

“Did I Encounter a Demon?”

Dear Miss Bohlin,

I am a 17 year old aspiring writer who has just recently gotten back into the Church after a hiatus of several years after getting caught up in some odd religious fever and being baptized. I've often wondered why that off sensation came over me, but I'm starting to piece together the way my life has panned out and how things are indeed serving a purpose.

I am writing you because of the article on the web you wrote entitled, [“Angels: The Good, The Bad, And The Ugly.”](#) I was reading because I am trying to do research for a comic book project about a Christian “super hero” in the future, and I would like to feature an angel or two as supporting characters to my heroic lead character.

As I read the article, I came upon the part speaking of the falseness of those preaching the practice of channeling angels and praying to angels, and how these so called angels providing the information were more than likely actually demons. The part that hit me hardest, though, was the part speaking of the promise that those who seek out these “angels” will be visited by a “Shining” angel that is more than likely a personal encounter with an actual demon.

This hit me because of something that happened several years ago. If I remember correctly, I had just entered my teenage career, and had already been baptized sometime before. By this point, though, I had drifted away from religion, and had stopped attending church almost altogether. Lord forgive me if this isn't entirely accurate, I have horrible memory about some things. Anyways, I had become interested in ghosts and psychic phenomenon, and had decided to call a psychic 900-number. The man I spoke with was more than happy to assist when I asked if he could help me strengthen any abilities I

may have had. He went with me through the motions for several days of meditating and “filling myself with a light” in my mind’s eye. Finally, I actually saw the outline of a being’s face, a being that looked like a perfect representation of what I have tended to see Angels as, like some kind of a Greek statue or something.

As I came back to the church, I have been at war with myself internally over what to believe in this world we live in, and in some ways I’ve been frustrated because I haven’t felt a level of religious belonging like the one I experienced in the few weeks leading up to my baptism since the baptism itself. I had been using this “vision” of my “angelic guide” as proof of faith for so long, and now I realize I was trying to use an encounter with a demon as justification of believing in God.

Do you think this could be what has been holding me back from experiencing the joy I felt during the time surrounding my Baptism? If so, now that I have realized it, how should I deal with it? My first impulse at this discovery that I likely encountered a demon and have probably been under some sort of influence since then has been to be horrified and afraid. But as I talked about it with a friend, I began to see it as a backfire in the plans for whatever this being was. If there is a demon, then there must be angels. And if there are Angels, then there must be a God to follow, and obey and have faith in. Is this a good interpretation? Is this a personal victory for me? I’ve heard it said that nearly anything used for evil can be turned back and used for good. Should I be using my encounter with evil as reinforcement for a belief that there must, undoubtedly, be a good, and I have every reason to seek that good?

Your thoughts on this strangeness are greatly appreciated.

Thank you,

Dear _____, I wish you could see the smile on my face as I read this particular section of your letter:

If there is a demon, then there must be angels. And if there are Angels, then there must be a God to follow, and obey and have faith in. Is this a good interpretation? Is this a personal victory for me? I've heard it said that nearly anything used for evil can be turned back and used for good. Should I be using my encounter with evil as reinforcement for a belief that there must, undoubtedly, be a good, and I have every reason to seek that good?

Yes, yes, yes!! It's an excellent interpretation!

To answer your question, "how should I deal with it?" the best answer I can suggest is that you get Neil Anderson's book *The Bondage Breaker*. He explains the power and authority we have in Jesus Christ and how to completely renounce any hold Satan and demons have over you in an orderly, step-by-step manner. Many, many people have experienced freedom as a result of Neil's book.

Welcome back to the family of God! I am sure that you will experience the joy that is part of knowing Christ when you disengage yourself from the demonic oppression that is holding you back. . . but only until you find out how the Lord will free you.

In His grip,

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

“You Should Ask God to Show You How Demonic Harry Potter Is”

Why is it so vital that America’s children be entertained by the likes of [Harry Potter](#)? There’s plenty of adventure in the Bible. I am a devout Christian and my gut feeling is that Harry Potter is yet another device to enable Satan to get his filthy foot in the door. Is it any wonder that this nation is under such ruthless attack? What are we feeding our children’s mind and souls with? I tell you: Alternate lifestyles, evolution and now sorcery and witchcraft. I’d advise you to seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit if you are indeed a real Christian and ask God to reveal the truth about Harry Potter. He has to me and I say that this literature is of a demonic nature and should not be assimilated by any child.

I respect your opinion and the right (and responsibility) you have to make choices for your family.

However, one of the things we do at Probe Ministries is to “engage the culture.” That means interacting with issues and topics in our culture and examining them from a Christian world view. Some parents—MANY parents—do not have children who accept their “no” the way yours might, and will need to confront the Harry Potter phenomenon head-on. For example, dads of kids with a custodial mom who buys the books for them regardless of what the dad wants. If we can help people to find a way to use this major cultural icon to teach Christian truth, to find what is good in a major literary and now film genre and help them understand spiritual truth through it, then that’s what we’re called to do. Even if other Christians don’t understand or agree.

I assure you that I have sought the guidance of the Holy

Spirit; we would be foolish to do what we do here at Probe without His wisdom and guidance! I believe this falls under the category of “disputable matters.” That means the Lord can lead you to avoid Harry Potter books and He can allow others to read them without sinning, and He still remains Lord and God.

By the way, the last time I checked, the test of a “real Christian” was the presence of the indwelling Christ as a result of trusting Him for life and salvation, not one’s position on Harry Potter.

Respectfully,

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

“What About Us Women Not From Venus?”

This question is sent in response to the article [“Men are from Mars, Women are from Venus.”](#) Are all women relationally oriented? What about the introverts out there? What about the goal-oriented women?

Being an introvert myself, I have had to work at caring for other people and reaching out, as God commands. I naturally want to do things by myself and for myself. When I get stressed out or upset, I withdraw from people into my “cave.”

I am also goal-oriented. I cannot multi-task. I can only focus on one thing at a time. My motivation is achieving the goal. I strongly dislike group projects.

My fiancé is the opposite of me. He is very relational, loves to be around people, talks a lot, and is not as goal-oriented.

In my experience, there are many people like us. How can this be explained? If God designed woman to be relational, then why am I (and many others) not wired that way?

Great questions.

I do think that at our core, women are relationally-oriented, which you will probably see once you have children and the concept of “family” becomes much more important to you. Particularly in American culture which has been so steeped in feminism, women’s mindsets have been shaped to be more male-like, and there are more and more women saying the same thing as you.

When Ray and I give our “Mars/Venus” lecture, we run into couples like you and your fiancé from time to time, where it looks like somebody switched the labels. <smile> But the interesting thing is, you guys still find each other! There is still a beautiful complementarity to the male-female relationship where each person’s strengths and weaknesses are balanced by the other person’s strengths and weaknesses.

Sometimes people become independent and self-reliant not because of their gender but because of their family dynamics. That doesn’t change what it means to be a woman at the core of your being, though. Your experience of being independent and self-reliant is going to be different from a man’s experience. And honestly, they are both a challenge to living as God wants us to—depending fully on HIM instead of on ourselves. Being fiercely independent can be a curse; it’s a way of digging our own cisterns (Jer. 2:13) instead of going to the source of Living Water in complete dependence and neediness. But you didn’t ask that question, so I’ll get off my soapbox now! <grin>

I’d be interested in having this discussion with you a few

years down the road after you're married and hopefully have children. I wonder if you would still see yourself as not being relational anymore. If you think of it, pop back in and let me know, OK?

Warmly,

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

“Is It OK to Look Down My Girlfriend’s Top?”

I'm a 17 year old male and have been going out with my girlfriend, who I truly love, for almost two and a half years. We are both Christians and have set boundaries that will ensure that sex will only happen after marriage (which could be a possibility for us in a few years). She is a modest girl, unlike the many around who have no problem showing too much skin. I know it is wrong to look at females dressed like this and do my best to keep my eyes off (which I have become pretty good at). I have been trying to determine whether it is OK by God, for me to look at my girlfriend when she wears a top that can be seen down. She is OK with it and appreciates that I don't look at other girls that way. Is it OK for me to look at the one girl I love in this way as long as it is not lustful and I don't get addicted to looking at her. I don't want to be sinning. But, if it's OK by God I want to be able to enjoy looking at the wonderful girl he has sent to me (God gave her to me after I stopped masturbating). Looking at her helps me to not look at other females when they pass by which is great, but is it OK to look at her this way before marriage.

