

“How Is It Moral To Own People as Property?”

How is it moral to own people as property and pass them along to your heirs, Leviticus 25:44-46?

We wouldn't say it's moral, but it IS part of life in a fallen world deeply impacted by sin.

The Bible never condones slavery, but God does regulate it to protect people where slavery was part of an economic system.

Much of slavery in the ancient world was different from the heinous, inhuman, and degrading slavery of the past several hundred years (and unfortunately, continuing into today). People would choose to sell themselves into slavery as a way of managing debt and insufficient income to provide for themselves and their families.

Slavery has been and is part of a fallen world, but ultimately, when Jesus Christ sets everything right in the new heavens and the new earth, there will be no slavery. God does have a plan and a timeline for abolishing slavery altogether and forever.

Here's some helpful insight on the subject: www.gotquestions.org/Bible-slavery.html

Blessing you,

Sue Bohlin

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“I’m Looking for a Way to Deprogram Homosexuality”

I’m a licensed counselor looking for ways to de-program homosexuality.

I’m afraid we don’t know any formulaic means for de-programming homosexuality. And neither Probe nor Living Hope Ministries (a ministry that helps people with unwanted homosexuality) does “conversion therapy.” In my 20+ years with LHM, the only method I have seen that makes a difference is the time-honored process of Christian discipleship, where we point people to Jesus and walk with them in submitting to Him and His word, cooperating with the Holy Spirit in facing the wounds and hurts of the past and grieving them, forgiving those who hurt us, and obeying God’s commands because they are given to protect and bless us. The fruit of this process is transformation from the inside out (Romans 12:2), because Jesus doesn’t make things better, He makes things new.

What I have personally witnessed over and over is that God helps the person reframe their understanding of their lives, especially the hurts of the past (and there is always pain in the past) and their sinful responses to those hurts. This is true of any believer, not just those dealing with homosexuality. As the person invites Jesus to be Lord over more and more internal real estate, He brings change and understanding. For example, I keep seeing that men reframe their craving to connect with other men sexually as their heart’s cry for healthy attention, affirmation and affection from other men, either (or both) a father figure, or a best-friend kind of relationship. In women, I see that women reframe their craving to intensely connect with another woman, as their heart’s cry for those same 3 As from a mother or a

best friend. When those legitimate needs are met in healthy relationships with other believers, the craving subsides. One of my closest friends, who spent 25 years as a lesbian activist before becoming a Christ follower, says that what used to be screaming in front of her face (her same sex attraction), is now white noise in the background of her life. It's not totally gone, and she can feed it when she's stressed which means additional temptations, but its control over her life has been replaced by intimacy with Jesus and with healthy relationships with women.

I don't know how this happens outside of the grace and power of God in a believer's life and in the context of community, because we need each other.

I'm glad you asked. And by the way, I see from your email address that you utilize EMDR in your therapy. God bless you for that! I am the beneficiary of its effectiveness as I have seen my husband healed of childhood traumas through EMDR. A number of the people at Living Hope—and friends from church as well—have found EMDR helpful in their counseling, which makes sense because trauma is part of so many people's stories who now deal with same-sex attraction.

Blessing you today,

Sue

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“How Could Jesus Take Our

Sins on Himself If God Cannot Tolerate Sin?"

How was it that Jesus, considering He is fully God, and God is not able to have sin anywhere near Him, can take all of our sins on Himself? Having trouble wrapping my mind around this. I fully believe what Jesus did, however, this is a bit confusing for me.

Great question.

You are operating with a misunderstanding common to a LOT of people, that "God is not able to have sin anywhere near Him." That's not true. First, consider Job 1, where the Holy Spirit pulls back the curtain on heaven and we see Satan striding confidently into heaven's throne room. God allowed the most evil of creatures access to Himself. Second, consider the incarnation, where the Son wrapped Himself in human flesh and entered the sin-filled world where he was literally surrounded by nothing but sinful people His entire earthly existence.

I think it's helpful to look at Habakkuk 1:13, where the prophet writes, "Your eyes are too pure to look on evil; you cannot tolerate wrongdoing." This is Habakkuk's perspective on God, but it is not teaching doctrine. We know from Job 1 that while He is pure, it does not prevent Him from looking on evil. We also know that God is so longsuffering, He does tolerate wrongdoing. He just won't tolerate it forever.

Does this help remove the obstacle to acknowledging that the Holy One can take all our sin into and onto Himself while on the cross? Even without fully understanding what a deep mystery it is?

