

“Your Article on A Course in Miracles Is Very Disturbing”

I found your article on [A Course in Miracles](#) very disturbing. This person is telling me that his opinion is the one I should follow because he is a Christian. I have been a practicing Catholic most of my life and I was under the impression that Christians are supposed to be charitable in that they gently pose their opinions, not slap you over the head with the idea of If You Don't Follow Me You Are Not Following Jesus!! I do have a STRONG belief in Jesus but I do not profess any organized church as my own. Does this mean that because I don't go to a church every Sunday that I also will burn in the fires of Eternal Damnation? Please excuse me. I have been reading information on “A Course In Miracles” and as the information I have read has stated this course can be interpreted many different ways. However, so can the Bible, and this person takes the idea that Satan has written “A Course In Miracles” and that anyone taking it will meet the devil and his minions face to face a bit too far. Please excuse me once again but God forbid that any of us should follow Jesus' path and meet the devil face to face and say through the strength Jesus brings “Get Thee Behind Me Satan”!

Mother of 2

Thank you for writing with your concerns about our article on “A Course in Miracles.” Although I didn't write the article, it is my privilege to respond to your letter as one “Mother of 2” to another.

This article was written to educate and warn people about the true source of the Course, because most people don't know what the Bible says and therefore they don't recognize spiritual danger. As a mom, you can recognize dangers that your kids can't because they aren't as well-educated in the ways of the

world as you are, and because you know more about how life works than they do. The author of this article, Russ Wise, has been studying the occult for many years and is extremely well-versed in the many doors into it. He wrote this article in the same spirit in which we as moms lovingly warn our kids, because it really IS a doorway to demons even if it looks innocent and spiritual on the outside.

As I read your letter, it seems to me that you're angry about religious things that have nothing to do with either this article or The Course. I can understand that. . . I was REALLY angry with God and with the church when I stopped going in high school. I found out later that my anger wasn't about God at all, it was about the frustrations of the emptiness of organized religion when what my soul longed for was a personal relationship with God. It took me several years to discover that I could have that relationship, through Jesus.

I'm glad to hear you have a strong belief in Jesus. That's great, since He has a strong belief in YOU! [smile] And that's why we have articles like this one on The Course, because it very subtly attacks His rightful place as King of Kings and Lord of Lords by making him just another spiritual guru, and one of many ways to God. But Jesus said He was the ONLY way to the Father, and proved it by dying on the cross in our place and coming back to life three days later.

To get back to your original letter, I would suggest that perhaps it would be good to do some research on your own—find out if it really is true that saying that The Course will lead one to demons is going “a bit too far.” Either it's true or it's not. If it's not, there's nothing to fear. If it is, that's a very scary proposition. . . and that's why we posted this article.

I pray God's good and rich blessings on your life and heart.

Sue Bohlin

“Magic: The Gathering is Better than Other Bad Stuff Kids Can Get Into”

This article has been removed while we do further research.

“Is Magic: The Gathering’ OK For Kids?”

This article has been removed while we research this topic again.

“On What Authority Do You Call New Age Thought Demonic?”

On what authority do you call New Age thought demonic? You

have a closed mind and are only allowing yourself to grow within the confines of your narrowness.

I call New Age thought demonic on the authority of God's word. Whenever philosophies and religions differ from what God has revealed to us as truth, particularly when they directly contradict what He says, then either the Bible is lying or the philosophies are lying. They can't both be right. And since there is an evil spirit who desperately hates God and whose native tongue is lying, I'm going to agree with God instead of the lying spirit.

You are so right—there truly is a narrowness to my perspective. Truth is narrow, but untruth is wide and popular. I've experienced both, and I choose the narrow truth. One leads to life and peace; the other leads to death. It's been my experience that those who disrespect the Bible have never seriously examined its reliability and truthfulness, but have instead relied on the hearsay evidence of those who want it not to be true and so they easily dismiss it.

By the way, if I'm wrong then I've lost nothing. If I'm right, then you've lost everything. There really is an ultimate truth that cost God greatly to communicate it fully to us.

I pray you'll see the truth one day.

Warmly,

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

“What is a Biblical View of Kabbalah?”

My daughter-in-law has told me that she is checking out the religion Kabbalah. What can you tell me about this religion and do you have a Biblical critique? She was also dabbling into Wicca. My wife found your critique and we have forwarded it to her.

