her rage at her shaming parents. So she directs it at herself through life-threatening self-injury. She needs to let go of the belief that watching her blood flow into the bathtub is a solution to the emotions that overwhelm her. And she needs to let go of the belief that hurting herself is the only way to release the rage inside.

We all cling to wrong beliefs and sometimes demonic deceptions that we trust to make life work, but they are our blind spots. We can no more identify those false idols than a fish can tell you what water is.

That's why one of the best prayers we can pray is, *Lord, show me where I'm being deceived. Reveal my idols to me. Show me what I'm trusting to make life work instead of You. Shine a light on where I need to let go of every thought, every habit, every burden, every encumbrance that so easily entangles me* (Heb. 12:1).

And then LET GO of whatever He shows us.

Often, God uses other people who are "doing life" with us, who don't have blinders on like we do, to point out the self-

sabotaging or dangerous or foolish things we cling to-or which we allow to cling to us. This is yet another reason He wants us to live in community, where we know and are known and people will speak the truth in love to us.

When they point out something that is a self-sabotaging or dangerous or foolish encumbrance, we need LET IT GO.

Lord, I need You to help me LET GO of whatever You convict me of. In Your strength, I set it down, relinquishing it into Your hands. Receive this thing as an act of worship. I can't do it on my own.

This blog post originally appeared at
blogs.bible.org/tapestry/sue_bohlin/let_it_go

Are You a Safe Person?

Dec. 19, 2012

We all want people in our lives that we can be real with, people we can trust with our hearts and our struggles, people we can risk opening up to. But it is foolishness to share the treasure of our hearts with unsafe people who will judge us, shame us, or condemn us.

So what does a safe person look like? How do we recognize them? And more importantly, how do we become one?

Being a safe person starts with owning your own brokenness and need for Jesus. It means admitting you're not perfect. Beyond that, it means dropping the unrealistic hope of perfection in this lifetime and the pretense that you've got it all together. It means being open about your hurts, your

temptations, your failings, your humanity. A safe person gets that “there but for the grace of God, go I.”

A safe person is humble, which means being right-sized. Not pretending to be bigger than they really are, and not thinking they are less than they really are. Right-sized! Humble people don’t look down on others from their “superior” position, but they don’t put others on a pedestal either. They understand that the ground is level at the foot of the cross.

A safe person understands grace and gives it to others. I love Pastor John Ortberg’s delightful definition: “Grace is the offer of God’s ceaseless presence and irrational love that cannot be stopped. It’s the flow of God’s power and presence and favor in your life from one moment to the next that enables you to do whatever it is God has for you to do.”

Grace is acceptance. It looks at others and communicates, “I accept you just as you are.” Acceptance doesn’t mean agreeing about everything, or condoning others’ foolish or sinful choices; it means not denying reality, and respecting other people’s right to make their own choices. God accepts us just as we are but He doesn’t agree with our sin. When a friend’s daughter confessed she was pregnant and unmarried, it was a painful struggle for the mom. One day she protested in her prayer time, “Lord, I suppose You want me to help put together a *shower* for her?!” She was taken aback by the gentle response she received: “Every child deserves to be welcomed and celebrated.” Chastened, she helped organize a shower for a little girl who has been nothing but a blessing and an unimaginable joy from the day she was born. My friend learned to live out the grace of acceptance without compromising on the sin that created the situation in the first place.

Safe people encourage others, by their example of transparency and authenticity, to be the same person on the outside that they are on the inside.

Safe people remember there are two sides to every story, and they wait to make a judgment till they hear the other side.

Safe people seek to maintain a non-judgmental attitude toward others. They don't shame others. They don't criticize others.

Safe people are honest people. They speak the truth in love (Eph. 4:15) as a way of life. Safe people teach themselves to be good listeners. When the other person is talking, they're not thinking about what they are going to say when the other's done; they simply receive their words with respectful attentiveness.

Safe people love with God's love. By abiding in the vine (John 15), they stay yielded to God, and His love flows through a pipeline from the Father's heart to others' hearts.

Safe people are forgiving people. They extend to others the forgiveness they have received from God and from others.

Safe people seek forgiveness when they blow it. They confess their specific faults, acknowledge the effects of their actions on others, and ask for forgiveness.

