“My teacher is encouraging me to question my beliefs”

Dear Sue,

I hope I can word all of this correctly and in the most concise manner possible. Thomas Aquinas of Renaissance times said one must question what he believes rather than accept things blindly. This was the whole mindframe of the rebirth from the dark ages. My mother of modern times says she doesn’t question her faith because she wants to stay strong in her beliefs. I agree with Aquinas. Whatever is in quotation marks in this letter is an excerpt from my history teacher’s e-mails to me. He wrote, “The first step in believing something for yourself is figuring out what you believe versus what others have told you to believe.” He said I should decipher “propaganda from purpose.” He studied different religions alongside Christianity such as Buddhism, Islam, and Hinduism, and even though he didn’t buy into them he realized that they were all promoting the same basic ideas: “The golden rule is in every major religion.” Major religions all include the idea of the flood and most promote a moral system for promotion. I know I’m kind of jumping around but I hope you’ll still be able to figure the labyrinth of my mind. He wrote, “Doubt is the seeding ground of wisdom.” It drives people to find out about their faith and strengthens their beliefs. He points out the seeming contradictions in the Bible. Here come some more quotes! “The last line of the Lord’s prayer is an addition by a monk. .. Luke 19:45-48, Matthew 21:12-16, and Mark 11:15-18 show Jesus turning over the vendors at the temple after His Triumphant entry into Jerusalem.”

I agree with Aquinas.

I do too, which is why I'm glad I was able to catch up with you in the bathroom at church where I could use the wall to illustrate the point that it's the strength and credibility of what we believe in, rather than the strength or fragility of our faith, that matters. That's why it's okay to question Christianity: it can MORE than hold up under scrutiny. Just like that wall was more than adequate to stand up to me pushing against it.

> *He wrote, "The first step in believing something for yourself is figuring out what you believe versus what others have told you to believe."*

That's true. Part of growing up means examining our beliefs that sit in our head like canned goods sit on the shelf of our mind, and we decide which ones we're going to keep and which ones we're not. Once you believe to keep the "can" of a belief, it becomes yours instead of your parents' or your teachers'. HOWEVER! The most important question is not, "Do I believe it, or was I merely taught to believe it?" but "Is it true, regardless of whether I believe it or not?"

> *He said I should decipher "propaganda from purpose."*

Who can argue with that? The bottom line question, again, is "Is it true?" And how can we know if something is true or not, apart from information from "outside the box" (the box being the world and our human experience)? That's why we as Christians depend on revelation: God is giving us information from His perspective, outside the box. That's a big way (and the ultimate way) we know whether something is true or not.

> *He studied different religions alongside Christianity such as Buddhism, Islam, and Hinduism, and even though he didn't buy into them he realized that they were all promoting the same basic ideas: "The golden rule is in every major religion."*

There’s a big difference between all religions sharing a particular element (e.g., the golden rule) and all religions promoting the same basic ideas. We can find some truth in every religion, but that doesn’t make the religions themselves true because they don’t correspond to reality. Only Christianity corresponds to reality.

I think it’s interesting how many people can “study” world religions and come to the conclusion that they’re all basically the same. Eastern religion is radically different from Christianity: the concept of reincarnation and karma is vastly different from the concept of one birth, one death, then judgment.

Furthermore, Christianity says “There is no way anyone can get into heaven on their own because only the good and perfect and holy can get in.” Other religions, if they even believe in a heaven, depend on their own good works. Christianity says, “We are dead in our sins and separated from God.” Other religions say, “Our efforts can overcome our sin.” Christianity says, “Jesus Christ is the only way to God.” Other religions say, “There are many ways to God.” Christianity says, “Christ living inside you is your power source and allows you to live a live pleasing to God.” Other religions say, “You’re on your own” or, worse, the New Age religions promise the lie, “You ARE god!”

> *Major religions all include the idea of the flood and most promote a moral system for promotion.*

First of all, the fact that major religions all have a flood story/myth/legend says something powerful about it being a real event! What’s significant to me is that the flood story as recorded in our Bible is the one that Jesus endorsed when He quoted from that Bible, when He talked about Noah as a real person.