Dear _____,

The real question is, "Does looking down my girlfriend's top so I can help myself visually to her breasts, help me or hinder me in my walk with God?" Another important question is, "Does it honor her?"

I would suggest that helping yourself to the breasts of a girl you are not married to is 1) outside the boundaries of marriage, which is the only place where you have a right to gaze at a woman's breasts, and 2) very effectively pulling your attention off God and holy thoughts, and thus is NOT helping your walk with God.

You may intend to marry your girlfriend, but nothing can guarantee that it will happen until you've said "I do." Couples often break up before marriage despite their hopes and intentions. Furthermore, it is VERY unusual for 17-year-old couples to end up marrying each other, which means that the chances are, you've been looking down the top of another man's future wife, and there is some girl out there that you WILL marry, hoping that you will keep your eyes and all other body parts to yourself as you wait for her.

I know I've been very blunt here, but in the interest of giving you direction that will best help everyone involved, both now and in the future, I want to encourage you to exercise self-control in where you look, and don't deliberately put yourself in a position where you are able to look down anyone's top.

Hope this helps!

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

“Will Jesus Bear His Nailprints Forever?”

Sometime back I was told that Jesus will bear the marks of the nails on his hands and feet forever (eternity). Is there a scripture reference to back this up?

There is no scripture that explicitly says Christ will bear His scars for all eternity. However, they are part of His resurrected body. After Thomas insisted that he would not believe unless he saw the imprint of the nails, and put his finger into the place of the nails, and put his hand into His side, John 20:27 records the Lord Jesus telling Thomas, “Reach here with your finger, and see My hands; and reach here your hand and put it into My side; and do not be unbelieving, but believing.”

I believe that the scars on Jesus’ body are the most beautiful things in all of heaven, and we will want to fall down and worship Him and touch (and even kiss!) His scars with awe; they are excruciating proof of His love for us.

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

The Wonderful Rise of Masculinity

October 2001

Recently, I was sitting at an airport terminal waiting to board a plane when a man dropped into the seat next to mine.

He nodded to me and said, "How're you doing?" I looked at him and said, "Well, that depends on whether you're a bad guy or a hero. Those are your two choices." He smiled; he understood. As we boarded, everybody on that plane was looking at everybody else, scanning their faces, wondering the same thing—are you a bad guy or a hero?

One of the best things to come out of the Sept. 11 attack on America is that masculinity has been restored to its rightful place of honor. After a generation of merciless male-bashing in the wake of feminism's contempt of men, it's a good and fine thing to be a man again, and I for one love it. It seems that men are walking taller and more proudly, more confident in themselves. Young men flooded to the armed forces, ready to defend their country and grateful to be able to DO SOMETHING about such a heinous attack on America.

We have been reminded what true heroes look like: not sports figures, not entertainers, but the men of Flight 93 who controlled their fear to overtake terrorists and crash a plane into a field instead of a building. True heroes look like the firefighters who ran up the stairwells of doomed, burning buildings to rescue people going down. True heroes look like the police officers who helped people get away from the World Trade Center as they deliberately put themselves in harm's way. And now that we remember what a true hero is, we're seeing long overdue displays of gratitude for the public servants who risk their lives so the rest of us can be safe. Recently a local elementary school invited firemen to a school assembly where they had festooned the auditorium with banners, balloons and posters thanking them for their service. When the group of men entered the room, the kids went absolutely wild with cheers and applause. You'd have thought it was an N'Sync concert!

