

“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 rejected 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 fiancée'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 than 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.

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Four Killer Questions

Homosexuality Q&A

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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.

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"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](#).

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

“Can You Recommend Some Books to Help Us Teach Our Kids About Sex?”

Can you recommend some books that would be appropriate to use to help teach our children about the birds and the bees? Are there any written from a Christian perspective? Our children are in 3rd and 5th grades. Thanks for your help!

According to our good friends at Logos Bookstore in Dallas, there is a wonderful series called “God’s Design for Sex” by Stan and Brenna Jones, published by NavPress. The first book is for ages 3-5, the second for ages 5-8. The third book, for ages 8-11, is called *What’s the Big Deal? Why God Cares About Sex*. The fourth book, for ages 11-14, is called *Facing the Facts: The Truth About Sex and You*.

Glad to be able to help!

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

“Where Does the Bible Say that All Sexual Activity

Outside of Marriage is Sin?"

In your site you talk about how all forms of sexual activity is a sin and that the bible says that "all sexual activity outside of marriage is sin." Please give me verses where this is true because all I can find is how intercourse is wrong outside of marriage. Please also explain how we can define fornication as any sexual activity, who defined this, and how do we know this is God's definition. I appreciate your help.

If you do a word study on "fornication" or "immorality" (which are two ways the Greek word *porneia* is translated), you will find that it means illicit sexual activity. [Note: two very good web sites for doing Bible study are www.blueletterbible.org and www.studylight.org.] Many dictionaries will say "illicit sexual intercourse," but that is unnecessarily narrow. Consider, for example, that Romans 1:29 condemns fornication in the same passage where lesbianism is shown to be sin. Since two women are unable to have sexual intercourse with each other in the same way that a man and a woman do, I believe it would be disingenuous to try and make a case that lesbian sex is not fornication or immorality simply because of physiology of sex prevents them from having intercourse.

Secondly, consider why it's wrong in the first place: God is pure, and sexual activity outside of marriage is impure. God commands sex to be contained within marriage because it is so powerful; in fact, it is the glue that holds people together and binds their spirits to each other (1 Corinthians 6:16).

Third, if one is trying to make a case that sexual activity short of intercourse is not sin, then I would ask, where do you draw the line? Ask the father of a teenage daughter if it's sin for her boyfriend to touch her genitals, or if God allows this activity with His blessing. Ask the wife of a man visiting a prostitute if it's OK for him to receive oral sex

from her as long as they don't engage in intercourse. And if you are bothered by our position that masturbation falls in the category of *porneia*, then I would reply that we have [written so extensively](#) on that subject that I'm not going to go further with it. I will say, however, that we recognize not everyone agrees with us on this issue. Nonetheless, we still have a hard time reconciling masturbation with Paul's injunction to "do everything to the glory of God" (1 Corinthians 10:31). Exactly how does one do that to the glory of God?

Hope this helps.

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

"Help Me Figure Out Why My Relationship Hurts!"

I checked out the article where you and that guy were making comparisons between [Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus](#), and the Bible. That discussion really interested me because I am reading *Men are from Mars and Women are from Venus*, and I began thinking as I was reading it and I developed a theory... First I thought about older people (ages 55 and up). I have seen so many of those older couples still holding hands and being very loving together. I found my self asking what is so different in relationships today and relationships in the fifties and earlier? Why do so many relationships fail today and not in those yester years? I came to the conclusion that Christianity must have been the key. Not only does the Bible provide instruction for healthy relationships, it also provides people (believers) with a feeling of fulfillment.

Never before have I ever really understood the real reason for the verse "Do not be unequally yoked." It causes a real strain on relationships, and I have been through many unmeaningful and heartbreaking relationships. I was wondering since you have read the whole book *Men are From Mars and Women are from Venus* if you could help me with my most recent relationship problem.

I have a great boyfriend—he is very beautiful on the outside and inside, he is considerate in fulfilling my needs, buying me gifts, and taking on his fair share of the cooking and cleaning responsibilities. I really love him for that. I know that he likes me or else he wouldn't be with me and he says that when I ask him how he feels about me. Actually he says you know how I feel about you why else would I be with you, and if I say how I feel about you too much it won't mean as much. How should I go about telling him that it means the world to me every time I hear (which is totally not enough and I feel unfulfilled because of it) him say how much he cares about me and I really need some reassurance right now about his feelings or I will have to leave him because I am very fragile right now and every day I grow more and more insecure in how I feel as to where I am in our relationship. I am even starting to question if he really wants me to go with him when he asks me if I would like to go out with him and a friend for lunch. Then he gets mad and says I wouldn't ask you if I didn't want you to come. I constantly wish he would just give me some reassurance, any kind, because I feel myself hurting soooo much, and I know he is hurting too because he doesn't like to see me sad. I think that he has a really hard time expressing how he feels towards me because he has been single for 30 years now (he has had long relationships that end badly) and like MAFMWAFV says that men start to love people and they pull away so they can find their own self because they are afraid they will lose their sense of independence. Do you think that he is really struggling with something like that or what do you think I should do to solve my problem? I

really sincerely love him and I don't want him to slip away because I don't understand or know something that I should. When I am done my formatted and fully (to the best of my knowledge and understanding) completed correlation between the Bible and MAFMWAFV I will send you a copy. I know you probably get about a million emails a day so if you can't answer mine I want you to know that I feel a little better just having gotten all of this off of my chest. Thank You Sue!

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

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

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

I would also suggest that you read Gary Chapman's book "The 5 Love Languages," and ask him to read it or listen to it on tape. Sounds like your love language is verbal affirmation, and he needs to know that you need to HEAR verbal appreciation and affirmations of love to feel loved. I cannot tell you how disrespectful it sounds to hear the excuse "If I tell you all

the time how I feel about you it won't mean as much." Ask him why he eats all the time instead of only at Thanksgiving. I mean, eating all the time diminishes the meaning of eating, right? Wrong! It nourishes his body, just as hearing "I love you and I appreciate you" nourishes your heart and your relationship.

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

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

I hope this helps!

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

"My Wife is Seriously Ill:

Does That Mean No More Sex Forever?"

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

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

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

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

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

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

wonder about this question.

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

“The Difference Between Religions and Jesus”

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

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

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

Religions promise to show a way to God...

Jesus says, “I am the Way.” Religions say that there are many truths...

Jesus says, "I am the Truth." Religions promise to show light...

Jesus says, "I am the Light of the world." Religions promise a chance for eternal life...

Jesus says, "I am the resurrection and the life." Religions offer guides...

Jesus says, "I am the Good Shepherd." Religions offer to show us god (or gods)...

Jesus says, "I AM." Besides that, Christianity is the only "religion" with a living Founder. I say, why follow a loser?!

Guess that about breaks down the differences! ☐

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

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

The Lord bless you and keep you.

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

"Is it a sin for a married

couple to masturbate during sex?"

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

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

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

Nothing a married couple does in the marriage bed is sin as long as it is mutually acceptable and it doesn't involve anyone else (for example, porn movies or fantasies that involve another person). I think God intends for us to experience far more freedom and enjoyment than a lot of people think! May I suggest you get an EXCELLENT book for married women called *Intimate Issues* by Linda Dillow and Lorraine Pintus. Absolutely the best book on the subject for women out there, I think. Please also see our article [What's God's Plan for Sex in Marriage?](#)

Hope this helps!

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries