“Jesus Contributed to Drunkenness!”

I know drunkenness is condemned in Scripture, yet it seems that Jesus contributed to the drunkeness at the wedding feast when he turned the water to wine.

I’m afraid we can’t agree with your conclusions. First of all, Scripture doesn’t say anything about drunkenness occurring at the wedding at Cana (John 2:1-11). Secondly, to blame the Lord Jesus for drunkenness by changing water into wine is like blaming God for the Great Chicago Fire because He created wood with the capacity to burn. No one is responsible for drunkenness except the person who chooses to overdrink. I think it’s important to draw a distinction between the fact that God created good things in the first place, and the possibility that those good things can be abused. He is never responsible for our sinful choices.

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

“I Think One of My Students Plagiarized Your Angel Article!”

I am an English teacher checking research papers and I have a wonderful one on angels. It talks about Sue Bohlin dropping her baby boy and him almost hitting the wall. It goes on to say angels are non-bodily creatures in which their response to

God’s love did not need time nor reflection to grow and mature.

Trouble is, I don’t think this girl has ever used the word “nor” or “non-bodily”… I really don’t think she wrote it. Does anything here sound familiar? It also talks about Myra and the ministry of Teen Challenge in Philadelphia…it quotes Shakespeare and Isaac Watts.

I imagine you are busy, but I would like this girl to write her own paper, not use someone else’s works. I appreciate your time!

Response #1:
Boy, what an interesting e-mail! Your student produced a paper with some interesting concepts that are new and intriguing to me, as well as some anecdotes that I did indeed write. Check out my article on angels here.

Now maybe I’ll do an AltaVista search to find the other source article that talks about the “non-bodily” (huh?) creatures. . . <smile>

So let me know how this plays out, will you?

Sue (another teacher)
Response #2:
As soon as I sent my other e-mail, I found the web page your student lifted from:

http://geocities.com/Heartland/Pointe/4290/angels.html

Oh, they think we are so dumb and they are so crafty!!

Sue

You should have seen the look on this girl when I told her I had e-mailed the author of her paper!!! You should see the paranoid look on all of these kids when I tell them I caught someone plagiarizing and e-mailed the author!!!

This little girl has to have her paper rewritten by Monday and she will e-mail you an apology then. Thanks for the help. Much of her paper came directly from your “Angels: The Good, The Bad, and the Ugly” (which, by the way, was an interesting paper!)

THANKS FOR YOUR HELP! It made my day!!

“Do Angels Have Free Will?”

Do angels have Free Will like humans, or are they just automatons?
Yes, angels have free will like us. When Satan chose to stop obeying and worshipping God, and vaunted his own pride, that was a free choice, with the consequences that followed. One third of the angels chose to follow him. (See Rev. 12:4)

What sets apart angels from us is that we can be forgiven and restored, and they can’t. To follow God or not was a one-shot deal for angels, as far as we can tell. 1 Peter 1:12 says that angels “long to look into these things” (salvation and grace), which are not available to them.

Hope this helps.

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

“Bad Things Are Happening After I Talked to My Angel”

I’m hoping you can help me. A couple of weeks ago, a friend told me that there was a way to talk to my guardian angel by going into a relaxed, meditative state, and asking “Are you there?”

I didn’t believe it would work, but I tried it anyway. Nothing happened, but that night, I was having a strange dream when I was “awakened” by a loud knock at my door. I sat up in my bed and went to ask “who’s there?” and nothing would come out of my mouth but a hoarse whisper. I was still dreaming. Then I really woke up and my heart was pounding and then it felt like my bed was slightly trembling. That was on a Tuesday at 12:57am. The following Tuesday, I awoke at the same exact time to tapping on the wall next to my head. Again, it felt as though my bed was trembling. I didn’t sleep that night and convinced myself that it was just my heart pounding that caused it. Then it happened 2 more times, once on a tuesday a half an hour earlier, and then on a friday. I tried looking at it logically the last time it happened. I felt the walls, the floor and the only thing that was shaking was my mattress. The heater is on the other side of my room.

My manager told me to stop burning incense in my room and maybe that would help. I stopped burning it for the past week and nothing has happened. I am scared though, especially after reading the web page on angels and demons in disguise. Please write back to me. If you can advise me, I would greatly appreciate it, and maybe be able to sleep with my light off for once.

You must be terrified! I am so sorry to hear about this series of events. From what you write, I conclude that you really are dealing with demons—and they are terrorizing you. This is

where you inadvertently opened the door to them:

> *A couple of weeks ago, a friend told me that there was a way to talk to my guardian angel by going into a relaxed, meditative state, and asking "are you there?" I didn't believe it would work, but I tried it anyway. Nothing happened.*

Actually, something DID happen. Your friend gave you very bad, very dangerous advice. The Bible gives us no instruction or allowance for contacting angels; when you opened yourself up to your "angel," it was an unholy angel who answered.

Jesus Christ is the only One who has power enough to make the terrorizing stop. The demons are afraid of Him and afraid of His blood. I suggest you pray a prayer entrusting yourself to Him as God's Son who loved you enough to die (shed His blood) for you. Then, address the demons out loud by telling them they have to leave in Jesus' name. You can also say, "I am protected by the blood of Jesus Christ."

Here's the deal, though. If you haven't trusted Christ to save you, from either your sins or this situation, you have no authority to use Jesus' name and there will be no power behind your words. The words are not magic; the power is in a true relationship with Jesus, where He protects you because you have entrusted yourself to Him.

If you have never trusted Christ as your savior, please read here for a full explanation of what it means: The Most Important Decision of Your Life.

Let me know how you're doing, OK?

Sue Bohlin

Probe Ministries

Trash Your Marriage in Eight Easy Steps – A Christian Perspective

Sue Bohlin helps us take a biblical perspective on eight activities and attitudes that will tear down our marriage. Fortunately, she also provides us eight Christian alternatives that will help build up our marriages.

The divorce rate is at an all-time high, and marriages are falling apart everywhere you look. Marriages of church-going people are crashing and burning especially fast. There are forces in our culture that contribute to marriage stresses such as pornography, the prevalence of drivenness, two-career families, and the dynamics of the blended family. But people also make foolish choices to destroy their marriages from within.

Talking about the family, Proverbs 14:1 says, "The wise woman builds her house, but the foolish tears it down with her own hands." Ephesians 5:28 exhorts husbands to love their wives as their own bodies, nourishing and cherishing them. God's plan is that we treasure and cultivate our marriages, but it's very easy to trash them instead. Let's take a tongue-in-cheek look at eight ways that people trash their marriages.

Be Selfish

The first step is to *be selfish*. My pastor once said that the AIDS of marriage is justified self-centeredness. Everything needs to revolve around you because, let's face it, you *are* at the center of the universe, right? If you find something you like to do that ignores your spouses' feelings and interests,

go ahead and do it! Too bad if they don't like it! You only go around once in life, so grab for all the gusto you can get!

Always insist on having things your own way. If you don't get your own way, throw a tantrum. Or freeze your spouse out. Get your kids involved in this game by saying things like, "Would you please ask your father to pass the salt?" Don't be afraid to withhold sex if your spouse isn't letting you have things your own way. There's a *lot* of power in that, so don't waste it!

If there's only enough money in your budget for what one of you wants, make sure you get what *you* want. Especially if you're the wage earner, or if you make more than the other. Money is power, and don't be afraid to use it against your spouse!

Make demands instead of requests. Wives, let your husband know that he *will* do things your way, or you'll make his life miserable. Husbands, when you want your wife to do something, just *tell* her to do it. "Please" and "thank you" are for the kids. This is your spouse you're talking about—they don't need it. Save all your courtesy for strangers; don't waste it on the person you said you'd spend the rest of your life with.

What we really mean to say:

Selfishness is guaranteed to hurt marriages, so ask for God's help in putting your husband or wife ahead of yourself so you *don't* trash your marriage.

Pick at Each Other

The second step is to *pick at each other.* If you know that something you do annoys your spouse, be sure to do it often. And intentionally. When she complains about it, tell her to buzz off, it's not as annoying as the stupid things she does to bug *you*. The more childish the annoying habit, the better.

Be critical of the smallest thing the other one says and does. Don’t let your spouse get away with anything! Stay vigilant for every little offense. Be sure to address these small details with an air of superiority . . . unless it works better for you to act like a martyr, as if you deserve the Nobel Prize for putting up with someone who doesn’t squeeze the toothpaste from the end.

Always get the last word when you’re arguing. Dr. Phil McGraw has said that the most accurate predictor of divorce is when people don’t allow their partners to retreat with dignity. So make your spouse feel whipped and defeated at the end of a fight. As long as you win, that’s what matters.

Let The Kids Be More Important

A third step to trashing your marriage is to *let the kids become more important than your spouse.* Moms, make your husband feel left out of the intimate, secret relationship between you and your baby. As the baby grows, continue to draw the line where it’s you and your child on one side, your husband on the other. Keep your Mommy hat on all day and all night. Your kids don’t care if your hair is brushed and if you put on perfume and a little makeup before Daddy comes home, so why should he?

Dads, invest all your energies into making your child succeed at what he’s good at, or what you *want* him to be good at. Squeeze out Mom so that you will be your kid’s favorite parent. Work so hard on homework and school projects that there’s no time for family time.

Let the kids and your other priorities crowd out your “alone together” time. Date nights are for unmarried people! In order to be fulfilled as a person, it is essential to invest all your energies in parenting, career, housework, church commitments and hobbies, so don’t worry if there isn’t enough time left over for the two of you. It’s no big deal. There’s

always tomorrow. Or next year.

What we really mean to say:

Hey! If you find yourself doing these things, *stop*! You don’t have to trash your marriage!

Show Disrespect

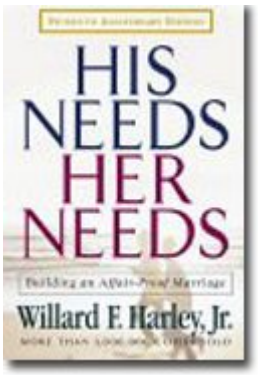
Show disrespect for your spouse, especially in public. One of the best ways to disrespect your partner is ugly name-calling, especially about things he or she can’t change. However, the old standbys of “stupid,” “fat,” “ugly,” “weak,” and “loser” are always effective, too.

Complain about your spouse to your friends. It’s even more powerful if you do it in front of your spouse. Then, if he objects, punch him in the arm and say, “I’m just kidding! You take everything so *seriously!*”

There are a number of ways to show disrespect with nonverbal communication. Roll your eyes, cluck your tongue, narrow your eyes in contempt. The heavy sigh is a real winner, too.

Wives: Straighten out your husband when he makes a mistake, especially in front of others. Lecture him. Ridicule him: his feelings, his behavior, his dreams, his thoughts. Do everything you can to emasculate your husband. Husbands: Let your wife know you think your opinion is better than hers. Interrupt her when she’s speaking.

Refuse to Meet Emotional Needs



Another easy way to trash your marriage is *to refuse to meet your spouse's emotional needs.* Men and women need different things from their life partners. Dr. Willard Harley discovered and examined a pattern in his excellent book *His Needs, Her Needs.* Husbands' top needs, it turns out, are: first of all sexual fulfillment; second, recreational companionship; third, an attractive spouse; fourth, domestic support; and fifth, admiration. Wives, if you want to trash your marriage, ignore his need for sex and that you be there for him in leisure time. Blow off his desire that you look your best and he can be proud that you're his wife. Make your home as stressful and chaotic as you can, and never, ever tell him what you admire about him.

Wives' top needs are: first of all affection; second conversations; third, honesty and openness; fourth, financial commitment; and fifth, family commitment. So guys, if you want to trash your marriage, don't show your wife you love and appreciate her. Don't talk to her. Close off your heart to her. Make her constantly worry about finances. Don't be a faithful husband and father.

Dr. Harley's got a Web site, MarriageBuilders.com, that has a lot of good, practical information for building strong marriages, so you'd better stay away from there if you're not interested in being intentional and constructive!

Remember, we're being tongue-in-cheek here. We want you to *build* your marriage, not *trash* it!

Treat Your Friends Better than Your Spouse

The sixth easy step to trashing your marriage is to *treat your friends better than your spouse.* Since a lot of men unfortunately don't even have friends, this is something women

tend to do more. Women know how to treat their girlfriends. They call them up just to encourage them. They drop off flowers for no reason. They send them cards, and they listen intently to whatever's going on in their lives. They are emotionally invested in their friends. They are quick to mention when someone looks nice or does something well because women are usually good at affirming each other. If you want to trash your marriage, don't do any of these thoughtful kindnesses for your husband. If your girlfriend is having a bad day, go out of your way to take her a wonderful casserole *and* fresh salad *and* dessert . . . but serve your husband Spaghetti-O's.

But husbands, if your wife needs you for something at home, and your buddy scores some tickets to a game, tell your wife "too bad, so sad." After all, she'll be around forever but tonight's hockey game won't. If someone at church or in the neighborhood needs something fixed, drop everything to take care of it, even if it means that the broken things around *your* house will continue to go unfixed.

Be a Pansy

Step number seven for trashing your marriage has two parts. Husbands, *be a pansy*. Retreat into the safety of passivity. Refuse to take initiative or responsibility in making plans or suggestions. That way, when things go wrong, you can say, "Don't blame me! It's not my fault!" These are great ways to trash your marriage.

Be His Mother

Wives, *be a mother* to your husband. When people ask how many children you have, say things like, "Two—three, if you count my husband." Tell him to wear a coat when it's cold and take an umbrella when it's raining, because he can't figure it out on his own. Be sure to say "I told you so" as often as possible. If he is passive or irresponsible, jump in and

rescue him so he won't have to deal with the consequences of his own choices. Make sure he feels three years old. Tell him how to live his life, down to the smallest detail.

What we really mean to say:

Please, if you find yourself doing these things, ask for God's help in being *con*structive instead of *de*structive. We want to help you *build* your marriage, not *trash* it.

When You're Angry, Blow Up

Let's talk about one final way to trash your marriage. Yell and scream, or quietly say hurtful words; it doesn't matter. Inflicting pain is the important thing. Call each other names in the heat of your emotion. Dredge up the past and bring up old hurts. You can hit or slap with words as well as with hands, and they each leave a different kind of lasting damage to your spouse and to your marriage. Losing control when you're angry is a powerful way to hurt your spouse.

Build Your Marriage in Eight *Harder* Steps

Well, enough of ways to trash your marriage—how about eight steps to build it? All we have to do is look at the opposite of this article's negative, destructive steps.