I'm thankful for the perspective my husband provided on this: he observed that men are able to be men because women are letting them. It seems that unless we women show men the

respect and honor due them in their masculinity, they won't fight for it and many will retreat into a most unmanly passivity. But in the attacks on our country, many women have lost our sense of security and we're more in touch with how much we need to be protected. Thank the Lord for His plan that men be strong and self-sacrificing as they rise to the occasion in protecting us! Masculinity is a beautiful strength. God knew what He was doing when He made men men. It's one more way He's bringing glory to Himself in the aftermath of 9/11.

“Where Is the Spiritual Heart of Man?”

Some newly converted family members to the Church of God and I are in disagreement about the location of the spiritual heart of man. I believe it's hidden in the physical heart of man, but they believe the heart is in the mind. I cannot find many scriptures to concretely back up my theory since the heart and mind are used interchangeably in scriptures.

They presented some pretty strong arguments because the heart and mind are used interchangeably.

In the Bible, the heart is shown to have three capacities: to think (or believe), to choose, and to feel. The heart is really the “innermost part” of us to which David refers in Ps. 51. But it doesn't tell us about a link between the spiritual heart and any physical organ. Consider this; what happens to someone with a diseased heart who gets a heart transplant? Does the very essence of the person change because he's lost his old heart and received a new one? No.

Then consider what happens to the person plagued with Alzheimer's disease or stroke who has suffered brain damage. She has lost her previous capacity to think, choose and feel, but what happens at death? Wouldn't she enjoy full use of those capacities again, unhindered by an uncooperative brain? But even *before* death, does God no longer indwell the heart of a believer with brain damage? No, because He promised He would never leave us or forsake us.

I think, to be honest, that the question of the location of the spiritual heart of man is a moot one. It's like asking, "What color is love?" Instead of trying to pin down a physical location of a spiritual thing, perhaps our time would be better stewarded developing our hearts, as you so obviously have!

The Lord bless you and keep you.

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

Why Dr. Laura is (Usually) Right

Why Dr. Laura Is Popular

Dr. Laura Schlessinger's call-in radio show is wildly popular in North America. According to her web site, Dr.Laura.com, the purpose of her program is to dispense morals, values, principles and ethics. Her refusal to coddle people's self-centered behavior and immoral or stupid choices is either highly entertaining or absolutely infuriating, depending on

your worldview. She's opinionated and not afraid to fly in the face of the culture. Most of the time I agree with her, but sometimes she misses the boat. In this essay I'll be looking at why Dr. Laura is usually right—not because she agrees with me (I mean, how arrogant is that?), but because her positions are consistent with what God has revealed in the Bible.

Dr. Laura rejects the victim mentality. She says, "Victimization status is the modern promised land of absolution from personal responsibility. Nobody is acknowledged to have free will or responsibility anymore."^{1} Instead of coddling people because of past difficult experiences, she calls her audience to make right choices. In her book *How Could You Do That?*, she writes, "I don't believe for a minute that everything that happens to you is your doing or your fault. But I do believe the ultimate quality of your life, and your happiness, is determined by your courageous and ethical choices, and your overall attitude."^{2} This call to assume responsibility for our choices and our behaviors resonates with us because it is consistent with the dignity God endowed us with when He gave us the ability to make significant choices and not be His puppets. Joshua encouraged the Israelites, "Choose ye this day whom ye shall serve: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord" (Josh. 24:15). It was a real choice with real consequences. That's because we live in a cause-and-effect universe where "God is not mocked: a man reaps what he sows" (Gal. 6:7).

There is a most interesting postscript in Dr. Laura's book *How Could You Do That?* She quotes from the Genesis 4 passage where God confronts Cain for his bad attitude after He would not accept Cain's offering. God tells Cain, "If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must master it." (Gen. 4:7) She makes the point that God seems to be teaching that there is joy in doing right, and "God also reassures us that we do have the capacity to rise

above circumstance and attain mastery over our weaker selves.”^{3} It’s a good observation, and this passage makes a strong statement about what God expects of every person, as a moral creature made in His image. He wants us to do what is right and resist the pull of sin’s temptation.

In a culture that gets increasingly secular every day, where we have lost our moral compass, listeners are relieved to hear someone who has a strong commitment to God-given absolutes. Dr. Laura acts like an anchor of common sense for many who find life’s choices too confusing and overwhelming in today’s postmodern world.

