

“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

“What About the Super-Secret Skull and Bones Society at Kerby Anderson’s Alma Mater Yale?”

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

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

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

never really knew much about the organization.

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

Kerby Anderson

In his junior year, George W. was "tapped" (invited by existing membership) for Skull and Bones, the well-known Yale senior-year secret society that was founded in 1832 and has been the focus of wild, indeed sometimes paranoid, conspiracy theories ever since. Skull and Bones is the most famous of the Yale societies, which admit a dozen or so juniors as lifetime members. Since the intake is so small, there are only around eight hundred Bonesmen (women were admitted for the first time in 1992) at any time, and Yale being already an elite institution, it is hardly surprising that Bonesmen have risen to be United States cabinet secretaries, Supreme Court justices, and even, on three occasions, presidents of the United States—most recently, Bush Senior and George W.

The prestige of Skull and Bones membership and the fear of its alleged power among many of the society's critics are products of the secrecy in which the society has operated from the outset and the unmistakable achievement of generation upon generation of Bonesmen. President and Supreme Court Justice Howard Taft, Ambassador W. Averill Harriman, Secretary of State Henry Stimson, Massachusetts senator and Democratic presidential aspirant John Kerry, conservative political commentator and author William F. Buckley, and of course Bush Senior's father, Prescott Bush, later himself a U. S. Senator, were all Bonesmen. But while the first century and more of the Skull and Bones tradition was heavily WASPish from the 1950s onward, both African Americans and foreigners were admitted.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

“What Are the Differences Between Catholics and Christians?”

Dear Mrs. Bohlin,

I have read your article on the [“Six World Religions”](#) with great interest. I am sure you receive many emails, so I will keep this short. Could you please send me your thoughts on the essential differences between Catholics and Christians. My son is about to marry a Catholic, and I cannot fully justify to him my concerns.

Well, you’re asking the right person, since my husband and I were both raised Catholic! Of course, there’s a difference in expression between U.S. Catholicism and elsewhere in the world, but the basic beliefs are the same.

First of all, you should know that there are born-again Christian believers in the Catholic church. You should also know that the gospel really is there in the Mass, and in the catechism teachings that children and converts receive. Ray and I are grateful for the foundation of spiritual truth that we received from the Catholic church: that God is one God in three Persons, that Jesus is the Son of God, that He died on the cross for the sins of the world and was raised on the third day, and that He’s coming back.

What we DIDN’T receive was the personal aspect: that we needed to *personally* receive the grace-gift of salvation. We were taught, instead, that being baptized a Catholic was enough to bring us into God’s family. We were taught that Jesus opened the door to heaven, so to speak, but it was our responsibility and our good works that would get us there. So it was Jesus PLUS our good works that might result in salvation. But there was no assurance of salvation, just a vague hope that our good

deeds would outweigh our bad deeds when we died.

If I were you, I would gently and lovingly have a conversation with your future daughter-in-law, and ask her the great question, "If you were to die tonight, and you were to stand at the gates of heaven, and God said, 'Why should I let you into my heaven,' what would you say?"

If she says anything other than, "Because Jesus died on the cross for my sins," then she is trusting in her own self or in the Catholic Church, and not Christ. You might ask her why Jesus had to die. If we could do *anything* to get us into heaven, why would Jesus have to die a horrible death? Wouldn't that be a terrible waste?

Sometimes people will say, "Because I'm a Catholic." We were taught that salvation is only found in the Catholic church. I would respond, "Where does that idea (that being a baptized Catholic is a "free pass" to heaven) come from? How do you know it's true?" Claiming to be a member of any organization is just another way of trusting in human merit and good works instead of what Christ has done FOR us.

I think that a lot of Catholics actually believe that it's "Jesus plus me." If you were to ask her, "Do you believe Jesus is the Son of God? Do you believe He died on the cross for YOUR sins?" you might discover she has intellectual assent to the truth of the gospel. You might then want to gently explain that in the Bible, God calls us to actively TRUST in Christ and not just believe in our heads what is true. The demons, after all, also believe that Jesus is God's son and that He died for mankind, but that doesn't change their hearts.