Blessing you,
Sue Bohlin

Thanks so much for getting back to me and yes that helped and yes it is very deep and mind boggling. And what is it that they say? To completely understand something like that we would then have the mind of God, right?

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“Can God Create a Rock Too Big for Him to Lift?”

I am a young adult who is just beginning to really dig deep into Christianity and what it truly is, and I was presented a statement from one of my past teachers that has haunted me ever since.

We were having a civil conversation about religion and other such topics until I revealed that I believed in God and Christianity. This was immediately (and somewhat sharply) met with a stymieing paradox that goes like this: If God is to be an all-powerful and omnipotent being, then clearly He must be able to do absolutely anything, such as create a rock that cannot be lifted by anyone in all of existence and so forth. But, if God can create an “un-liftable” rock, then that would technically rule out God Himself being able to lift that rock. Therefore, there is something God cannot do, and as a result He is not truly omnipotent.

Now of course I could not answer that question (as I am, as most young teens are, uneducated on answering mystifying questions such as those) and was left to a feeling of defeat and eventually that sinking feeling of having everything you believed in being disproved in one, simple statement.

Can you answer this question to calm those little poking words?

This question has been posed by many people attempting to stymie believers, and there are some really good answers. The bottom line is that God cannot do what is inherently impossible because it's illogical and irrational, such as make a square circle, or lie and deceive us because He is perfect and He is truth. The problem is not power. The problem is a category error.

I love how Dr. Sean McDowell answered this question: youtu.be/iH4j_jikWXs

You may also enjoy how GotQuestions.org answered this question: www.gotquestions.org/God-rock-heavy-lift.html

Hope you find this helpful.

Sue Bohlin

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“How Would You Respond When Someone Prefers to be Called by Their Opposite Gender?”

Sue, my friend texted me this:

“How would you respond (or how have you responded) when someone prefers to be called by their opposite gender? I had a man correct my daughter (she's only two, almost three) today

because she referred to him as 'he.' I told him out of deep love for him I could not in good conscience refer to him as 'her' but how do I explain that to an almost three-year-old?"

I answered, "Oh wow. That hasn't happened to me yet. My big kids know and we said that sin clouds their judgment and how they see/feel so they think they will be happier living life as a different gender, but then we remind them that God doesn't make mistakes and He chooses gender. He made us in His image (like Him) and His design is perfect . . . people mess it up, not Him."

I tried, but would love to learn from your response also!

Sweet friend, LOVE your answer!! I would explain that sometimes people are confused in their thinking. God made that man a boy and so that is what we call him.

How do you lovingly respond to the gender confused person?

It depends on how the conversation goes, but I would remain warm and cordial while not backing down by embracing a delusion.

Think "The Emperor's New Clothes." Just because everyone appears to be celebrating something that doesn't make sense, doesn't make it true. And just as the crowd shushed the little boy who piped up with what everyone could plainly see—the emperor didn't have any clothes on at all—people are being shushed and canceled when they speak up about the transgender delusion.

One of the reasons the transgender folly continues is people going along with the game of pretend. (And when I say "transgender folly," I am referring to the ideology, not the people caught up in it who need compassion, not judgment. I believe they are objects of spiritual warfare, being attacked by the enemy of our souls through an insidious lie. Just like in Genesis 3.)

When the man crossed the line to correct a stranger's little girl, he escalated from confused soul to transgender activist. And activists want the whole world to agree with a delusion. A lie. And we need to push back.

If it were me, I would suggest saying to my child, with a kind voice, "This man is playing a game of pretend, but we're not playing that game." This of course would infuriate the man, but he is deliberately pushing an agenda of unreality on the world in general and my child in particular, and that's not okay. It's my responsibility to teach and defend truth to my children, and here's a guy lying to my child and instructing her to participate in that lie.

It's one thing to present oneself as the other sex, and quite another to cross the line into "incorrecting" a child who could see for herself that he was male! I would let my Mama Bear come out—with gentleness and respect, as 1 Peter 3:15 says—but firmly stating the truth in the face of an egregious lie.

Blessing you,
Sue Bohlin

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“Our Granddaughter is Severely Confused About Her Gender Identity”

I just read an article by Sue Bohlin on [transgender](#) and God's

view on it. We completely believe our granddaughter is severely confused and we believe her gender identity is being greatly influenced by the people she is hanging out with. She is almost 22, we have told we love her unconditionally but do not support her lifestyle as it goes against God's Word. She understands that we will not compromise our faith and what the Word of God says. But we have been reaching out to pastors and they have offered zero spiritual guidance. In fact they really do not want to discuss it. Our pastor told me to buy a secular book on homosexuality from Amazon. I told him I do not need or want the world's view on it, I need spiritual guidance. He had nothing. I'm reaching out because I agreed 100% with what Sue said and we still need spiritual guidance. We love our granddaughter and pray for her all the time but we are struggling with how to deal with it.