I am so sorry. It sounds like you have received your “marching orders” from God: to intercede for your d-i-l!! This is spiritual warfare.

The Watchman Fellowship (watchman.org) provides this short description of Kabbalah:

Kabbalah: (Various spellings) Mystical Jewish teachings intermingled with teachings of gnosticism, Neoplatonism, magic and the occult. The word Kabbalah means secret oral tradition and was coined by an eleventh century Spanish philosopher, Ibn Gabirol. The philosophy developed in Babylon during the middle ages from earlier Hebrew speculation and numerology. An early Kabbalist, Moses de Leon, developed and systematized the philosophy in his thirteenth century work, The Book of Zohar (sometimes spelled Zohar meaning Splendor).

The Christian Research Institute has this article on the subject (note that there are different spellings for the same thing):

www.equip.org/articles/kabbalah-getting-back-to-the-garden

Bottom line: Kabbalah is a mystical spiritual teaching that emphasizes secret knowledge (old-fashioned gnosticism, addressed by Paul in Colossians, that’s still around today). This secret knowledge stands in direct opposition to the way

God communicates plainly with us through the Bible. Kabbalah uses animistic principles (see our [article on animism](#)) of superstitious practices to attempt to exert control over the world: “numerology, talismans, amulets, and incarnation of divine names and words,” to quote from the CRI article.

Your daughter-in-law is searching for spiritual truth and experience. Praise the Lord! That IS better than spiritual disinterest and apathy. I pray with you that the Lord will pierce the darkness and deception of her heart with His truth and the evidence of His love, drawing her to Himself.

Blessings,

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

“What’s a Biblical Description of Witchcraft?”

I was just curious if the Bible has any description of what witchcraft is or what characteristics of a person make them a witch?

First of all, here are the biblical references to witchcraft and other occult practices:

DEUTERONOMY 18:9-14

When you enter the land which the LORD your God gives you, you shall not learn to imitate the detestable things of those nations.

There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, one who uses divination,

one who practices witchcraft, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer, or one who casts a spell, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead.

For whoever does these things is detestable to the LORD; and because of these detestable things the LORD your God will drive them out before you.

You shall be blameless before the LORD your God.

For those nations, which you shall dispossess, listen to those who practice witchcraft and to diviners, but as for you, the LORD your God has not allowed you to do so.

LEVITICUS 19:26-28,31

You shall not eat anything with the blood, nor practice divination or soothsaying.

You shall not round off the side-growth of your heads nor harm the edges of your beard.

You shall not make any cuts in your body for the dead nor make any tattoo marks on yourselves: I am the LORD.

Do not turn to mediums or spiritists; do not seek them out to be defiled by them. I am the LORD your God.

In her excellent book *Lord, Is It Warfare?*, Kay Arthur provides this glossary of terms used in these passages:

DEFINITIONS OF TERMS USED IN DEUTERONOMY 18:9-14 AND LEVITICUS 19:26-28,31

1. **Casts spell:** the act of charming; “tying up” a person through magic; used in the sense of binding with a charm consisting of words of occult power.

2. **Divination:** the act of divining sorcery; soothsaying; pagan contrast to true prophecy or prophesying; man’s attempt to know and control the world and future apart from the true God using means other than human; foretelling or foreseeing the future or discovering hidden knowledge through reading omens, dreams, using lots, astrology, or necromancy.

3. **Interpret omens:** a type of divination; seeking insight or

knowledge through signs or events.

4. **Medium:** necromancer; one who foretells events or gains information by conversing with spirits of the dead; conjurer.

5. **Necromancer:** one who calls up the dead; medium.

6. **Spiritist:** familiar spirit; one who has esoteric knowledge through non-human means; diviner.

7. **Soothsaying:** witchcraft; observing clouds for augury; foretelling future events with supernatural power but not divine power; interpreting dreams; revealing secrets.

8. **Sorcerer:** magician; conjurer; enchanter; one who practices magic arts, sorcery, charms, with an intent to do harm or to delude or pervert the mind; one who claims to have supernatural power or knowledge through (evil) spirits.

9. **Witchcraft:** soothsaying; practice of witches; the use of formulas and incantations to practice sorcery; act of producing extraordinary effects by the invocation or aid of demons; the use of magic arts, spells, or charms.

Hope this helps!

Sue Bohlin

Probe Ministries

“Do You Have Any Advice to High School Graduates?”