Secondly, about promoting a moral system for promotion: what

is that but a system of human works? Why would we be surprised that all religions, which address the subject of morality, would talk about *good* works? Again, though, Christianity is completely different from all other religions in this department. It claims that there is nothing we can do to promote ourselves, to climb any ladder of goodness and morality because we are sinners. "Promotion" comes from accepting Christ's righteousness in exchange for our sinfulness. What a swap! That isn't found in any other world religion—what human would have thought it up???

> *I know I'm kind of jumping around but I hope you'll still be able to figure the labyrinth of my mind. He wrote, "Doubt is the seeding ground of wisdom." It drives people to find out about their faith and strengthens their beliefs.*

Doubt, if it means being openminded to finding or being reassured of the truth, may well be a seeding ground of wisdom. But I am concerned whenever ANY teacher holds up the banner of doubt as "freethinking" as if choosing to continue to believe your beliefs is closeminded and controlled. Please see this teacher as a threat to your faith. God may well be using him to help you build your faith at the same time, but know that the enemy uses disillusioned teachers to destroy students' faith all the time. It's not an accident; it's a deliberate attempt to spread the enemy's poison. It's a spiritual battle, and the teachers and professors are unknowing pawns being manipulated by the enemy in the heavenlies just as surely as if they were marionettes. And ironically, they *think* they're being "freethinkers!"

> *He points out the seeming contradictions in the Bible.*

There's nothing wrong with examining SEEMING contradictions. Usually they come from not seeing the whole picture.

> *Here come some more quotes! "The last line of the Lord's*

> *prayer is an addition by a monk.”*

And how would he know that?

> *“…Luke 19:45-48, Matthew 21:12-16, and Mark 11:15-18 show Jesus turning over the vendors at the temple after His Triumphant entry into Jerusalem”*

Right. Who said there could only be one cleansing of the temple? If John tells of one cleansing, and the synoptic gospels put a cleansing at another time, why does that make it a contradiction instead of an addition?

I’m so proud of you for not being afraid to face the questions. You have nothing to be afraid of. The very power of God is behind the philosophy and words of scripture, which assure you that what you believe is indeed the truth. It will always stand up to your study and hard scrutiny. What may not stand up are your assumptions about things that God never said in the first place, and that’s not a bad thing! (For instance: there are people who suffer with their desire to get up and dance to a great, moving, rhythmic song, but they believe—because they’ve been taught—that dancing is sin. But God never said it was! That’s a man-made rule that doesn’t stand up under the searchlight of “Hath God said. . .?”)

Hang in there! You have all the supernatural assistance possibly available to you!

Love,
Sue

“What About Body Piercing?”

In your latest Probe-Alert you had an interesting commentary on tattoos. I was wondering what your thoughts were about earrings, since they also change the body that God gave us. What about body piercing in general?

Great question!

Earrings are considered a common form of jewelry in the Bible, and there is no condemnation associated with earrings themselves. (Only the desire to adorn oneself with jewelry instead of a beautiful and godly heart, Is. 3 and 1 Pet. 3:3.) In fact, in Ezek. 16 the Lord describes how he treated unfaithful Jerusalem with tenderness and love, dressing her with fine garments and adorning her with all sorts of jewelry, including earrings.

But it’s not just earrings you wonder about, I bet. . . it’s pierced earrings, right? Well, ear piercing is addressed in the Old Testament in a positive way. If a master wants to grant freedom to his servant, “But if the servant declares, ‘I love my master and my wife and children and do not want to go free,’ then his master must take him before the judges. He shall take him to the door or the doorpost and pierce his ear with an awl. Then he will be his servant for life.” (Exo. 21:6)

Personally, I wonder if the Lord didn’t create earlobes just for decoration. . .??! <smile>

The important thing, though, for a New Testament Christian, is that we don’t live under Old Testament rules anyway, and we have freedom in Christ to do anything that He gives us permission to do. Since there is no prohibition anywhere in the Bible against pierced ears and earrings, then one needs to go by other Biblical principles. For instance, if a girl wants

to get her ears pierced but her parents say no, then the principle of children obeying their parents would dictate that it would be wrong in this instance.