I am so very, very sorry for the pain you are experiencing in this spiritual battle. The enemy has gone after your beloved granddaughter, deceiving her with lies and demonic schemes about her true identity. You are undoubtedly right about the influence of the people she's hanging out with, and that would extend to (and may even entirely consist of) the voices she is listening to on social media.

In terms of how to deal with it, let me encourage you that you are already doing the two most important things: loving her and praying for her. Your love will be a beacon for her to find her way out of spiritual darkness back to truth, and your prayers are powerful for the pulling down of strongholds (2 Corinthians 10:3-4). This is a battle that has to be fought on your knees, using the supernatural weapon of prayer. Trying to convince her out of her delusion won't work; it has to be God's power.

You will need encouragement from others who are also in the battle for their children and grandchildren. Let me suggest two places to find that. One is the Friends and Family forum at Living Hope Ministries. www.livehope.org. The other is to

request access to the private group "CHANGED Movement" on Facebook, where you will find very encouraging testimonies from those who have come out of the LGBTQ community.

Let me close with a story I hope encourages you.

A couple were heartbroken that their daughter had jumped into the LGBT community and identity, and needed to know what to do about it. On the recommendation of a mutual friend the husband called me; as we talked, the Lord dropped an idea into my head, which he followed.

He took her out for a meal and said to her, "Sweetheart, I want to tell you something, and I'm only going to say this once, so pay attention.

"Your mom and I see that because of your choices, it's like you're on the Titanic, and we know that eventually it's going down. But we're out here in a lifeboat, rowing around the ship, and we will never stop rowing. We'll be here to love you and pray for you, and we'll be here to help you when you realize you've got to get off a sinking ship." They were so faithful in daily praying for her.

Ten years later, their daughter showed up on their doorstep. When Dad opened the door, the daughter asked, "Are you still in the rowboat?"

That was *ten years later*.

And many many prayers later, they just celebrated the one-year anniversary of her repentance . . . of her recognizing the ship was sinking and she got in the lifeboat with her parents. This man said that in all his many years, he has never seen such a full and beautiful repentance as what his daughter exhibited.

Recently, in fact, he and his wife and their daughter stood in front of his Sunday School class to tell their story. For the

first time, the daughter told her side; can you imagine what it was like for the parents to watch their beloved daughter give testimony to God's goodness and her parents' faithfulness in praying for her? In fact, she had sent an email at one point that said, "Mom and Dad, thanks for never giving up rowing."

The dad had also told his story to a men's conference, sharing the rowboat part, and said the other men, all fathers who would do anything for their children, were in tears. They all understand how hard it is, especially as men designed to "fix" things, not to be able to fix their children's hurt or destructive choices or the consequences of those choices. But the power of a praying parent can redeem the pain and the choices and the consequences.

So. . . don't give up rowing!

And [please hear my voice being very very gentle here] let go of your expectations for God's timetable. He knows how long it will take for her to see the light, in a way that will bring the most glory to Him and the greatest benefit to your granddaughter.

I'm sending this with a prayer that God does amazing things in your family. Please remember—if it's not good yet, God's not done yet!

Warmly,
Sue Bohlin

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“Should I Divorce My Wife Since I’m Not Attracted to Her Anymore?”

Hi my name is _____ from Burundi. My question is about divorce. My wife told me about her past but I am still bothered by it whereby she slept with old men and foreigners, and aborted many times, so since I heard that I have lost even the appetite of being sexually attracted to her, so should I go for divorce?

I was born with a heart for preaching to people about the heaven and the hell, and I am still jealous to find out that Satan has many people I am determined to bring them to God and create a church similar to what apostles were doing whereby they were sharing everything together.

Churches of today especially in Africa, they get an Aid and share it among elders instead of helping some church members who are facing troubles, lucky enough I am rich blessed by God. But all the work of I am afraid that it would be compromised by the divorce I am thinking to go through.

Please your advices. God bless you.

I am so glad you wrote. Your desire to serve God is admirable, and you are correct in thinking your ministry would be compromised by divorce.

God’s best is always, ALWAYS forgiveness and reconciliation. That is how He is most glorified in our relationships, especially marriage. Please read the book of Hosea for an excellent example of God’s heart of forgiveness and reconciliation as He had his prophet Hosea marry and then continue to extend forgiveness to his wife Gomer as an illustration of God’s relationship with His unfaithful earthly

wife, Israel.

This does not mean that your heart is not broken by your wife's sin before your marriage. Her sin required the death of the Son of God—it's serious! But brother, YOUR sin also required the death of the Son of God, and you had to go to God with humility and repentance, asking for His forgiveness, in order to become a believer in Jesus Christ and enter His family. He is asking you to extend to your wife the forgiveness that He so graciously gave you. Please read Matthew 18, the whole chapter, at least three times so that you can grasp God's heart for the lost, and the importance of forgiving those who hurt us. Divorcing your wife out of a hard-hearted bitterness and unforgiveness will not only block the flow of God's grace in your life, but it will keep you open to the "tormentors" (Matthew 18:34). Here is a link to a very good, biblically sound message and explanation of Jesus' teaching on forgiveness: www.youtube.com/watch?v=0ff7whIExhk

I strongly believe that if you forgive your wife and seek to love and serve her as Christ loves and serves the church (Ephesians 5:25-30), your desire to be with her sexually will return as you allow God to soften your heart.

Please, brother, take seriously Jesus' command that "What God has joined together, let no man separate" (Mark 10:9). His plan for marriage is lifelong commitment between husband and wife, with ongoing forgiveness between us.

Blessing you,
Sue Bohlin

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“How Can I Trust Christianity and the Bible Are True With So Many Changes and Translations?”

I recently visited the Museum of the Bible in Washington DC. I was excited to go there, because I thought I would view a lot of evidence for the faith of Christianity. While that was true, I was disappointed to leave the museum more confused than when I had arrived. The history of the Bible section showed that there have been many changes, corrections and translations made of the Holy Bible. How do we know that the Christian faith is the one true thing, and how do we know that the Bible has been translated/passed down correctly (and without error) during all those times of translations?

The great news is that we have a crazy HUGE number of manuscript copies of the New Testament, that allows us to know with amazing accuracy which are the most accurate copies (because we can identify where the copy mistakes are). I just checked with the world experts at the Center for the Study of New Testament Manuscripts (www.csntm.org); there are 5500 copies of the Greek New Testament, and 15,000 copies total of the various languages from before the printing press was invented.

I just used these numbers to update one of my favorite answers to email on our website: probe.org/the-bible-has-been-changed-and-corrupted-over-time/

And here is the link to one of our best articles on the Bible: probe.org/are-the-biblical-documents-reliable/

One other article that is, I believe, super powerful for building your confidence that Christianity is true:

probe.org/how-i-know-christianity-is-true/

I hope this encourages you!

Cordially,

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries Webmistress

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“Why Are Children Born Blind?”

I have asked the question of why children are born blind. I get no satisfaction from any of any religious explanation. The fact of the matter is that the Almighty can see but these little children cannot. It is cold comfort to hide behind some doctrine when an innocent child will spend his or her life in darkness.

It's a great question. In fact, God considered it such a good question that it is included in the Gospel of John:

As [Jesus] went along, he saw a man blind from birth. His disciples asked him, “Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?”

“Neither this man nor his parents sinned,” said Jesus, “but this happened so that the works of God might be displayed in him. . . .” (John 9:1-3)

So the first answer of why babies are allowed to be born blind is so that God can put His goodness and His power on display

through the person's life.

I can imagine that an immediate response might be, "How sadistic and egocentric can you get? Why would a good and loving God allow such pain and distress just to set Himself up to get glory?"

And my response would be, "When we start to understand God as He really is, as majestic and powerful and beautiful and most of all GOOD, we stop pushing back at His actions that reveal His character. Just like we don't raise a fist at the sun and scream, 'How dare you shine so brightly that I can't look at you without hurting my eyes?! How dare you pour such radiant light into the world that it lights everything up? Stop being so shiny and bright!'"

Another answer is that in the scope of eternity, there are many worse things than being physically blind. It would be far worse to live a life disconnected from God, refusing His invitation to the abundant life Jesus came to give, and enter hell with perfectly working eyes.

I do realize that this may seem callous, which is why I need to tell you that as a survivor of polio paralysis since I was eight months old, I have lived my entire life handicapped. I may as well have been born with a disabled body like a baby born blind. So this question is not a hypothetical, theoretical question. This is my daily life. And I have seen God "display His works in me" (John 9) in many ways not *despite* my handicap, but *because* of it. My very weakness is what allows His strength and joy to shine through me in the weak places.

Jesus went on to say immediately after the above statements that He was the light of the world. The juxtaposition of these two details, I believe, is making a statement: that things that exist in the physical realm point to corollaries in the spiritual realm. Blindness comes in various forms, physical

and spiritual and emotional and intellectual, but Jesus is the light that makes all the difference with those kinds of blindness.

I do think it's easier to grasp this truth when we cultivate an eternal perspective, remembering that our life on earth is but a short breath compared to the bulk of our existence that will happen on the other side of death. Blindness, for believers in Jesus, is limited to life on earth. All physical maladies will be restored to perfection in the New Heavens and the New Earth, which means no blindness, no lameness, no illness of any kind in the next stage of life.

You might ask, "But what about babies born blind who don't become believers in Jesus? What is the point of their blindness then?" It seems to me that the promise of healing and wholeness through a relationship with Jesus could be even *more* appealing to someone born blind. It might be the very best way for them to come to the place where they trust in Christ.

One final comment, addressing your statement that "the Almighty can see but these little children cannot."

There was a time when the Almighty restricted Himself to a human body while living on earth, leaving all His power and privileges behind in heaven when He took up residence in a young girl's body. I believe He experienced an even worse kind of blindness than merely physical blindness as He hung on the cross, absorbing all the sin, all the dysfunction, all the sickness, and all the brokenness of life in a fallen world into Himself for three hours. He was so immersed in the horror of a sin-sick world, I believe, that He could no longer "see" or sense His Father—because that's what sin does, it separates us from God, and the Bible tells us that He actually BECAME sin for us (2 Corinthians 5:21). No wonder He felt lost in sin's blindness. (Thus crying out "[My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?](#)")

So I would respectfully submit that Jesus, the Almighty, very much knows what the deepest kind of blindness feels like. He is Emmanuel, God with us—God who understands what it's like to be human and live in a broken world. Including blindness.

I do hope you find this helpful.

Sue Bohlin

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“Where Are the Rest of Jesus’ Teachings?”

I have been searching for text/documents/anything that Jesus taught. He had over three years of anointed ministry, and only a few lines in the Gospels are recorded. Where is the rest of His teachings? I doubt that He wrote them down to a great extent, but surely some of his followers wrote down His teachings.

It's great to hear about your excitement for the teachings of Jesus! May the Lord increase your tribe!

There is, unfortunately, a lot of nonsense written about Jesus—both at the scholarly and popular level (though doubtless more at the popular level). The fact of the matter is that the earliest and best historical evidence concerning Jesus and his teachings is to be found in the New Testament. Nothing else even comes close.

Of course, Jesus is mentioned in some ancient non-Christian sources. I have written a brief article about it here:

probe.org/ancient-evidence-for-jesus-from-non-christian-sources-2/

Additionally, the Gospel of Thomas appears to contain some of Jesus' actual sayings. According to New Testament scholar Bart Ehrman, probably about 1/3 of this gospel contains actual sayings of Jesus (or something close), about 1/3 of the sayings are full-blown Gnosticism (espousing things that Jesus never taught), and the final 1/3 are somewhere in between these two.

But here's the thing. The Gospel of Thomas is an early second century production. The other apocryphal and pseudepigraphical gospels are later still. By contrast, all of the New Testament documents (including the four gospels) are first century productions. So bottom line: if you want to know what Jesus really taught, you need to read the New Testament (and the NT gospels in particular). Indeed, the reason scholars think that some of the sayings in the Gospel of Thomas are probably authentic sayings of Jesus is because they are consistent with sayings we find in the New Testament Gospels—the earliest and most historically trustworthy documents we have concerning the life and teachings of Jesus.

A few other books you might enjoy by good, solid, evangelical Jesus scholars:

1. *Fabricating Jesus: How Modern Scholars Distort the Gospels*, by Craig A. Evans:

www.amazon.com/Fabricating-Jesus-Scholars-Distort-Gospels/dp/0830833188/

2. *Reinventing Jesus: How Contemporary Skeptics Miss the Real Jesus and Mislead Popular Culture*, by Komoszewski, Sawyer, and Wallace:

www.amazon.com/Reinventing-Jesus-J-Ed-Komoszewski/dp/082542982X/

3. *The Historical Jesus: Ancient Evidence for the Life of*

Christ, by Gary R. Habermas :
www.amazon.com/Historical-Jesus-Ancient-Evidence-Christ/dp/0899007325/

May the Lord greatly bless you in your studies!

Shalom in Christ,

Michael Gleghorn

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