It's especially wonderful when safe people become leaders, because they understand that brokenness and struggles are a normal part of growing and of the sanctification process. They know there will be stumbles and falls. They expect it. They're not shocked when it happens. So when it does, they recall their own desperate need for Jesus and His grace, and they extend it with sorrow rather than judgment, and compassion rather than criticism.

How safe a person are *you?*

This blog post originally appeared at
blogs.bible.org/tapestry/sue_bohlin/are_you_a_safe_person

Queen James Bible

Thomas Jefferson created his own version of the New Testament by literally cutting and pasting everything he agreed with, and leaving out anything supernatural. That's one way to treat what you don't like in God's word. Another is the recent publication of the Queen James Bible, where the editors changed eight verses that express God's prohibitions of homosexual acts to make homosexual expression okay.



As Bible versions go, this is a rather bizarre one. Legitimate Bibles are translated and thoroughly discussed by a team of scholars whose identities and credentials are freely cited. The identity of the QJV editors is completely opaque, per the QueenJamesBible.com website and, apparently, the printed Bible itself. On Amazon, the author is listed as "God," with "Jesus Christ" as a contributor.

The King James Version, first published in 1611, is now in the public domain. The editors changed the wording on eight verses that prohibit gay and lesbian practice, leaving the rest of the text unchanged. They explain their reasoning on the website and the printed version. Not a bit of it holds water.

For example,

Genesis 19:5
KJV: And they called unto Lot, and said unto him, Where are the men which came in to thee this night? Bring them out unto us, that we may **know** them.
QJV: And they called unto Lot, and said unto him, Where are the men which came in to thee this night? Bring them out unto us, that we may **rape and humiliate** them.

The editors write, “We side with most Bible scholars who understand the story of Sodom and Gomorra to be about bullying strangers.” Most Bible scholars? Maybe the few the editors read. That statement is patently untrue, particularly in the scope of church history. Further, the Hebrew word for “know” is used 946 times in the Old Testament, and not one time does it mean “rape and humiliate.”

Leviticus 18:22
KJV: Thou shalt not lie with mankind, as with womankind: it is an abomination.
QJV: Thou shalt not lie with mankind as with womankind **in the temple of Molech**: it is an abomination.

Since the command not to participate in pagan child sacrifice to the pagan god Molech immediately precedes the prohibition against men lying with men, the editors decided to incorporate it into verse 22. Interestingly, the verse on the other side of verse 22 prohibits sex with animals, but the editors decided to ignore that one in favor of reconfiguring this classic prohibition against male homosexual acts to be limited to male temple prostitutes.

Romans 1:27
KJV: And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet.
QJV: Men with men working that which is pagan and unseemly. For this cause God gave the idolators up unto vile affections, receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet.

The editors, citing Paul’s familiarity with the holiness code in Leviticus, decided that “Leviticus, as we know, is intended to condemn ritual impurities associated with pagan idol worship.” So the editors pass the Romans passage—that condemns all same-sex intercourse—through the lens of pagan ritual and

idolatry only. They ignore Paul's use of the word "natural," which is important because the apostle supports God's design for male-female pairings in creation.

1 Corinthians 6:9
KJV: Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, **nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind**.
QJV: Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, **nor morally weak, nor promiscuous.**

The two Greek words in this passage were not ambiguous in that culture. Bible scholar Dr. Robert Gagnon explains them: "Malakoi (lit., "soft men," but taken in the sense of men who feminize themselves to attract male sex partners) and arsenokoitai (literally, "men who lie with [koite] a male [arsen]") in 1 Cor 6:9 are clearly inclusive of all homosexual bonds. . ." (www.robgagnon.net/articles/HomosexHowBadIsIt.pdf) It is irresponsible to twist these descriptors to mean "morally weak" and "promiscuous."

The Bible is replete with stories of people who "did what was right in [their] own eyes" (Judges 17:6). It never ends well. The Queen James Bible is another in a long line of unfortunate decisions to set aside what God has said and pursue what people think will make them happy. At the core of the QJV, just as in every self-serving sin each of us indulges in, is a core of rebellion and independence from God.

Editors can change the words they don't like in God's word, but it doesn't change the reality of His created intent for us. One day, the people who published this Bible, just like the people who believe the changes, will face the truth: God knows what He's doing, and we don't get a vote in it.

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