Funny you should ask; after polling some wise people I know on “Things I Wish Someone Had Told Me Before I Graduated,” I just

shared these thoughts with our graduating senior girls in our church.

- **The importance of choosing purity.** This is the biggest area of regret for many people, but especially young women, who pay a greater cost of giving their bodies away. One lady said, “I wish someone had told me that my body is a precious gift from God to give to ONE man. I wish someone had told me that if someone pays attention to you or says nice things, it doesn’t mean they love you and it SURE doesn’t mean you have to give them your body.”

One element of choosing purity is to choose modesty in dress and behavior. Showing skin (especially midriffs, shoulders and backs) is a great temptation to men and it is a statement about oneself that a girl might not want to be making: “I care more about what’s trendy than about honoring God with my body. I want guys to look at me, even if they have to struggle with their flesh over it.”

- **Don’t get into credit card debt.** The credit card companies will throw undeserved credit at you, and it doesn’t take any time at all to be way over your head. One young lady was so desperate for other people’s approval that she got \$80,000 into debt to buy friends and impress people. The people aren’t around anymore, but her debt certainly is. Proverbs says that you are in bondage to your debtors, and credit card debt is a terrible kind of prison.

- **If you find yourself wondering, “Should I be doing this?” you probably shouldn’t.** Untold heartache and regret can be avoided by listening to that internal alarm. You won’t wonder “should I be doing this?” about things you should do, like, “Should I brush my teeth today?” “Should I be kind to my friends?” “Should I exercise self-control?”

- **Choose your friends wisely.** You will become like the people you hang out with, so choose people with beliefs and behaviors

consistent with godliness.

- **Pursue your relationship with Christ.** Less than half of the students in church youth groups will still be walking with God ten years after they graduate. Pre-decide to be one of those people. Go to church every Sunday. *GO TO CHURCH EVERY SUNDAY!* Get plugged into campus Christian groups as soon as you get to college. If you don't go to college, get plugged into some Christian fellowship group where you will be continually encouraged in your walk with God in the context of Christian community. You are like wet cement; you will (probably) determine the shape of your spiritual life for the rest of your adult life by the choices you make and the habits you form during ages 18-24.

- **Pursue wisdom.** Pray for "wisdom beyond your years." God loves to answer that prayer! Pray for your future spouse. Young women tend to be very passionate and full of longings for connection to a husband; turn that emotional energy into something constructive by praying faithfully for your husband. You might consider keeping a journal for him that you can give him when you marry, so he can see how you became the woman you will be. Write down your thoughts and feelings as well as the ways you are praying for him, even before you know him. At the same time, don't go to college for an "MRS degree," looking for a husband. Trust God to take care of that in His time. Getting married is a lousy goal for college.

- **Develop self-confidence.** Forget all the garbage about self-esteem that you were taught in school. It's not bestowed, it's earned. Real self-esteem is self-confidence, and there's only way to get it: by doing hard things, by rising to a challenge and working until you succeed.

- **PRAY!** Pray for your roommate. Pray for your studies, pray for your work. When you find yourself battling loneliness or homesickness, press hard into Jesus and let those hard feelings drive you to pray in dependence on Him. Trust God to

be in control, and rest in Him. He loves you more than you can imagine!

Hope you find this helpful.

Sue Bohlin

“When Are We Truly Forgiveness, at the Cross or at Confession?”

Some Christian writers have claimed it's unnecessary for Christians to ask for God's forgiveness since all our sins (pre- and post-conversion, past and future) were forgiven when Christ said "It is finished" (John 19:30). But two scriptures seem to contradict this: Jesus' model prayer instructs us to pray for forgiveness for ourselves (Luke 11:4), and he says in Matthew 6:15 that God will not forgive us (assuming "us" refers to believers, as he is addressing his disciples) if we do not forgive others. When do you consider that we are truly forgiven, at the cross or when we confess our sin (1 John 1:9)?

Great question!

I think it's frankly obnoxious to teach that we don't have to ask for forgiveness when we sin. One follower of one of these writers you mention carried it so far as to make a personal vow that he didn't ever have to say "I'm sorry" or "Please forgive me" when he hurt anyone because after all, his sins were forgiven at the Cross! (Need I elaborate on what that did to his marriage and family and workplace relationships???)