To build your marriage, fight selfishness by developing a servant's heart. Commit yourself to acting in your spouse's best interests. Do at least one unselfish deed for your husband or wife every day.

Second, instead of picking at each other, choose to let things go. Be grace-givers. Remember that "love covers a multitude of sins" (1 Pet. 4:8).

Third, be intentional in keeping your marriage at the center of your family. Have regular date nights, and schedule times away to invest in the intimacy of your relationship. Go to a

FamilyLife Marriage Conference (www.familylife.com).

Fourth, commit to actively be respectful to your spouse by never saying anything negative to other people. Be kind in your words and actions. Treat each other as courteously and with the kind of honor you would bestow on a stranger or a dear friend.

Fifth, talk about your spouse's particular emotional needs. Read Willard Harley's excellent book *His Needs, Her Needs.* Find out which ones are most important to *your* partner, and do everything in your power to meet them.

Sixth, treat your husband or wife at least as well as you treat your friends. Be as thoughtful and encouraging and affirming as you can possibly be.

Seventh: Ladies, resign as your husband's mother. You married an adult; treat him with the respect an adult deserves. Men: Your wife needs a servant-leader—someone who refuses either passivity or tyranny—to love her as Christ loves the church.

And last, when you're angry, express it wisely and constructively. Use words like "I'm angry about this" instead of yelling or hurtful silence. If you're too mad to speak with self-control, wait till you cool down. And don't go to bed without dealing with the situation (Eph. 4:26).

You don't *have* to trash your marriage. You can treasure it instead.

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Feminism: A Christian Perspective

Sue Bohlin provides a Christian view on feminism. How does this prevalent view of women measure up from a biblical perspective?

This article is also available in Spanish.

The worldview of feminism has permeated just about every aspect of American life, education and culture. We see it in the way men are portrayed as lovable but stupid buffoons on TV sitcoms. We see it in the way boys are punished and marginalized in school for not being enough like girls. We see it in politically correct speech that attempts to change the way people think by harassing them for their choice of words.

The anger and frustration that drove feminism's history is legitimate; women have been devalued and dishonored ever since the fall of man. Very real, harmful inequities needed to be addressed, and it's important to honor some of the success of feminist activists. But at the same time, we need to examine and expose the worldview that fuels much of feminist thought.

Modern-day feminism got its major start when Betty Friedan wrote her landmark book *The Feminine Mystique,* in which she coined the phrase "The Housewife Blahs" to describe millions of unfulfilled women. There are many reasons that women can feel unfulfilled and dishonored, but from a Christian perspective I would suggest that this is what life feels like when we are disconnected from God and disconnected from living out *His* purpose for our lives. As Augustine said, "We are restless, O God, until we find our rest in Thee."

Betty Friedan looked at unhappy, unfulfilled women and diagnosed the problem as *patriarchy,* which means a male-dominated society. If women are unhappy, the reason is that

men are in charge.

The early feminists decided that women are oppressed because bearing and raising children is a severe limitation and liability. What makes women *different* from men equals *weakness.* The next step, then, was to overcome that difference so that women could be just like men. The invention of the birth control pill helped fuel that illusion.

Out of the consciousness-raising groups in the ’70s came a shift in the view of women’s differences. Instead of seeing those differences as weakness, they now saw those differences as a source of pride and confidence. It was now a good thing to be a woman.

The next step in feminist thought was that women were not just *equal* to men, they were *better* than men. This spawned famous quotes like Gloria Steinem’s comment that “A woman without a man is like a fish without a bicycle.”{1} Male-bashing became the sport of the ’90s.

Feminism says, “The problem is patriarchy—male dominated society.” The problem is actually the sin of people within a God-ordained hierarchy. In a fallen world, there are going to be problems between men and women, and especially abuses of power. We must not confuse the abuses of the structure with the structure itself.{2}

Feminism and the Church

Feminism has so permeated our culture that we should not be surprised that it has impacted the church as well. Religious feminists uncovered the “Church Women Blahs.” People became aware that for the most part, women were relegated to service positions like making coffee and rocking babies. If a woman had gifts in teaching, shepherding, administration or evangelism, she was out of luck.

The *Magna Carta* for Christian feminists is Galatians 3:28: “In

Christ there is no male or female.” However, the context of this verse is not about equal rights, but that all believers have the same position of humility at the foot of the Cross. The issue is not capability, but God-ordained positions within a God-ordained authority structure of male leadership. Other biblical passages that go into detail about gender-dependent roles show that Galatians 3:28 cannot mean the obliteration of those roles.

There are two main areas where religious feminists seek to change gender roles: the role of women in the church, and the role of women in marriage. The discussion has produced two camps: egalitarians and complementarians.

Egalitarians are the feminist camp, with an emphasis on equality of *roles*, not just *value.* They believe that hierarchy produces inequality, and that different means unequal. The solution, therefore, is to get rid of the differences between men’s and women’s roles. Women should be ordained, allowed to occupy the office of pastor and elder, and exercise authority over others in the church. Instead of differences in the roles of husband and wife, both spouses are called to mutual submission.