But apart from ear piercing, there is the subject of body piercing. There is no New Testament prohibition against it, and not even an Old Testament prohibition as far as I can tell. There IS a matter of common sense here, though. For instance, the advice columninst "Dear Abby" published a letter from a dentist not long ago warning people against tongue piercing. He said, "Our mouths weren't made to work with metal banging around in them," and that he had quite a number of patients who came in with several broken teeth. Fixing them with crowns is tedious and very expensive, he said, and in his opinion tongue piercing isn't worth it.

Speaking of which, I have a counselor friend who told me that in the beginning of this fad, someone did a study of those who had pierced their tongues, and discovered that 100% of these young people had been sexually abused. That's food for thought. (It's no longer 100%, of course, since now it's a matter of "fashion.")

The biblical principle that would cover body piercing (as well as tattoos), in my opinion, is 1 Cor. 10:23: "'Everything is permissible'—but not everything is beneficial. 'Everything is permissible'—but not everything is constructive." I would suggest that the Christian's responsibility is to ask the Lord, "What would YOU have me to do about this?" And then obey.

Hope this helps!

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries



“God is a Child-Killer!”

This is about your mentioning that the bible says abortion is a sin. Then I would say that God should also not abort the unborn. But when he drowned the world, he aborted thousands of sinless unborn children.

So!!!!! don’t talk about abortion. (That is if you believe in the ark nonsense!)

We have over 5 billion people in this world, and when there will be more, there will be famine, and those people that listened to you will come after you, and demand an explanation. And then your home made GOD will not be there to help you. He never was there anyway. He is a figment of your imagination. Those people have been black mailed by your teachers and the teachers before them, but the time of reckoning is not that far off. You have leached enough monetarily of them. Your Churches are becoming emptier.

PS. In 2 Kings 2:23,24– he kills 42 Children by sending 2 she-bears to rip them apart, because they called an old man a

baldhead. This has not a thing to do with abortion: But it shows that if there was a God like the Bible describes, He does not like children at all. I could give you many more text to this effect, but I had my say.

I can tell you are very angry. I don't know what caused your anger, but whatever it was, I'm sorry.

Since you have arrived at the point of decided that there is no God, then it seems to be inappropriate and pointless to be angry at people who believe in Him. Because if there truly is no God, then the Bible is a man-made book of myths, and all the stories in it are meaningless. And if there is no God, then you have no basis for outrage at anything that anyone says about anything at all because there is no ultimate meaning or purpose in life. And if there is no meaning or purpose in life, why waste your time getting angry at other people's false beliefs? You may as well rage at the fact that the sky is blue or that there are 24 hours in the day. None of it matters in the end anyway.

But I think underneath your insistence that there is no God, you probably know better, and He may have allowed something painful to happen for which you are angry at Him. I'm sorry for that.

And if nothing happened, you've lived a great and charmed life but you're angry anyway, then I'm sorry for that too, because it's sad to be angry for no reason. Uses lots of energy that could be used for other things.

Concerning the 2 Kings passage you mention, "children" is an unfortunate translation. It should really be translated "young men" like the majority of the other times this word appears in scripture. Their disrespectful taunt of God's prophet incurred the discipline of God because He is holy and His prophet is holy, and treating God and His prophet with contempt is a very serious sin. God loves children, but He is also holier than we

can really imagine with our puny little minds. I don't know the answers to all the questions that bother you about God's actions in the Bible, but I do know that He is bigger than our questions, and we don't have all the facts that would allow us to fully understand why an immense and powerful and holy God would do things that make us shake our heads and wonder about.

But I do know He loves us. Even when doing hurtful things, like drowning the world. Just like a cancer surgeon can be loving even when he's cutting into people's bodies to take out cancerous growths.

Thank you for writing.

Sue Bohlin

Probe Ministries

"What If God Doesn't Exist?"

I have been a Christian for a very long time. I enjoy arguing for the truth of my faith. However, I run into a lot of trouble when it comes to doubt. I have read many of the articles on your site talking about things like, "Why Isn't the Evidence Clearer?" The problem that I have is that it is difficult to fully devote myself to the Lord in the presence of the plausibility of His non-existence. I believe there is very good evidence for the historical reliability of the scriptures and so forth but there is such a huge possibility still open for this not to be true. Just because there is a reliable historical record about something doesn't make that thing true. It just seems that the every day experience that I have as a Christian can be interpreted in any number of ways. In fact many other people of other antithetical religions to

Christianity and schools of thought explain answered prayer and things like that in seemingly acceptable ways. It seems that to simply say that our evidence is the "best" isn't good enough. I know I have made mistakes about things that I believe in the past because I wasn't careful enough about examining the arguments against it. Therefore I think that it is possible that there are other ways to interpret my beliefs.

Lots of people struggle with doubt, so you are in good company.

You're right, it is POSSIBLE that other religions and other worldviews may explain what happens in life. It's possible there is no God and we are all one giant cosmic accident (except that we wouldn't be a giant accident, we would be a small, insignificant, meaningless accident, right?). It's possible there is no heaven, that we all go into another life form in reincarnation. These things are, indeed, possible.

My challenge to you is, what evidence can you find that these explanations are better than the revelation from God in the Bible? Don't just look at it in your own head, thinking, "Oh yeah, that could be true." Actively pursue the evidence for the truth of alternate worldviews.

If your biggest problem is that it's possible God doesn't exist, then you might want to explore other expressions of Christianity. Is it possible that you have only been in churches where people live in their heads, like many Baptist or Bible churches? Do you have any experience with supernatural manifestations of the Holy Spirit? Do you have any experience with churches that truly understand the depth of reverence and holiness in worship?

I have a hunch that your problem may well be that your God is too small. That you have only had a peek at the true God, the God who is a consuming fire as well as a passionate Lover as well as one who speaks in a still, small voice.

I suggest you start seeing what else you can learn of God's heart and personality and experience by trying different types of Christian churches. Go to a charismatic or Pentecostal church if you've never done that. Go find a Catholic or Episcopalian church where the leadership knows Christ and seeks to make Him known. If you've never known a church with excellent Bible teaching, try that. Especially look for a church with deeply meaningful worship where people are intentionally and effectively drawn into greater intimacy with Jesus Christ. Get outside the box of your experience up to this point. And at the same time, ask God to reveal Himself to you in ways you've never seen or heard or experienced.

Is it possible there's no one there to answer? Sure. But if that is the case, why is there such a deep longing to know Him? We have stomachs because of food, and we have eyes because there is so much to see. . . and we have longing hearts because God made us for Himself.

I hope this helps. I send this with a prayer that the God Who is there will touch you in such a deeply intimate part of your heart that you will KNOW He is there.

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

"Aren't You Embarrassed That the Most Important Part of Your Life is Your

Domestication?”

Sue—

Does it not bother you that your various and vast achievements in both the academic and spiritual realms are completely overshadowed by your domestication and motherhood?

Your website reports:

> ***“Sue Bohlin is an associate speaker with Probe Ministries. She attended the University of Illinois, and has been a Bible teacher and conference speaker for over 25 years. She serves as a Mentoring Mom for MOPS (Mothers of Pre-Schoolers), and on the board of Living Hope Ministries, a Christ-centered outreach to those wanting to leave homosexuality. She is also a professional calligrapher and the webservant for Probe Ministries; but most importantly, she is the wife of Dr. Ray Bohlin and the mother of their two grown sons.”***

Does it not hurt to define your life through your involvement with others? Does this proliferation of the values dictated by our patriarchal society not cause you distress?

Hi ____,

Wow, what great questions! I’m so glad you asked!

First of all, what does “domestication” mean? I’m thinking that to you, it may mean something negative and contemptuous. The root word comes from the Latin “domus,” home, which is exactly what is most important to me because home is about family (and not the structure in which we live). But it has taken on a negative connotation as if a woman’s true fulfillment is found outside the home, so anything that connects her to home and family is sadly restrictive. (Thank you Betty Friedan *et al*.. . .)

I have been blessed to be able to live a rich and varied life, but all of my "achievements" pale markedly compared to the sweetness of my most important relationships with my husband and sons. For example, my work as a speaker and writer and webservant for Probe Ministries, as wonderful as that is, can't begin to hold a candle to the joy of loving and influencing the men God has given me to love and influence. I believe that God means for women to be most deeply fulfilled by our relationships, because He made us so relational. My "mark" on the world, I assure you, is far greater in my various relationships compared to the lectures I've given or the website I built. You might not ever be able to see the difference I make as Ray's wife or Curt and Kevin's mom, but believe me, as they all make their marks on the world, I can see it.