There is a difference between knowing we were forgiven at the cross, and experientially RECEIVING that forgiveness after we sin. It's like the difference between standing at the bottom of a waterfall, thirsty, with our cup upside down. . . and turning the cup right side up to receive the water.

Forgiveness was offered to everyone at the Cross, but we don't experience it until we confess our sins and receive it by faith (turning our cups right side up). The question of when we are truly forgiven depends on if you're looking at it from God's perspective or from ours. God-wise, we were forgiven before we even knew we needed forgiveness. Man-wise, we are forgiven when we receive it.

Also, receiving forgiveness afresh when we sin is what reconnects our broken relationship with God and with others. Confession and forgiveness are intrinsically related to fellowship and intimacy.

Hope this helps!

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

“Help! My Husband's Addicted to Porn!”

I am in a dilemma. I have been married for nineteen years. We have two beautiful children and what I thought was a 'picture perfect' marriage. Although I would have liked to make love more often, my husband never seemed interested – so I assumed he had a low level of sexual desire.

Recently I discovered to my horror that my husband has been

masturbating to hard-core pornography. When I approached him about it, he was very angry at first, saying that "All husbands have secrets from their wives", but then he was extremely sorry and promised that he would never touch himself again. He also stated his undying love for me and the family arrangement and I truly believed and forgave him. I was and still am deeply hurt because I also discovered that he has been doing this habitually almost every day for the duration of our marriage, waiting for me to leave the house before he "indulges." We had a good discussion where he broke down and cried and said that life was not worth living without me in it. I slowly tried to pick up the pieces and began to think that, because he was coming to me for sex more regularly, that things had changed for the better. A few days ago, while doing the laundry, I discovered a semen stain on his underwear.

I approached my husband but he profusely denied it, saying that it was a "urine dribble stain." I certainly know the difference! He then became extremely angry, stating that I was dredging up the past. He called me awful names for being so possessive. He also squeezed my arm so hard that it had bruises on it (something that has happened before). Once again, he eventually broke down crying saying that he loved me and that he felt like crashing his car into a tree. Please help me, because, other than all of this he IS a good man. He gives me flowers and gifts all the time, he constantly tells me that I am beautiful and he says "I love you" every single day. He shows great attentiveness when we do make love and I truly enjoy being with him; he is a hard worker, a positive thinker and an emotional being who can show great depths of compassion and humility. He has done so much for so many people, including me and our children – but I am having trouble dealing with this "other side." It is killing me to think that he chooses to masturbate as soon as I leave the house – after having spent the entire day together. I am frightened of his blackmailing me to stay – because I honestly think that he WOULD kill himself if I left him. Other than

this, our sex life together (when it happens) is wonderful and we spend a lot of quality time together as a family.

He will not attend counselling sessions, as he is in denial as to how hurt and shattered I am. I feel my whole married life has been based on betrayal. I now do not trust or respect my husband anymore and although I will always love him from the depths of my heart, I no longer find that I am in love with him. Please help me.

Bless your heart! I am so sorry for the horrible pain you're in!

I asked our good friend Henry Rogers, author of *The Silent War: Ministering to Those Trapped in the Deception of Pornography*, for help in answering your question. Here's his answer:

I'm convinced this man has been a habitual masturbator (is that a word?) since childhood. I suspect he battled with guilt during his teen years and yet the guilt gets stronger after marriage. The reason is simple. It's after men are married that they finally realize how selfish masturbation is. Sex between a husband and a wife is giving yourself completely to your spouse. Masturbation is giving nothing. What a contrast between the two which causes feelings of guilt.

Married men involved in habitual masturbation feel guilty because they have wives, yet at times they prefer masturbation. Masturbation can take a man into a fantasy world where he can be with anyone he wants and do anything he wants. It's selfish because the sex act that God designed for the husband and wife is taking place in the mind. Eyes can be closed to enjoy his imagination or they can be opened to enjoy pornography. Either way, it needs no one else...and it's selfish. And yes, masturbation is an addiction, too. Many men have told me they thought they would stop after marriage.

Sadly, addictions don't stop at the altar.

A wife hates it when she finds out about her husband's masturbation because she knows that her husband is enjoying a sexual release alone. The oneness is absent. She feels unwanted, unneeded...and unloved. And it hurts. When pornography is involved the pain is worse because a wife cannot compete with the women in porn. How does she compete with the fantasy who is ready any time of the day and willing to do anything he wants?