Egalitarians are reacting against a very real problem in the church. But the problem of authoritarian men, and women relegated to minor serving positions, is due to an abuse and distortion of the hierarchy God designed. Egalitarians reject the male authority structure along with the abuse of that structure.

Complementarians believe that God has ordained a hierarchy of authority in the church and within the family that reflects the hierarchy of authority within the Trinity. And just as there is equality in the Trinity, there is equality in the church and in marriage because we are all made in the image of God. Women are just as gifted as men, but there are biblical restrictions on the exercise of some of those gifts, such as

not teaching men from a position of authority, and not occupying the office of pastor or elder. In marriage, wives are called to submit to their husbands. Mutual submission in marriage is no more appropriate than submission of parents to children.

Christian feminists did not evaluate whether the structures or hierarchies of leadership were there because God designed them that way. They just demanded wholesale change. But some things are worth keeping!

Feminism on Campus

As with the family and the church, feminism has had an impact on our college campuses. Abraham Lincoln once warned, "The philosophy of the school room in one generation will become the philosophy of government in the next." What happens on college campuses eventually affects the rest of the culture, and nowhere is feminism's pervasiveness more evident than in our colleges.

A new discipline of Women's Studies has arisen in many universities. These courses usually stress women's literature, treating with contempt anything written by "dead white European males." They often incorporate women's religions in the curricula, especially the Goddess worship of Wicca on campus. The main tenet of this pagan religion is that the worshipper is in harmony with Mother Earth and with all life. They worship the Goddess, which is described as "the immanent life force, . . . Mother Nature, the Earth, the Cosmos, the interconnectedness of all life."{3} Many witches (followers of Wicca, not Satanists) and pagans are involved in women's studies programs because, as one Wiccan Web site put it, "Many feminists have turned to Wicca and the role of priestess for healing and strength after the patriarchal oppression and lack of voice for women in the major world religions."{4}

Christianity is often portrayed on college campuses, and

especially within Women's Studies, as an abusive religion. There are several reasons. First, because Christianity is hierarchical, teaching differentiation of roles and that some are to submit to and follow others. Second, their skewed view of the Bible is that Christianity teaches that women are inferior to men. Third, Christ was male, so he is insufficient as a role model for women and can't possibly understand what it means to be a woman. And fourth, since the language of the Bible is male-oriented and patriarchal (both of which are evil), it must be dismissed or changed.

Feminism impacts dating relationships on campus. Heterosexual dating is often colored by an attempt to persuade women that all men are potential rapists and cannot be trusted. Even a remark meant to compliment a woman is taken as sexist and unacceptable. One woman, wearing a short skirt on campus, heard someone whistle appreciatively. She strode into the women's study center complaining, "I've just been raped!"

Angry feminists convey a hatred and fear of men as part of the feminist ideology. When it comes to dating, for a number of feminists, lesbianism is considered the only appropriate option. If men are brutes and idiots, why would anyone want to have an intimate relationship with one? In fact, there's a new acronym on campus, GUG: "Gay until graduation." But the fact is, most women really like men; that's always been a problem for feminists. Let's consider more problems that result from feminism.

The Problematic Legacy of Feminism

Feminists started from a reasonable point in recognizing a most unhappy aspect of life in a fallen world: women tend to be dishonored, disrespected, and devalued by many men. This is as true in religious systems as it is in society and political systems. Feminists started out trying to rectify this problem first by trying to prove that women were as good as men. Then they decided that women were better than men. They ended up

trying to erase the lines of distinction between men and women altogether. This has resulted in tremendous confusion about what it means to be a woman, as well as what it means to be a man. And naturally, it has produced a lot of confusion in relationships as well. This confusion ranges from men who are afraid to open doors for women for fear of receiving a rude tongue-lashing, to women who are baffled in the workplace because the men they compete against at work won't ask them out on a date.

Radical feminist thought despised much of what it means to be a woman—to be receptive and responsive and relational, to treasure marriage and family. Only masculine traits and behaviors and jobs were deemed valuable. Nonetheless, many young women are confused by the messages they are getting from the culture: that an education and a job are the only worthwhile pursuits, and the social capital of marriage and family is no longer valued. However, these same women feel guilty and confused for finding themselves still longing for marriage and family when they're supposed to be content without them. One college student said, "I've taken all the women's studies courses—I know that marriage and motherhood are traps—but I still want to do both."{5}

The legacy of feminism is the refusal of the God-given role of men to be initiator, protector and provider. And the God-given role of women to be responder, nurturer and helper is equally disdained. The consequence of this rebellion is relational confusion, especially in the home. Dads aren't communicating to their sons why it's a blessing to be male, because frankly, they're not sure that it is. The message of feminism is that being male is a joke or a curse. Moms aren't teaching their daughters the basic skill sets that homemakers need because they're too busy at their jobs and besides, haven't we been taught that being a homemaker is demeaning? As a mentoring Mom to mothers of preschoolers, I see how many young women are totally clueless about how to be a wife and mother because

those essential skills just weren't considered important by their mothers. Radical feminism hates family and families, and we all suffer as a result.