Much of Dr. Laura’s “preaching, teaching and nagging” (her words) is directed at helping people decide to make good moral choices. Even if they don’t know God, their lives will work better simply because they will be more in line with how God created us to live. (Of course, from a Christian perspective, this has no value in light of eternity if a life that “works better” is lived separated from the life of God through Jesus Christ.)

Dr. Laura’s emphasis on honor, integrity and ethics strikes a nerve in eighteen million listeners.^{4} No surprise, really: that nerve is common to all of us—the nerve called morality—because we are made in the image of a moral God.

Self-Esteem

One reason why Dr. Laura’s values and beliefs attract millions of listeners to her daily radio program is her common-sense approach to the whole issue of self-esteem. When a caller complains, “I don’t feel very good about myself,” Dr. Laura will fire back a great question: “Why *should* you feel good about yourself? What have you done that gives you a reason to feel good about yourself?” In a culture where people want to believe they’re wonderful and worthwhile without any basis for such an assessment, Dr. Laura has a completely different

approach: self-esteem is earned.

In her books and radio show, she suggests several means of earning the right to enjoy self-respect, and all of them are good ideas from a pragmatic perspective.

Dr. Laura points out that we derive pleasure from having character. We need to choose high moral values and then honor them during times of temptation. She writes, "There is no fast lane to self-esteem. It's won on . . . battlegrounds where immediate gratification comes up against character. When character triumphs, self-esteem heightens."[{5}](#)

She also says that choosing personal and professional integrity over moral compromise will make us feel good about ourselves in the long run. So will valuing and honoring our responsibilities, which she calls "the express route" to self-esteem.[{6}](#) We build self-respect by choosing loyalty, sacrifice, and self-reliance over short-term self-indulgence.[{7}](#)

In her book *Ten Stupid Things Women Do to Mess Up Their Lives*, Dr. Laura astutely demonstrates one of the differences between the sexes: "Women tend to make a relationship their life, their identity, while men make it a part of their lives."[{8}](#) She's absolutely right. The reason a relationship cannot provide true self-esteem for a woman is the same reason a man's job or accomplishments can't do it: it is idolatry to look to relationships or accomplishments for meaning and purpose. God will never honor our false gods.

But self-esteem is only part of the equation for a healthy view of ourselves. Self-esteem is how we *feel* about ourselves; it needs to be built on the foundation of how we *think* about ourselves, which is our sense of self-worth. How valuable am I? What makes me significant? It doesn't matter how good we feel about ourselves if on a purely human level, we're in actuality worthless.

Pastor Don Matzat tells of a woman who came to him complaining, "I feel like I am completely worthless." He blew her away with his response. Gently and slowly, he said, "Maybe you are completely worthless."[{9}](#) Are you shocked? This lady was. But it's true. We are only valuable because God made us, not because of anything within ourselves. We are infinitely precious because He made us in His image, able to be indwelled by God Himself. And He proved our value by paying an unimaginable price for us: the lifeblood of His very Son. Apart from God, we are completely worthless.

C. S. Lewis put it so well:

Look for yourself and you will find in the long run only hatred, loneliness, despair, rage, ruin and decay. But look for Christ and you will find Him, and with Him everything else thrown in.[{10}](#)

Dr. Laura's right: we earn our self-respect. But our sense of worth is one of God's great gifts to us, because He's the one who determines our value.

Man as a Moral Creature

If you call Dr. Laura's radio program, the screener will ask, "What is your moral dilemma? What is the issue of right and wrong that you want to discuss?" Zeroing in on moral problems and not psychological ones sets her call-in talk show apart from most others. Dr. Laura sees man as a moral creature, capable of choosing good and evil. This is what she wrote in her book, *How Could You Do That?*:

Why do people do good things?

In contrast to all other creatures on earth, only humans measure themselves against ideals of motivation and action. We are elevated above all other creatures because we have a moral sense: a notion of right and wrong and a determination

to bring significance to our lives beyond mere existence and survival, by actions that are selfless and generous. [{11}](#)

It's true, we are indeed elevated above all other creatures by our moral sense. We are far, far more than animals. But where does that morality come from?

Human beings are moral creatures because God created us in His image. That means we can choose between good and evil because God chooses between good and evil. We can think on a higher level, contemplating abstracts and ideals like goodness and nobility, because our minds are a reflection of God's unimaginably complex mind. We can choose to love others by serving them sacrificially because that's what God is like, and He made us like Himself. Dr. Laura thinks it's because we're lapsing into our animal natures. [{12}](#) But we are not the product of evolution. We were never animals. People do bad things because we are born as fallen image-bearers. I love the way Larry Crabb described it: "When Adam sinned, he disfigured both himself and all his descendants so severely that we now function far beneath the level at which we were intended. We're something like an airplane with cracked wings rolling awkwardly down a highway rather than flying through the air. The image has been reduced to something grotesque. It has not been lost, just badly marred." [{13}](#) But our airplanes keep wanting to wander off the runway and go our own way because we let our flesh rule us. That's why we do bad things.

Why do people do bad things?

But although Dr. Laura is right about man being a moral creature, she misses the boat on what it means to be human:

When Adam and Eve were in the Garden they were not fully human because they made no choices between right and wrong, no value judgments, no issues of ethics or morality. Leaving Eden, though, meant becoming fully human. [{14}](#)

They certainly did make a moral choice in the Garden. They chose wrong over right and chose disobedience over fellowship with God. Actually, when Adam and Eve were still living in the Garden, they were more fully human than we've ever been since, because God created man sinless, perfect and beautiful. When we look at the Lord Jesus, the Second Adam, we see just how sinless, perfect and beautiful "fully human" is.

Dr. Laura is right to insist that we see ourselves as moral creatures, because a moral God has made us in His image.

Dr. Laura's Wisdom

Dr. Laura's strong positions on certain topics has made some people stand up and applaud her while others fume in frustration at her bluntness.

She makes no bones about the sanctity of marriage and that sex belongs only within a committed relationship sealed with a sacred vow. People living together and having sex without marriage are "shacking up." She's right because God ordained sex to be contained only in the safe and committed relationship of marriage.

Another of her well-known positions is that abortion is wrong because it's killing a baby. The much better alternative is adoption. She gets particularly frustrated with women who say, "Oh, I could never do that. I could never give up my baby once it was born." Her answer to that is, "You can kill it but you can't wave goodbye?" Here again, she's right because abortion is the deliberate taking of a human life. God's Word clearly commands us not to murder (Ex. 20:13).

Her strong views on abortion continue in her commitment to children, and her disdain for the way so many parents indulge their own whims and agendas at the expense of their kids. In a day when divorce is so prevalent, she makes an impassioned case for doing what's best for the children, with parents

remaining active and involved in the raising of their kids. She believes that the family is the cornerstone of civilization, and this is consistent with the biblical view starting right in the first chapter of Genesis.(Gen. 1:28)

Part of the way parents should take care of their children is to make sure they raise them in a religious faith shared by both parents. Dr. Laura warns people not to enter into interfaith marriages because usually the kids end up with no religion at all. Both the Old and New Testaments warn against being unequally yoked; God knows it's a recipe for heartbreak at best and disaster at worst.

She shows practical wisdom in many ways. She makes a distinction between those who are evil and those who are merely weak. In the same way, the book of Proverbs goes into great detail about the difference between the wicked and the fool.

Another evidence of her wisdom is her response to the fact that some people are uncomfortable keeping secrets, believing it's dishonest to not tell everything you know. Dr. Laura says there is a difference between maintaining privacy and withholding truth. The question to ask is, "Will this benefit the person I tell?" If not, don't tell. The reason this works is that this is how God operates. Everything He tells us in His Word is truth, but it's not exhaustive truth. Plus, God doesn't owe it to us to tell us everything He knows, and He's not being dishonest when He keeps information from us, like the "whys" of our trials and sufferings, or the exact details of how the endtimes will play out.

Finally, Dr. Laura exhorts people to choose "as if" behavior. "What a radical idea: choosing how to behave regardless of how you feel—and discovering that behaving differently seems to change how you feel."[{15}](#) In 2 Corinthians 5:7 we are told to "walk by faith, not our senses" (a paraphrase), which is another way of urging us to act as if something were already

true instead of being limited by our feelings. I do love Dr. Laura's practical wisdom.

Where Dr. Laura's Wrong

Most of the time, Dr. Laura's views are right on the mark because they are consistent with the laws and values of Scripture. A fairly recent convert to conservative Judaism, she is still developing her own belief system, yet she can be fair and open-minded in considering other viewpoints. But there are some areas where she departs from the Bible's teachings.

For example, Dr. Laura believes that all religions are equally effective for establishing morality. If a young mother calls, looking for a religion in which to raise her children, Dr. Laura doesn't care if it's Hinduism or Islam or Presbyterianism, just as long as there is a *religion*. To her the issue is what works, or what *seems* to work, and most religions are the same to her in the area of shaping behavior. On the other hand, the truthfulness of religious claims is apparently not as important to her. Yet only one religion offers a personal relationship with God on His terms, by His own definition. Only one religion is God reaching down to man: Christianity, with its roots in Judaism.

Dr. Laura misunderstands biblical Christianity. She rejects the notion that Jews can believe in Christ. Many rabbis teach that to be Jewish is to reject Jesus as Messiah; they teach that Jesus is the God of the Gentiles. Two thousand years of unjust persecution feeds a heartbreakingly “anti-Jesus” mentality. But Jesus Christ was a Jew, and almost all of the first believers were Jewish. As one messianic rabbi put it, to believe in the Jewish Messiah is the most Jewish thing someone can do! [{16}](#) Dr. Laura is mistaken in her belief here. When a Jew trusts Christ as Savior, he does not stop being Jewish. What he discovers, in an intensely personal way, is that Judaism is the root, and Christianity is the fruit. He feels

“completed” in ways many Gentiles never can.

What is the purpose of life? Dr. Laura has told many people who are floundering without personal meaning that they need to find their niche in life to do their job, which is to perfect the world. This sounds noble . . . but there is nothing in Scripture that calls us to perfect an unperfectable world. In fact, God plans on scrapping the whole thing and starting over (Rev. 21:1). Perfecting the world is not our purpose in life: the reason we are here is to bring glory to God (Eph. 1:6,12,14).

One other area where Dr. Laura misses the boat is in dealing with guilt. I remember one caller who was filled with remorse and regret over her abortion, and she asked what to do with her guilt. But since Dr. Laura’s belief system doesn’t offer a way of handling it, she advised the woman to just carry the guilt. This is her usual advice in such circumstances because she believes the person will learn a deep life lesson from the continual pain. I grieve that she has no understanding of the cleansing that comes with Christ’s forgiveness. Jesus paid for our sins on the cross, and when we come to Him in belief and trust, He not only forgives the sin but cleanses us of the guilt. We don’t have to carry guilt that He washed away!

There are a few subjects where Dr. Laura departs from the Scriptures, most notably about Jesus and salvation, and we can’t agree with her. But for the most part, as far as her positions and beliefs, Dr. Laura is usually right, and I think she honors God as she proclaims His laws and ways. I just pray she will respond to the light of the WHOLE truth.

[Addendum on why I left out Dr. Laura’s views on homosexuality](#)

Notes

1. Laura Schlessinger, *How Could You Do That?* (New York: HarperCollins, 1996), p. 8.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 134.
3. www.drlaura.com/about/
4. "No Whining!," *U.S. News and World Report*, 14 July 1997.
5. *How Could You Do That?*, p. 152.
6. Laura Schlessinger, *Ten Stupid Things Women Do to Mess Up Their Lives* (New York: HarperCollins, 1995), p. 171.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 157.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 189.
9. Don Matzat, *Christ Esteem* (Eugene, Ore.: Harvest House), p. 173.
10. C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*.
11. *How Could You Do That?*, p. 26.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 187.
13. Larry Crabb, *Understanding People* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1987), p. 87.
14. *How Could You Do That?*, p. 93.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 257.
16. Personal conversation with the staff of Baruch Ha Shem, a messianic congregation in Dallas, Texas.

“Did Jesus Preach to the Cherokee Indians?”

Dear Sue,

I heard in a newspaper article a while ago that some time in his life Jesus travelled on a Phoenician sailing vessel to North America and ministered to the Cherokee Indians there. The article said that there was evidence of this because the Cherokee believe in a single, all-powerful God, which is something unusual in Native American religions; that the Cherokee believe many of the same things from the Gospels; and that they had drawings of a man with a beard (who looked like the stereotypical image of Jesus) in their art and that this was strange because no men in the tribe grew beards.

I really don't know if all this is true or not, it seems to be but I know that the newspaper I read this from is not a reliable source and is known for making phony stories to get sales, but I can't help but wonder if this one is true. Have you ever heard anything about this?

You know what you said about the newspaper being known for making up phony stories to get sales? There's your answer. <smile> I'm sure the article gave no documentation for their "story" (written from the perspective of the "Well, it COULD have happened!!" school of "journalism"). That's because there's nothing to it. . . they just stole some ideas from Mormon claims that Jesus came to North America. There is no New World archeology that supports such a claim.

Furthermore, Greek culture had absorbed the Phoenician civilization before Jesus was even born. Alexander the Greek took the Phoenician city of Tyre around 332 B.C. and it was

all downhill from there, so the Lord Jesus couldn't have taken a Phoenician sailing vessel anywhere.

It's not surprising that native North American spirituality included the concept of one God—ever hear of the term “the Great Spirit”? Don Richardson's book *The Peace Child* shows that cultures and peoples all over the world are aware of biblical truth that has been handed down since the time of Noah and the tower of Babel when civilizations really began migrating all over the world.

If I were you, I'd stay away from the tabloids.

Hope this helps.

Sue Bohlin

Probe Ministries

“It’s Not Your Fault!”

There's a great scene in the fantasy movie “Disney's The Kid” where a middle-aged man, played by Bruce Willis, meets up with his little boy self. The two of them go to their childhood home where the boy learns the horrific news that his mother will die soon, and his father blames him. The grown-up version of the boy knows that he carried the terrible burden of guilt and shame about his mother's death for years. He kneels down, looks his little-boy self full in the face, and assures him, “It's not your fault,” lifting the burden from the little boy before he ever has to carry it. These four words, “It's not your fault,” are truly one of the most powerful gifts an adult can give a child. This is a powerful truth that children need to hear and they can't tell themselves; only an adult can give them this “special revelation.”

Children are naturally self-centered and they think everything that happens to them is connected to them and their choices or their character. Of course that's not true. Stuff just happens, but a child can't know that. A little girl's parents divorce and her world falls apart. She thinks, if I had obeyed more, if I were prettier or more talented, my daddy would still be here. She needs for both parents to say, "This is about us. It's not your fault."

A beloved grandparent dies. Or a pet dies, and a child blames himself. He needs to be told that it's not his fault, and no matter what he thought—like not wanting to visit with his grandpa one afternoon—or what he did—like forgetting to feed the cat—he doesn't have the power to make those kinds of things happen, and it's not his fault.

My friend's son has Tourette's syndrome, and we were talking one day about how to help him handle it. I suggested she make sure he knew he wasn't responsible for it, and she assured me, "Oh, he already knows that." But that night, as she was tucking him into bed, she said, "You know this isn't your fault, don't you?" His eyes got big and it was like a huge weight rolled off his shoulders. With great relief in his voice, he asked, "*It ISN'T???*" My friend had thought he already understood, but we can't ever assume kids own that truth until we give it to them.

And if children don't know that bad things are not their fault, they can take on guilt that weighs heavily on them for years. Others react by wrapping themselves in shame. For example, when a girl is sexually abused, she feels dirty and broken, like damaged goods. She needs to be told, "It's not your fault." Even when those broken little girls are grown-ups, the little girl inside still needs for someone to tell her, "It's not your fault."

Has a bad thing—or something a child perceives as bad—happened to a child you know? Give them the gift they can't give

themselves, the truth that will set them free. Tell them it's not their fault.

©2001 Probe Ministries