Doesn't it hurt, you ask, to define my life through my involvement with others? In other words, to define my life through my relationships? I wish you could see the huge smile on my heart as I think about your question. . . because ultimately, I think we were created to define our lives exactly that way. What makes my life worth living is my strong and healthy relationship first of all with my Creator, from whom I find out what I was made for, what I was made to do, and thus find my fulfillment in walking out the sense of "I was made for this!!" My "achievements in the academic and spiritual realms" are only a small part of what God made me for, as His beloved daughter and friend. Since that is how I define myself—as a cherished child of God—then no matter what happens in any other dimension of my life, I do not fear being rocked by the loss of what defines me. Should I lose my family, God forbid, that will not change my identity. Should I lose my vision or my voice or my mobility or my mind, that will not change my identity, since my identity and my definition is not found in those things.

You also ask, "Does this proliferation of the values dictated

by our patriarchal society not cause you distress?” Not at all, because I don’t see patriarchy as evil; I see it as a God-ordained chain of authority. Of course, it is complicated by the fact that every single human being on the planet is broken and sinful and infected by a rebellious spirit, but that doesn’t make patriarchy inherently wrong. I’m smiling again because I know that patriarchy is another one of those contempt-filled words in the academy (especially at the University of Texas! How many women’s studies profs have you studied under?). Yet from my understanding of scripture and of feminism, an authority structure that points to God as loving Father makes me feel secure, not subjugated, and beloved, not bitter.

I’m also aware that I may well come off to you as naïve and uneducated in The Ways Of The World, needing to be shown how truly sad and imprisoned by my misbeliefs I am. But that’s one of the joys of being over 50 and seeing how incredibly loving and kind and generous God has been to me, personally, in 30+ years of walking with Him and deriving my identity and direction from Him: I know too much about how good life is lived according to His values to be bothered by what feminist thought thinks of my life.

Here’s the thing, _____: when I am an old woman, at the end of my life, it really won’t matter what I have accomplished in the world’s eyes. What will matter is how much I loved and was loved, how much and how deeply I influenced and impacted people’s lives. That’s ultimately about relationships. My sister is a hospice nurse and she sees people dying every day. They never want to be surrounded by their diplomas or their trophies or their certificates of achievements, but by their family and friends. I think that says something profound about what ultimately matters.

Thank you so much for asking so I could share my heart with you.

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

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“Is Oral Sex a Sin?”

Is oral sex a sin? Does it constitute having sex? Can you have and give oral sex and still remain a virgin? Is it okay to have oral sex if you’re in a committed marriage? And if it’s wrong can you tell me where in the Bible it says this?

I’m sorry about the many questions but these questions have been nagging me for quite a while.

Is oral sex a sin?

It’s permitted within marriage (by mutual consent), but a sin outside of marriage. In condemning fornication (some translations call it “sexual immorality”), the Bible says that all sexual activity outside of marriage is sin. It’s not that God is a cosmic killjoy—it’s that He knows the best way to protect us is to keep the extraordinarily powerful nature of sex contained within the safe confines of a committed marriage relationship.

Does it constitute having sex?

Yes. We need to define “sex” more broadly than many people do (such as a former president . . .). There are a great many sexual activities and behaviors that fall in the category of “sex” besides intercourse. Here’s a helpful question to help think clearly about any particular activity, such as open-mouth kissing or oral sex: would you do it with your parent or your pastor? If you shrink back in disgust at the thought,

that means it's sexual. (But holding hands, however, is something you can do with anyone without it being sexual. People often hold hands while praying, for instance. See the difference?)

Can you have and give oral sex and still remain a virgin?

The definition of a virgin is a person who has not experienced sexual intercourse. It's really more of a biological term than anything else, because the real heart issue is about purity. You can't participate in oral sex outside of marriage and still be pure. So people can be technically virgins and still engage in very sexual behaviors. For example, there is an epidemic of gonorrhea of the throat among American junior-high age kids who are still genital virgins but have infected oral sex. The good news is, someone who has had oral sex outside of marriage can confess it as sin, be cleansed and have his or her purity restored.

Is it okay to have oral sex if you're in a committed marriage?