I want this wife to know that she is not alone. There are many other wives who know the pain she is experiencing. The good news is that she can help. Here's how:

1. Pray for him daily...that he would flee from this temptation. He's done it for over 20 years, and unless God, by His grace, frees him from it, he has a tough road ahead. He needs prayer most of all.

2. Don't confront him with semen stained underwear with an "I gotcha" attitude. She'll get denial in return or names and bruises. She needs to be gentle in her confrontation. Gentle, yet firm....

3. Encourage accountability with another man. All men understand masturbation, yet we act like no one else has done it except us. (Sometimes we're not very smart...) It's OK to talk about. And it's OK to be accountable to another man. We need each other, especially if this is a problem.

4. I would also tell her that his masturbation is not because she is not desirable, or pretty or sexy enough for him. Again, he's done it from childhood...and he did it with porn before they were married. She does not need to own it as her fault...which many women do.

5. Encourage him to set boundaries for himself. When is he most prone to masturbation? When is he most likely to give

in? Where does he masturbate? Does he stay up late after she goes to bed? Try to encourage him to answer these questions and then set up some boundaries or protective measures.

6. Finally, encourage him to pray, too. In fact, they can pray together! She knows his secret and she loves him. They can talk about it...

I hope you find this as helpful as I did!

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

See Also:

[Pornography](#) by Kerby Anderson

Probe Answers Our Email:

- How Do I Handle My Husband's Porn Addiction?
 - [I Need Resources for My Porn Addiction](#)
 - [What's Wrong with Masturbation, Anyway?](#)
- [Men Have Always Looked at Porn—What's the Big Deal?](#)
 - [I'm a Compulsive Masturbator](#)

“How Do I Encourage My Gender Role-Reversed Kids?”

Thank you so much for [your commentary](#) on encouraging our children to feel blessed in their own unique gender. I have a

boy (6) and a girl (7) (and a child of unknown gender on the way). I was really nervous about raising a little boy, because I am one of two girls in my family, and had an absentee father for most of my life.

My little boy is the love of my life. He is so loving and sensitive. His dad has trouble dealing with this side of him. He also has many male qualities, but my girl child is rather rough and teases him unmercifully. How can I encourage them despite their apparent role reversals?

You brought up SUCH a great question, and I wanted to provide as powerful an answer as I could, so I asked a good friend for whom same-sex attraction is part of his story. God has done a huge work of grace in his life to bring him to the point where he can truly enjoy being a man, and has been healed from some of the woundings that came from not being supported in his masculinity when he was a boy. This was his answer for you, and I couldn't be more pleased with what he wrote:

It's OK to be nervous about raising a boy. I think that's natural. However, there are many very helpful resources out right now that will help you in guiding your little man in the right way (i.e., Dr. James Dobson's *Raising Boys* etc.). Dad is perhaps the most important factor in guiding the young man into gender security. Even though Dad might have difficulty dealing with sensitivity and other "less masculine" traits, I urge Dad to look at Jesus, study our Savior, see what godly masculinity is. Come to grips with the fact that what our society deems masculine is often brutal cruelty. The ultimate guidebook for healthy gender security is none other than the Bible and Jesus is the ultimate example of the godly MAN.

That having been said, in the early years, I believe that it is very important to make sure your children are taught good manners and how to be accepting of people that aren't like themselves—even if they are siblings. If your little girl

picks on or teases your little boy, I would encourage you to stop that behavior—through discipline, through reasoning or any other effective method. Your little boy must have an advocate in this early stage of life that is present and visible. It really is best if it is Dad but certainly someone he loves and trusts. And little girl must be taught to respect not only other people but the other gender as well.

On a more scientific note, there is a theory called the neuro-endocrine theory. This theory states that anywhere from the 8th to the 12th week of gestation, there is a hormone wash that is released in the womb that kind of kick-starts the development of gender depending on the chromosome makeup (xx being female and xy being male). Sometimes the hormone wash is not as strong as at others and the process by which the masculine moves into the left brain and the feminine moves into the right brain is not fully completed. This is not to say that any child is less male or female or more so. But it does apparently make some male children more sensitive and creative (right brain) and some female children more aggressive and decisive (left brain). It's not a bad thing or a good thing. Simply a scientific explanation of why some male children might be a bit more sensitive etc.

Hope this helps!

Sue Bohlin

Probe Ministries