One other thing. If and when, Lord willing, you have grandchildren, you will have some marvelous opportunities to teach the truth about Jesus to them, and it's amazing how parents can be reached through their children. Pray a lot, and ask the Holy Spirit to give you a green light to talk about

spiritual things for which He has prepared her heart. The Lord bless you and keep you!

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

“Is Lust Justification for Divorce?”

I have a question. In Matthew 5:27ff. Jesus says that if a man lusts after a woman he has already committed adultery in his heart. Then, in v. 32 Jesus indicates that sexual immorality is the only justification for divorce. Is, then, lust justification for divorce? If so, what degree of lust is justification for divorce? Or, if it is not Jesus' intention to allow divorce for lust, please substantiate this position. Thanks.

Good question!

The bottom line answer to your question is no, lust is not grounds for divorce.

If you look at the context of the Lord Jesus' remarks about lust in Matthew 5, what you see is that He is “pulling back the rug,” so to speak, on outward sins to expose the underlying problem, which is sin in the heart. Murder doesn't start with murder; it starts with sinful anger in the heart (vv. 21-22). Don't be as concerned about the proper words in taking an oath; be people of such integrity that your simple word alone will suffice and no oath is necessary (vv. 33-37). Instead of carefully measuring the retaliatory consequences of an offense against you, give in and don't fight back (vv.

38-42). Instead of loving your neighbor and hating your enemy, love your enemies and pray for them (vv. 43-44).

The main point to all of these illustrations in the Sermon on the Mount is that a sinful heart lurks behind every offensive action. By shining the light of His perfection on our dark hearts, the Lord very effectively makes us aware of how short we fall of God's standard of righteousness. That's why we need to receive Christ's righteousness, since we have none of our own.

So the point about lust is made to expose the sinful motives of the heart, showing that even before one actually enters into an adulterous relationship, there's a heart problem that's just as serious in God's eyes as acting on it.

But if the Lord had meant to set lust as an acceptable ground for divorce, He would have said so. He doesn't play games with us to keep us guessing about what pleases Him. Personally, this makes sense to me, since a person can fall into the sin of lust for another person, and repent and receive forgiveness, without his/her spouse ever getting hurt. They don't ever need to know about it; it's an internal war of the one struggling with lust. As sinful creatures, we are going to struggle with various sins all our lives. But there's still a big difference *in consequence* between fighting the internal battle against the sin nature and going out and *acting* on it.

Furthermore, engaging in sexual immorality is an external act that can be proven by witnesses and/or testimony. Experiencing lust is internal, and can only be judged by another without any proof. Only God can know whether someone truly lusts or not. Kind of hard to hold up in a court of law!

I hope this helps.

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

Meet the Probe Speakers and Writers

This is a listing of the individuals who speak and write for Probe Ministries. Not all speakers are available for every conference.

Kerby Anderson is president of Probe Ministries International. He holds masters degrees from Yale University (science) and from Georgetown University (government). He is the author of several books, including *Christian Ethics in Plain Language*, *Genetic Engineering*, *Origin Science*, and *Signs of Warning, Signs of Hope*. His series with Harvest House Publishers includes: *A Biblical Point of View on Islam*, *A Biblical Point of View on Homosexuality*, *A Biblical Point of View on Intelligent Design*, and *A Biblical Point of View on Spiritual Warfare*. Kerby hosts "Point of View" (USA Radio Network) heard on 360 radio outlets nationwide as well as on the Internet (www.pointofview.net) and shortwave. He is also a regular guest on "Prime Time America" (Moody Broadcasting Network) and "Fire Away" (American Family Radio). He produces a daily syndicated radio commentary and writes editorials that have appeared in papers such as the *Dallas Morning News*, the *Miami Herald*, the *San Jose Mercury*, and the *Houston Post*. He can be reached at kerby@probe.org. (Click [here](#) for a full bio.)



Byron Barlowe is a research associate and Web coordinator with Probe Ministries. He earned a B.S. in Communications at Appalachian State University in gorgeous Boone, N.C. Byron served 20 years with Campus Crusade for Christ (CCC), eight years as editor and Webmaster of a major scholarly publishing site, Leadership University (LeaderU.com). In that role, he oversaw several sub-sites, including the Online Faculty Offices of Drs. William Lane Craig and William Dembski. His wife, Dianne, served 25 years with CCC and now homeschools their active teen triplets. He can be reached at bbarlowe@probe.org.

Dr. Ray Bohlin is Vice President of Vision Outreach at Probe Ministries. He is a graduate of the University of Illinois (B.S., zoology), North Texas State University (M.S., population genetics), and the University of Texas at Dallas (M.S., Ph.D., molecular biology). He is the co-author of the book *The Natural Limits to Biological Change* and has published numerous journal articles. He was named a 1997-98 and 2000 Research Fellow of the Discovery Institutes Center for the Renewal of Science and Culture. He can be reached at rbohlin@probe.org.
(Click [here](#) for a full bio.)

Sue Bohlin is an associate speaker and the Website Administrator for Probe Ministries. She attended the University of Illinois, and has been a Bible teacher and conference speaker for over 30 years. She is a frequent speaker for MOPS (Mothers of Pre-Schoolers) and Stonecroft Ministries (Christian Women' Clubs), and she serves on the board of Living Hope Ministries, a Christ-centered outreach to those dealing with unwanted homosexuality. She is also a [professional calligrapher](#); but most importantly, she is the wife of Dr. Ray Bohlin and the mother of their two grown sons. She can be reached at sue@probe.org.

Steve Cable is senior vice president of Probe Ministries. He is a magna cum laude graduate of Rice University with a Bachelor of Science and Masters Degree in Electrical Engineering. Prior to joining Probe, Steve spent over 25 years in the telecommunications industry. Steve and his wife Patti have served as Bible teachers for over 30 years helping people apply God's Word to every aspect of their lives. Steve has extensive, practical experience applying a Christian worldview to the dynamic, competitive high-tech world that is rapidly becoming a dominant aspect of our society. He can be reached at scable@probe.org.



Michael Gleghorn is a research associate with Probe Ministries. He earned a B.A. in psychology from Baylor University and a Th.M. in systematic theology from Dallas Theological Seminary, and is currently working on his Ph.D. in theology from DTS. Before coming on staff with Probe he taught history and theology at Christway Academy in Duncanville, Texas. Michael and his beautiful wife Hannah have two children. He can be reached via e-mail at mgleghorn@probe.org.



Todd Kappelman is a field associate with Probe Ministries. He is a graduate of Dallas Baptist University (B.A. and M.A.B.S., and Greek), and the University of Dallas (M.A., philosophy/humanities). Currently he is pursuing a Ph.D. in philosophy at the University of Dallas. He has served as assistant director of the Trinity Institute, a study center devoted to Christian thought and inquiry. He has been the managing editor of *The Antithesis*, a bi-monthly publication devoted to the critique of foreign and independent film. His central area of expertise is Continental philosophy (especially nineteenth and twentieth century) and postmodern thought.



✘	<p>Paul Rutherford is a researcher, writer, and speaker for Probe. He joined staff in 2008 after earning a bachelor's degree in philosophy and religious studies from Rice University. His areas of interest include philosophy of religion, world religions, and faith and culture. Paul's ministry experience includes campus ministry, cross-cultural ministry, and he has spoken in churches and schools throughout Texas. He and his wife Kelly have two young children. Paul's hobbies include playing saxophone, singing, acting, swing dancing, and sometimes Texas two-step. He can be reached at prutherford@probe.org.</p>
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<p>Dr. Lawrence Terlizzese is currently joining the Probe team while teaching rhetoric at the University of Texas at Dallas (UTD). Meanwhile, he is a doctoral candidate with an emphasis in Philosophy of Technology at UTD. He holds both a Th.M. and Ph.D. in Theological Studies from Dallas Theological Seminary, and a B.A. in Biblical Studies from Columbia International University in Columbia, South Carolina. He is the author of two books, <i>Trajectory of the Twenty First Century: Essays in Theology and Technology</i> and <i>Hope in the Thought of Jacques Ellul</i>. He can be reached at lawrence@probe.org. (Click here for a full bio.)</p>	✘
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“Do People Who Commit Suicide

Go to Hell?"

A young man I know committed suicide. Someone remarked that if he was troubled that day, he is *really* troubled now because the Bible says he is in hell forever. Is this true? If so, can you give me Bible references to support it, likewise if it is false?

That is NOT what the Bible says. That's what a lot of people think, but God isn't one of them.

Trusting Christ is the only criterion for determining whether one goes to heaven or hell. If the young man had trusted Christ and committed suicide as the only way he could think of to make the pain stop, then he is with the Lord because of the security of the believer. For instance, Rom. 8:38-39 says,

"For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, nether the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Nothing—including our own acts such as suicide—can separate believers (the context of Paul's letter) from God's love.

Consider also John 10: 28-19, which shows we are DOUBLY safe:

"I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all; no one can snatch them out of my Father's hand."

Not even ourselves.

If the young man had not trusted Christ, then unfortunately he is in hell, but not because of suicide: it would be because of his refusal to believe in and entrust himself to Jesus.

I hope this helps.

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

“How Do I Help This Young Teenage Wiccan?”

My husband and I are taking care of a 15-year old girl while her dad and step-mom (who are Christians) are on vacation. However, she just recently moved in with them. Previously she was living with her mom in another state. We were discussing Christianity with her last night and asked her what she believed in. She stated she believed in reincarnation and Wicca. Also, she doesn't believe in Satan which is really a contradiction. She says she went to the public library and checked out books on Wicca and studied them and she can cast spells. Of course, her dad and step-mom are not aware of her beliefs or that she practices Wicca. I searched your website using the word “Wicca” and read all of the articles so I understand some of what it is. However, I'm not sure what approach would be effective in ministering to her about Christianity and where to point out that Wicca is a false-religion. Are there other articles on your website with more information on Wicca specifically and how to minister to someone with these beliefs? What suggestions do you have? What scriptures can I point her to?

Whoa. You DO have your work cut out for you, don't you?

If I were you, I'd go beneath the girl's Wiccan beliefs to the heart issues that drew her to Wicca in the first place. Wicca

is appealing because it offers the lure of personal power, and it is particularly appealing to those who are feeling powerless. Which would seem to describe this young girl whose parents have divorced and she's being shuttled between them. . .? Personal power is the draw to be able to cast spells for those who perceive themselves as personally powerless.

Since she's a teenager, she's not interested in lectures, but longs to be heard and listened to. She's dying for real conversation with someone who honestly cares about her. So I would ask her, "Tell me about what drew you to Wicca in the first place. How did you hear about it? Tell me about the spells and why that's interesting to you."

Ask the Lord to open opportunities for you to tell her about what the true God is like—tenderly loving and kind. Wiccan teachers tend to bash the image they hold of the Christian God, not understanding who He really is. People who are drawn to a loving, kind goddess are really looking for the feminine side of God, which we can see in the Psalms and in Jesus' lament over Jerusalem. You may be able to ask her about her understanding of the Lord Jesus, and if she's open, you might be able to tell her about not only His personality and how He proved His love for her, but—amazingly—He promised (and delivered!) personal, supernatural power for those who trust Him! There is FAR more power in Christ living His life through us, empowering us supernaturally, than any spell or charm in any witchcraft book ever penned.

It's not surprising that she doesn't believe in Satan; Wicca doesn't believe in an evil entity. It's really about pantheism, with a non-personal deity that permeates everything. Unfortunately, not believing in Satan doesn't keep him from attacking people. Those who refuse to acknowledge a personal devil are more vulnerable to spiritual warfare than anybody.

I found a couple of articles on the web you may find helpful.

The first is from Leadership U., Probe's sister site, on teen witchcraft.

<http://www.leaderu.com/theology/teenwitchcraft.html>

The second is from the Christian Research Institute on "Witnessing to Witches."

<http://www.geocities.com/Heartland/Estates/6535/wittowit.htm>

I do hope this helps. I pray God will empower your words and let her see His love flowing to her through you.

In His grip,

Sue Bohlin

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