Yes, as long as both spouses are okay with it. If either one doesn't want it, it would be selfish and unloving for the other one to insist. Also, please see our article, "What's God's Plan for Sex in Marriage?"

And if it's wrong can you tell me where in the Bible it says this?

If you read the Song of Solomon, you can see that God encourages married people to enjoy His gift of sex in all its glory. Jody and Linda Dillow (authors of *Solomon on Sex* and *Intimate Issues*) believe that there are two veiled references to oral sex in the Song of Solomon. Keep in mind that in this biblical book, "garden" usually refers to the wife's genitals, and "fruit" to the husband's:

(Bride) Awake, O north wind

> And come, wind of the south
> Make my garden breathe out fragrance
> Let its spices be wafted abroad
> May my beloved come into his garden
> And eat its choice fruits! (4:16)
>
> Like an apple tree among the trees of the forest
> So is my beloved among the young men
> In his shade I took great delight and sat down
> And his fruit was sweet to my taste. (2:3)
>
> *I'm sorry about the many questions but these questions have been nagging me for quite a while.*

I'm glad we could help!

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

"My Friend is HIV+"

A person I love very much was diagnosed as being HIV positive. He was infected at the age of 16. If he had been diagnosed with cancer or some other disease the first thing people would say or think is "How terrible, I will pray for this person." or "I'm sorry. " They would also wonder about the injustice of it. Unfortunately, that is not the reaction a person gets from the church when they let people know they have AIDS. The first thing they want to know is "How did you get it. "

Because of this reaction my friend has been totally turned off to Christianity. No one at are chuch knew about him because he was afraid of what people would say. Only his family knew. One day at church the subject of AIDS came up and quickly his fears were realized. Comments such as it being God's judgment

and people getting what they deserve for making immoral choices. You should have seen his face. He was shattered. So was I.

I know that not all churches are like this but so far I havn't found one that wasn't. I try and tell myself that this is not our savior talking. If he were here he would forgive and love the person afflicted with this disease. I try to talk to him about Jesus loving and healing the leper. But faced with what is said in our church its hard for him to remember that.

There are so many people struggling with this terrible disease. People who make the same bad choices lots of teenagers in the church are making, but fortunately they only got pregnant or got someone pregnant. They were lucky enough not to get AIDS. When someone repents, God casts that sin as far as the east is from the west. Too bad we can't do that. It doesn't matter how you got the disease. That person needs to be shown the love of Christ. Don't wait until it's your loved one. Learn the facts about this disease. CHURCH, I beg of you don't let ignorance stop you from being a witness. We are His hands and feet. Lets use them to show a group of people rejected by the church His love. God has not rececte those who have AIDS. He is loving them and He is expecting us to do the same. Please pray about this issue.

I am so very, very sorry to hear about this horrible experience. You are so right about the church's judgmental reaction and how it grieves not only the person who has it, and the people who love him, but the Father's heart.

The reason it's so easy for people to react so strongly is that, unlike cancer or stroke or other life-stealing disease, HIV is usually contracted through an immoral lifestyle choice, either sex or drugs. But, of course, as the disease has spread, innocent people get it from those who weren't innocent, and the accompanying unfair judgment just adds to the pain.

You're right, too, all churches aren't like this, but it's hard to find a grace-based church that knows the truth about how God accepts us no matter what. Our church, for example, embraced a man who eventually died of AIDS, and he was greatly loved. But part of that process was educating them about their own risk to exposure to him, and assuring them that unless they came in contact with his body fluids they had nothing to worry about. Which is why some of us particularly delighted in hugging him and kissing him on the forehead to communicate that we cared.

Let me share something someone e-mailed me. I love this story and I bet you will too.

> ***Slandering The Blood of Jesus*** *One night in a church service a young woman felt the tug of God at her heart. She responded to God's call and accepted Jesus as her Lord and Savior. The young woman had a very rough past, involving alcohol, drugs, and prostitution. But, the change in her was evident. As time went on she became a faithful member of the church. She eventually became involved in the ministry, teaching young children. It was not very long until this faithful young woman had caught the eye and heart of the pastor's son. Their relationship grew and they began to make wedding plans. This is when the problems began. You see, about one half of the church did not think that a woman with a past such as hers was suitable for a pastor's son. The church members began to argue and fight about the matter. So they decided to have a meeting. As the people made their arguments and tensions increased, the meeting was getting completely out of hand. The young woman became very upset about all the things being brought up about her past. As she began to cry the pastor's son stood to speak. He could not bear the pain it was causing his wife to be. He began to speak and his statement was this: " My fiance's past is not what is on trial here. What you are questioning is the ability of the blood of Jesus to wash away sin. Today you have put the blood of Jesus on trial. So, does*

it wash away sin or not?" The whole church began to weep as they realized that they had been slandering the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. Too often, even as Christians, we bring up the past and use it as a weapon against our brothers and sisters. Forgiveness is a very foundational part of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. If the blood of Jesus does not cleanse the other person completely then it cannot cleanse us completely. If that is the case, then we are all in a lot of trouble. What can wash away my sins, nothing but the blood of Jesus…. end of case!!! God Forgives.. So should we.

Bless you, _____.

Sue Bohlin

Probe Ministries

"Aren't All Religions Man-Made?"

Let me get this straight: your view is that "man-made religions lead to spiritual death and only one [i.e., yours] leads to life." Aren't all religions man-made? Without man, there is no religion, because religion is a man-made concept. Animals have no concept of Deity, or anything beyond their own survival, so it cannot be a "God-given" concept innate to all creatures; otherwise, the creatures of the wild would spend more time worshipping and less time surviving. Thus, we have proved religion is a concept restricted only to mankind. Man has been interested in this concept for about the last 12,000 years. This interest was sparked when the hunter-gatherer

societies (concerned with survival only) evolved into agricultural societies. They saw the existence of a power greater than themselves which made the crops grow and the rains fall. If we look to the first man-made interpretations of Deity, most of which were female, they date from about the 7,000 BC on. If all the concepts of Deity and religion from 7,000 BC to the birth of Christ were man-made religions, then Christianity is one in an ongoing series of man-made religions. Which brings me back to my original point, being that since religion was created by man to bring him into contact with That which was Greater then himself, all of the world's religions, from the oldest to the newest, are ALL man-made, including Christianity. And if man-made religions lead to spiritual death… how can any one religion claim to offer the only way to life, especially one so young in the overall history of religion? May God bless you with a history lesson.

Peace.

Dear _____,

Our view is that Christianity leads to life because it is about Jesus Christ, who defined Himself as life. All religions are not man-made because Christianity (with its roots in Judaism) comes *from* God *to* man. God communicated with people through His written word (the Bible) and by sending His son Jesus from heaven. In other words, He pierced our space-time continuum and communicated with us.

All other religions are man's way of attempting to find God. Christianity is God reaching US.

The evidence for this is that the Bible is the only holy book that includes true prophecy, history written in advance, because an all-knowing God knew what would happen in the future and made sure it was written down before it happened. More evidence for this is that when Jesus came to earth, He claimed to be God and said He would be crucified and come back

to life three days later, which He did.

Christianity is not man-made because it is a religion of revelation—the truth of God and not the invention of man.

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

Sue Bohlin

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Sue Bohlin is an associate speaker and Web Site Administrator with Probe Ministries. She attended the University of Illinois, and has been a Bible teacher and Christian speaker for over thirty years in addition to being a professional calligrapher. She is a frequent speaker for MOPS (Mothers of Pre-Schoolers) and for Stonecroft Ministries (Christian Women's Clubs), addressing the subject "How to Handle the Things You Hate But Can't Change," based on her experience with childhood polio. Sue serves on the board and as a speaker for Living Hope Ministries, a Christ-centered outreach to those dealing with unwanted homosexuality. She also serves on the Women's Leadership Team for Bible.org and is a regular contributor to its Tapestry Blog. She and her husband Ray,

Vice President of Vision Outreach for Probe Ministries, have two grown sons.