Feminism says, "The problem is patriarchy—male dominated society." The problem is actually the sin of people within a God-ordained hierarchy. The heart of feminism is a rebellion against the abuses of this God-ordained hierarchy, but it's also a rebellion against God's plan itself. This is a perfect example of throwing the baby out with the bathwater. Feminists believe they have the right to reinvent reality and to change the rules to suit them. This rebellious belief system has had some disastrous effects on our culture and society.

For example, one of feminism's biggest achievements was the legalization of abortion. *Keeping* it legal is one of feminism's biggest goals: see, if women are to be truly free, then they must be free to decide whether or not to carry a pregnancy to term. A woman's ability to conceive, give birth, and nurture babies is seen as weakness and vulnerability, because women can be forced to be impregnated and to bear unwanted babies. Removing the consequence of sexual activity, and getting rid of unwanted pregnancy to cancel out a woman's so-called "weakness," is important to many feminists. So, since 1973, there have been over 40 million abortions in the U.S.{6}. But that only tells part of the story; "while some women report relatively little trauma following abortion, for many, the experience is devastating, causing severe and long-lasting emotional, psychological and spiritual trauma."{7} I have the privilege of helping post-abortal women grieve the loss of their babies and receive God's forgiveness for their sin. They know that feminism's insistence that abortion is every woman's right is a lie.

Another impact of feminism is seen in the feminization of American schools. Feminism's disrespect for men and boys has shaped schools and educational policy around values and methods that favor girls over boys. Competition, a natural

state of being for many boys, is considered harmful and evil, to be replaced with girl-friendly cooperative, relational activities. “Schools are denying the very behavior that makes little boys boys. In Southern California, a mother was stunned to find out that her son was disciplined for running and jumping over a bench at recess.”{8} My colleague Don Closson wrote, “Gender crusaders believe that if they can influence little boys early enough, they can make them more like little girls.”{9}

To despise the glory of masculinity is to reject the very image of God. To despise the treasure of femininity is to reject what the Bible calls the glory of man.{10} That’s the problem with feminism: it is a rejection of what God has called good. It has gone too far in addressing the inequities of living in a fallen world. It’s a rebellion against God’s right to be God and our responsibility to submit joyfully to Him.

Notes

1. Actually, I have discovered, it wasn’t original with Ms. Steinem. She had this to say in a letter she wrote to *Time* magazine in autumn 2000: “In your note on my new and happy marital partnership with David Bale, you credit me with the witticism ‘A woman needs a man like a fish needs a bicycle.’ In fact, Irina Dunn, a distinguished Australian educator, journalist and politician, coined the phrase back in 1970 when she was a student at the University of Sydney.” Irina Dunn has confirmed this story, in an e-mail of January 28, 2002: “Yes, indeed, I am the one Gloria referred to. I was paraphrasing from a phrase I read in a philosophical text I was reading for my Honours year in English Literature and Language in 1970. It was “A man needs God like a fish needs a bicycle.” My inspiration arose from being involved in the renascent women’s movement at the time, and from being a bit if a smart-arse. I scribbled the phrase on the backs of two toilet doors, would

you believe, one at Sydney University where I was a student, and the other at Soren's Wine Bar at Woolloomooloo, a seedy suburb in south Sydney. The doors, I have to add, were already favoured graffiti sites."
www.phrases.org.uk/meanings/414150.html
2. I am indebted to the wisdom and insight of Mary Kassian as expressed in her excellent book *The Feminist Gospel* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1992).
3. www.cog.org/wicca/about.html
4. Ibid.
5. Quoted by Barbara DeFoe Whitehead, *Mars Hill Audio Journal* No. 61, Mar./Apr. 2003.
6. www.nrlc.org/abortion/aboramt.html
7. www.hopeafterabortion.com/aftermath/
8. William Pollack, *Real Boys: Rescuing Our Sons from the Myths of Boyhood,* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1998), 94. The entire quote is from Don Closson, "The Feminization of American Schools".
9. Ibid.
10. 1 Cor. 11:7

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"Were Jesus' Miracles a Demonstration of His Humanity or Deity?"

I am writing a thesis about Jesus' dual nature and I would like to know what you think about the miracles Jesus performed. Were they a demonstration of His humanity or deity? I've already heard that He performed His miracles as a man who

was been used by the Holy Spirit as some preachers today that have the gift of healing. Please give me biblical references.

Great question!

His deity. Only God can do miracles; there's nothing in our humanness that can do them.

When Jesus exorcised demons, He simply said, "Be gone," not "In the name of the Father." When He calmed the sea, He simply said, "Be still," not "In the name of Yahweh." When he fed the 4,000 and the 5,000, He simply blessed the food and kept handing it out. Period.