Blog Posts

Probe Publications

Abortion
Angels: The Good, Bad, and Ugly
Answering the Big Questions of Life
Bible Literacy Quiz
Creation & Evolution Q&A for Kids
Dungeons and Dragons and FRPGs
Evidence for God's Existence
Four Killer Questions
Homosexuality Q&A
Homosexual Myths
The Internet
Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus
Ten Lies of Feminism
Why Dr. Laura is (Usually) Right
A Short Look At Six World Religions
Worldproofing Our Kids
The Value of Suffering
Harry Potter
Can Homosexuals Change?
5 Lies the Church Tells Women
Protecting Your Family on the Internet
Boys Are From Mars, Girls Are From Venus: Raising Gender-Healthy Children
Myths Christians Believe
Same Sex Marriage
The Proper Care and Feeding of Husbands
Tuning Up Your Baloney Detector: Learning to Think Critically
Trash Your Marriage in 8 Easy Steps
Your Work Matters to God
What God Says About Sex

The Dark Underside of Abortion
The Darkness of Twilight
The Glory of Grace
What a Biblical Worldview Looks Like

The Galapagos Islands: Evolution's Sacred Ground
100 online photos with accompanying text of Ray and Sue's trip to the Galapagos Islands with the Institute for Creation Research in May 2003

Contributing author, *Marriage, Family and Sexuality: Probing the Headlines that Impact Your Family*, Kregel, 2000.

Probe Lectures

Angels
Abortion
Feminism
Four Killer Questions
Homosexuality
Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus
Cherishing Your Child's Gender
Protecting Your Family on the Internet
Raising Godly Sons and Daughters
The Value of Suffering
Why Marriages Fail

Apologetics:
Worldviews: What Is True?
Evidence for the Existence of God
The Deity of Christ
The Authority of the Bible
Is Jesus the Only Savior?
The Problem of Pain and Evil

Women's Retreat Messages

[Click **here** for descriptions of topics]

How to Handle the Things You Hate but Can’t Change
Seeing Ourselves from God’s Perspective
Learning To Give Thanks as a Way of Life
Changing Our Negative Self-Talk
Forgiving: Being A Woman of Grace
A Gentle and Quiet Spirit
The Power of Being a Woman
Seven Secret Passions of Woman
Obstacles to the Wellspring of Joy
An Accurate View of God
Unpack Your Bags, This Guilt Trip Is Cancelled!
What Are You Doing Pushing That Porsche?
Look in the Mirror, Your Royal Highness!
Standing at the Foot of Niagara Falls
Holiness
The Value of Suffering
Thinking Like Jesus Does
Good and Angry
Becoming an Encourager
Communication in Marriage
Your Work Matters To God

3-Part Series “Daughters of the King: Bring On the Bling!”
Daughters of the King: What does it mean to be a princess?
Real Bling: What are true riches?
Bling Tarnish: What diminishes the brightness of God’s glory in us

4-Part Series on Prayer
4-Part Series on Inductive Bible Study and Colossians

“This World is Far From Perfect”

I just read your article about evidence of God’s existence. I just want to say that this world is quite far from being perfect. A perfect world would be a world free of racism, hypocrisy, and genocide just to name a few. If God had made a perfect world it would have been a world free of these things. And the section about Jesus being the “proof,” well there is no proof of there being a Jesus except the Bible which may be false also.

You are so very right. This world IS quite far from being perfect. However, this isn’t the world that God created. That world was absolutely perfect, with no racism, hypocrisy or genocide. But Adam and Eve chose to go their own way and disobey God, and when they did they plunged the world into awful consequences they could never have foreseen. A world of ugliness and hate and violence, in addition to the evils you mentioned. In fact, as I watched the attacks on the World Trade Center, I thought what a horrible parallel it was to how God must have felt when His beautiful, perfectly-working world was devastated and defaced by sin. We call it “the fall,” and as I watched both towers collapse I thought what an apt description it is of what happened to our world back in the Garden of Eden.

This, however, does not change the fact that our world is perfectly designed to sustain life. What hurtful things happen on the earth, and how the earth was fashioned and placed here with just the right parameters to support life, are apples and oranges. Completely different issues.

Concerning there being no proof of Jesus’ existence, well, I guess you haven’t really seriously examined that, or you would have discovered that there is more evidence for the existence

of Jesus than for most other famous people in the ancient world. I'm sorry, I can't take your criticism any more seriously than the young man who came up to me after a conference and told me he didn't believe he existed. I can take YOU seriously, and I do, but not your charge. It won't hold water. There's a whole discipline called "history" that would prove your charge to be groundless. At the very least, allow me to suggest you read my colleague Michael Gleghorn's article Ancient Evidence for Jesus from Non-Christian Sources.

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