We do see examples of people performing miracles in the Bible, like Peter healing the crippled in man in Acts 3:6. Peter had no power on his own, but said, "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk." Jesus never had to appeal to a higher power; He WAS the higher power.

Hope this helps!

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

"You're Overreacting About Harry Potter"

Dear Ms. Bohlin,

It was with great concern that I read your article regarding the Harry Potter series. You said,

> **"But there's one substantial difficulty with the Harry Potter series. They make sorcery and witchcraft enticing to**

the reader. And that is not consistent with a Christian worldview, where we are called to 'take every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.' God gives us very strong and clear commands about witchcraft: it is a sin, it is an abomination before God, and the Old Testament penalty for sorcery or witchcraft was death. The proscription against the practice of magic is continued in the New Testament."

Please know that in Great Britain the state religion is the very Christian Church of England. We can freely talk about God and government at the same time. There is no problem with my son's school putting on a Nativity play, the Headmistress praying at the school assembly and his teacher teaching about the life of Jesus. England has clergymen from the Anglican (Episcopalian Church in the US) Church in Parliament as representatives. This is a very Christian country and J.K. Rawlings would never make a statement about Christ without being eaten alive and her book banned from every school in the country if it was thought to be of the occult.

The book is getting lots of questions in the US for dealing with wizards, but not here. I think that is because England has such a history of King Arthur and Knights, dragons and other lore. One more story about a wizard is not considered to entice children into witchcraft anymore than any other stories. It is not an issue in the UK. There are few occults in England and no religious right or fundamentalist. The English think the Americans' obsession with Harry Potter and the occult is weird, unless there is the issue of American Christian's not being as strong in their faith.

Thank you so much for your insightful letter. The difference between the UK mindset and ours in the U.S. in terms of the King Arthur and wizard mythologies provides a wonderful perspective on the whole Harry Potter phenomenon, and I am indebted to you for helping me see things more globally.

Here in the U.S., the subject of witches and magic is definitely linked to the occult and Satanism (or, at the least, the pagan religion of Wicca), whereas I see how it is probably dismissed as nothing more than mythology in the UK.

Nonetheless, God has still condemned occult practices as a form of idolatry. Perhaps Harry Potter doesn't stir the imagination in that direction in England, but it certainly does here.

But I hear what you're saying about how the English could look at us as wierd for our reaction to Harry.

Thank you for taking the time to write!

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

"Help Me Understand Rewards in Heaven"

Dear Sue,

I want to ask about different rewards in heaven. In some classes I've been told that everyone is equal in heaven and there are no levels. Other classes seem to indicate that it is the way you live on earth and the deposits you make in heaven on the rewards you receive. I know that believing in Jesus Christ as your Savior guarantees your salvation, but I am a little confused on the levels in heaven and what this means. I've even been told that it is just different people's interpretation. Please help me understand!

The confusion usually comes from people confusing the

differences between SALVATION and REWARDS. Salvation is a free gift, but rewards are earned by our works after we are saved. No one's works will ever earn them salvation—the only ones that count are the ones we perform after becoming a Christian. Salvation is a present reality, but our rewards will be given in the future, in heaven.

They will be given at the Judgment Seat of Christ (you may hear some people call it by the Greek word, *bema* [bay-ma]), when our works (NOT our sins, which were paid for at the Cross) will be tested and judged.

2 Corinthians 5:10 says, "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be paid back according to what he has done while in the body, whether good or evil." Similarly, Romans 14:10, 12 says, "We will all stand before the Judgment Seat of God. . . and each one of us will give an account of himself to God."

1 Corinthians 3:9-15 describes what will happen: God will test our works by the fire of motive. If we did things in His strength and for His glory, they will pass through the refining fire and emerge as gold, silver and costly stones. If we did things in our own flesh and for our glory or for the earthly payoff, we will have gotten all our strokes on earth, and the works will be burned up, not making it through the testing "fire." (Those works are referred to as wood, hay and straw, which are easily consumed by flame.)

There are various kinds of rewards, but the Bible doesn't give a lot of information.

Matthew 10:41 talks about a prophet's reward, a righteous person's reward, and a disciple's reward.

Then there are crowns:

- James 1:12 and Revelation 2:10 refer to the "crown of life" for those who endure, remaining faithful under

trials and persecution. (Some have called this the martyr's crown.)

- 2 Timothy 4:7-8 refers to the "crown of righteousness" for those who loved the Lord's coming and lived holy lives in anticipation of His return.
- 1 Peter 5:4 promises the "crown of glory" to those who shepherd God's flock with faithfulness.
- Philippians 4:1 and 1 Thessalonians 2:19 refer to beloved believers that Paul calls his "crown of exultation (or rejoicing)."

All these crowns use the Greek word *stephanos,* which is the crown made of foliage and placed on the head of the victor of a competition.

But it can be made of precious metals as well. Rulers' crowns symbolize dominion and authority over people, and sure enough, God's rewards include dominion and authority:

Revelation 2:26–"He who overcomes, and he who keeps My deeds until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations, and he shall rule them with a rod of iron." This goes along with one of the parables in Luke 19:17 where the master rewards the servant who was a faithful steward of his money; he says, "because you were faithful in a very little thing, you are to be in authority over ten cities."

Revelation 2:17–In this book written to people undergoing persecution, Jesus promises, "To him who overcomes, I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and a new name, written on the stone which no one knows but he who receives it."

We can also lose our rewards (2 John 8), and it's possible for someone to take our crown (Revelation 3:11). So, no wonder God calls us to be faithful and persevering all the way to the end!

I'm so glad you asked this, because I've heard people say, "If

those who become Christians as small children end up in the same place (heaven) as those who trust Christ moments before they die, then why spend your whole life serving God?" That's because they don't understand that what happens at the Judgment Seat of Christ will be very, very different for these two people. Our lives in heaven will be determined by the choices, sacrifices, and actions of earth. Some will be very wealthy, and others will be "barely there." 1 Corinthians 3:15 says that the deeds of some people will be burned up, and they will suffer loss; they will be saved, but only as those escaping through the flames. It will be like watching your house burn to the ground with every single thing you own in it. . . lost. On the other hand, lots of people will see their works shown for the high quality that they are, and they will be rewarded exceedingly well because God is so generous.

I hope this helps!

Sue Bohlin

Posted November 2001, Updated 2/19/2021

"I Am So Afraid—What If There Is No Heaven?"

I am writing to you because I am very concerned and don't know where to turn for help. I am a Christian and have always felt I had a great deal of faith. I lost my father, my mother and an older sister over the years – and my faith sustained me during those traumatic times.

Recently our 38 year old daughter died quite suddenly. I am just overwhelmed with grief – and I believe the medications

given her caused her sudden death. She had kidney problems – but her doctor was aware of that, and the med he gave her should not have been given to her because of her kidney problems.

Now I seem to have lost my faith completely. I cry and want so much to know she is OK and that she is not sad and lonely as we are here without her. I have begun to question if there really is a Heaven? I read recently that Heaven is something Christians invented to take away their fear of death. Is this true? I also read a book called *Embraced by the Light* by Betty Eadie, and it really upset me. She claimed to have had an out of body experience where she went to Heaven, and then she wrote a whole book about what heaven is like – and the different levels there, and how one may stay at a lower level, or advance to a higher level.

I am so afraid – what if there is no Heaven? Or if there is, is my daughter sad and lonely because none of her family are there with her? I just don't know anymore what to believe. I try to pray – but find no peace. I am so afraid.

Dear _____,

I am so very, very sorry to hear of your tremendous loss. You must be in such shock you don't know how to "do life" at this point.

As a mother who has also lost a daughter, I want to encourage you in how the Lord comforted me. Most especially, I am comforted by the truth of Psalm 139:16—"All the days ordained for me were written in Your book before one of them came to be."

_____, your daughter didn't live one day less than God intended for her to live from before the foundations of the earth. It FEELS like a premature death to us who are left behind, but no one is more powerful than God, and HE is the one who determines the length of our days. So even though it

is hugely painful and grievous, and even though it's tempting to blame the medications, she died on the day God knew she would die and planned for her to die. Not a day sooner, and not a day later.

Secondly, Jesus said He came from heaven (John 6:51). It is a real place. If there is no heaven, then Jesus lied. If Jesus lied, then he was not the holy Son of God, and His death was meaningless. If His death was meaningless, then none of us have any hope. But our hope is REAL and TRUE! He died to make it possible for us to be united with God and reunited with our believing loved ones.

Paul said that to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord (2 Cor. 5:6,8). If your daughter trusted Christ, she is immersed in a living sea of light and love and glory, worshiping the Lord Jesus and enjoying the freedom that comes from being released from this fallen, decaying world. When she "graduated" from your womb to your arms, did you ever worry that she was lonely for the comfort of the dark, warm place inside you? I bet not! <smile> She was in a far, far better place when she was born. When people are in heaven, it's like graduating from the womb to our mother's arms only way, WAY better. Being with the Lord is so much better than this earth that we can't even begin to imagine it, any more than the pre-born infant can imagine what it's like to be nestled in her mother's arms, to look in her eyes, to see a glorious sunset, to listen to a symphony. To eat ice cream! To love and love back. . . all those things cannot be imagined in the womb, but they await the baby, just as the joys of heaven await us if we have trusted Christ as our Savior.

I want to suggest to you that you read Joni Eareckson Tada's wonderful book *Heaven*, because it will make you much more familiar with heaven and it will greatly comfort your heart. Unlike Betty Eadie's book *Embraced by the Light*, Joni's book is TRUE and based completely on the Bible.

I pray you will know the warmth of God’s comfort in growing measure as you grieve the loss of your daughter. One of the things that makes heaven so real to me is knowing that my daughter and my parents are there. I pray the realness of heaven will grow for you as well.

In His grip,

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries