“How Do I Talk to My Friend Who’s Deceived by Eastern Thought?”

I am hoping you can help me with this huge dilemma: how to talk to a friend who has rejected Christ for Eastern religious thought. I am so ashamed that I have not kept very close to my Lord through His Word, so now I can’t think how to answer this friend who is lost deep in Eastern thought. I am hurtfully speechless when she spews out the “Jesus was a good guy…God is all good and would never create a hell…we are all good…there is no sin” stuff. I am very uneasy around her. I have to keep praying in my mind to keep her awful lies out of my head. Can you help me?!?!

My friend is visiting her dying mother, and will not be here long. So, I am desperate for quick help. I am so grateful for any help and resources you can point me to.

You sound like you are in such emotional and spiritual pain! Bless you for carrying such a deep burden for your friend.

I think the best response to the “no hell/we are all good” stuff—showing how deceived she is!—is to go for the heart. You said she is tending her dying mother, so apparently she cares for her mother. You might try this approach: “What if someone broke into your house and raped and murdered your mother? You know it could happen; it happens every day. What would you want to happen then? Would you send ‘happy thoughts’ to the raping murderer because he’s a good soul? Or would every shred of your being cry out for justice?

“I know you; I know you would want justice. And you know why? Because you are made in the image of God, and God is not only good and loving, He is also just. He wants evil punished. He promises He WILL punish evil. Don’t you find that comforting?

“Eastern philosophy doesn’t fit reality, because we know there IS evil, there IS sin, and the cry of our hearts is that evil and sin be addressed. And when you go back home, I beg you to read and research and think about the death of Christ. If He was only a good man, why did He have to die? If He was only a man, how could He come back to life, just as He promised He would?”

I suggest you leave your friend with questions instead of preaching the answers, and praying up a storm that the Holy Spirit will put hooks on your questions and not give her any peace until she deals with the truth and its implications.

I hope this helps!

In His grip,

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

“How Dare You Judge Edgar Cayce?!”

How dare you judge! I just read your article on Edgar Cayce and he was a Christian. How can you say just because he had a gift that you can’t explain that he must have been in an occult! God gives us gifts and that is something you can’t control so why would you say he was dealing with the devil? Everyone perceives the Bible differently and who is to say

that your way is right and his way was wrong? I am Catholic and I believe that God gives us gifts and what you choose to do with them is up to you!

Thank you for writing.

Have you ever been pulled over for speeding? When the police officer said, “You were going 70 in a 55 zone,” did you say, “How dare you judge!”? Probably not, because the officer doesn’t judge the people he pulls over—he compares our behavior with the standard of the law.

The article on Edgar Cayce compares his behavior with the standard of the law that God set down in the Bible. Having been brought up Catholic, I do understand that your perception of the Bible is probably not as accurate as it could be. The Bible is far more reliable than many people think, but they haven’t taken the time to research it. God has spoken very plainly about what constitutes the occult, and Edgar Cayce clearly fell in that camp. He certainly did have a gift, but it wasn’t from God, because God’s gifts behave differently than Cayce’s.

I hope that if this really bothers you, you will study the Bible for yourself and see that it is a supernatural book, and God has given us the Holy Spirit to help us understand it even further. It’s not open to every person’s individual interpretation, any more than the newspaper is. Different sections of the newspaper are to be read and interpreted differently, such as the comics, the front page, and the editorial page. The Bible is like that too, and the more familiar we become with it, the easier it is to tell the difference between the sections and the type of literature within it.

One more point: perhaps Edgar Cayce believed in God, but that didn’t make him a Christian. The Bible says that the demons believe in God, too. What makes a person a Christian is a

personal relationship with Jesus Christ, when we realize that He died on the cross for OUR sins and we say “thank you” for His gift of eternal life.

Thanks for writing.

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

“Did Nostradamus Predict the Destruction of the World Trade Center?”

A friend sent me these writings from Nostrodamus’ Quattrains:

The book of Nostrodamus, called The Quattrains (The Centuries), he has repeatedly predicted the future over and over and over again, from centuries ago. Nostrodamus’ prediction on World War III:

“In the first year of the new century and nine months,
From the sky will come a great King of Terror…
The sky will burn at forty-five degrees.
Fire approaches the great new city…”

“In the city of york there will be a great collapse,
Two twin brothers torn apart by chaos
While the fortress falls the great leader will succumb
The third big war will begin when the big city is burning.”

What is the story on Nostrodamus? Was he a prophet or someone with extraordinary psychic powers? Was he a Christian? Is it

true that his predictions have been fulfilled with great accuracy over the years? I'm sure I'm not the only reader that would like to know the answers to such questions.

I am so glad you wrote. I know this "prophecy" is buzzing around the internet in the wake of the WTC/Pentagon terrorist attacks.

First of all, these quattrains weren't written by Nostradamus. They were written by a Brock University student within the last decade as a fabricated example to show how anybody could write an obscure-enough, impressive-sounding prophecy. (See the Snopes report: http://www.snopes2.com/inboxer/hoaxes/predict.htm)

Secondly, Nostradamus' prophecies were written in a very old French, and much depends on both the translation and the interpretation. Prophecies can only be understood in retrospect, and his "believers" work very hard to try to make his prophecies fit events. His writings are full of symbolism and obscure references that could be twisted to mean anything.

If his writings coincide with later historical events, it's a matter of coincidence, not of writing history in advance like inspired, scriptural prophecy. It is not true that his prophecies have been fulfilled with great accuracy. They have, however, been treated with great relish by those anxious to find a spiritual aspect to life without submitting to the True Author of actual prophecy!

Finally, I don't know if he was a Christian or not.

Hope this helps!

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

“Why Do Christians Have to Bash Pop Psychology?”

Dear Mr. Anderson,

I was just browsing the Probe Ministries website and read parts of your article about Pop Psychology Myths.

Honestly, I just don’t get it. Well, I should tell you I come from a strong Christian background, involved in Campus Crusade, youth groups, church ministries etc. But sometime during my senior year of college I just about HAD IT with Christian culture and all their myths.

Why is it wrong to have self-esteem? I hid behind the Bible for years to make me feel good about myself, but I was never convinced. My personal calling isn’t to humble myself to meekness, never thinking for myself, in order to be “godly.” I feel better, accomplish more, and fulfill the talents God has given my when I act in ways to help my self esteem, like taking good care of myself, being assertive in my writing career and not letting people walk all over me, like I used to do, when I was a walking sin-o-meter… Why is it so important to make rules and laws and lists of myths when the whole essence of Christianity is Grace and Love? Doesn’t this fear of the world seem somewhat legalistic?

I really don’t know where I am going with this, I am just so frustrated with Christians who spend all their time worrying about the “world’s ways” when things just AREN’T so black and white. There is wisdom in pop psychology—some of it is just plain nonsense, but there is some wisdom, just as there is some wisdom in Taoism. For goodness sakes, a great deal of it parallels scripture.

Anyway, something to chew on. I very much respect your degrees and figured you may be open to some discussion on the subject.

Thanks for writing. I thought the book by Chris Thurman (*Self-Help or Self-Destruction*) that was a basis of my week of radio programs was very well written and discerning. Perhaps I should do another week of programs on the other five myths of pop psychology mentioned in the book so that the analysis would be more complete.

I don't think that my transcript (nor the book) denies that there is any wisdom in pop psychology. But I do think we should be more discerning, and that's what we were trying to convey in the program. Anyway, thanks for your opinion.

Kerby Anderson
Probe Ministries

"Why is Jesus called 'the Everlasting Father' in Isaiah 9:6?"

Why is Jesus called "the Everlasting Father" in Isaiah 9:6?

> *For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given:*
> *and the government shall be upon his shoulder:*
> *and his name shall be called Wonderful Counsellor,*
> *The mighty God,*
> *The everlasting Father,*
> *The Prince of Peace.*

The phrase "Everlasting Father" looks confusing, doesn't it?

It shouldn’t be taken literally, especially since Jesus the Son is not God the Father. The key is to understand the term “father” as “kingly protector of his people,” which was used in both biblical (for example, see Isaiah 22:21 and Job 29:16) and non-biblical literature. And we Americans are used to hearing George Washington called “the father of our country,” but it’s certainly not saying he sired all Americans! It’s a figurative term that describes a great leader.

Hope this helps!

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

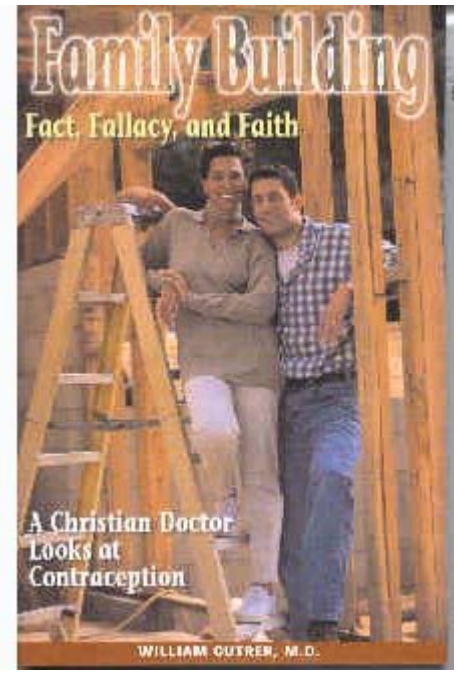
“What is the Pervading Christian Thought on Birth Control?”

I have a question about birth control. Until recently, I was under the impression that being on “the pill” meant that a woman did not ovulate and therefore, could not get pregnant. Upon some research, I was horrified to find out that women taking the pill can actually ovulate up to 50% of the time. When this occurs, the egg is harder to fertilize, but if it does become fertilized, the lining of the uterus will not allow the zygote to be attached, therefore causing the zygote to be aborted without the woman ever knowing it.

What is the pervading Christian thought on this? My husband and I are not Catholic, and we do not have a problem with birth control, but if it is essentially working like the

morning after pill I want nothing to do with it. We were both surprised that no church other than the Catholic church has taken a stance on this.

There IS no pervading Christian thought on this issue. There is no pervading thought even among Christian OB-GYNs, it turns out. The reason is that they truly don't know the pill's effect on the uterine lining and just exactly how abortifacient it is. There is no data to support the claim that the pill causes miscarriages. It would be very helpful if such data existed!



I read an excellent booklet by Dr. Bill Cutrer about a Christian perspective on birth control (*Family Building: Fact, Fallacy and Faith*) and he didn't say anything about women on the pill ovulating up to 50% of the time. Frankly, I am suspicious of that claim for more than a few women. He also said that a fertilized embryo is amazingly able to start growing in the most inhospitable environments, such as the fallopian tubes, intestines and even spleen, so the abortifacient characteristics of COC (combination oral contraceptives) are not absolute.

His perspective is that couples should be aware of the risks of the pill to both the mother and the unborn baby, and alternative contraceptives should be considered. The evidence

is not as strong as some would make it out to be, but nonetheless other forms of contraception would be good to discuss.

I hope this helps; I would suggest you get the pamphlet and read it for yourself (you can order it from FamilyLife at www.familylife.com).

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

"What Does the Bible Say about Marrying Cousins?"

What does the Bible say about marrying cousins? Can first cousins marry? I am also interested in the relationship of third or fourth cousins. If two children of first cousins marry, is this relationship considered third or fourth cousins?

The Bible does not forbid marriage between cousins. However, marriage between first cousins is illegal in about half the states in the U.S.; the Biblical principle here is that God has instituted the government's authority, so there may be a legal issue depending on where you live. But it's not a sin biblically.

The children of one's first cousin are actually "first cousins, once removed." The children of first cousins are second cousins to each other. Here's a helpful page to keep all that straight, an essay and chart called "What Is a First Cousin, Twice Removed?": https://wehavekids.com/family-relationships/What-Is-a-Second-C

ousin-Twice-Removed-Chart-Explains-All

Hope this helps!

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

"What Does It Mean for a Wife to Submit?"

Do you have information on what it means for a woman to submit—is obedience in some sense a part of it? When might she come out from under his "lead"?

I'm doing a bible study and the issue came up last week. In my home I basically submit to my wife because her judgement has been proven to be better in most things and I have a very flexible temperament. Am I a wimp??? Sometimes I wonder if we are doing it right.

Dear _____,

Biblical submission is a military term meaning "to arrange oneself under," the way a soldier places himself under the authority and leadership of his commander. God's plan is for male leadership and authority in the marriage relationship, the home and the church. . . and for men to lead, it's important for women to follow them. It does NOT mean being a doormat or denying one's gifts, talents and passions; it means using those very things to help her husband be the best he can be and to help their family and home be and run most effectively.

Submission does involve obedience, as we all obey God, the

governmental authorities and the elders in our churches as we submit to them; however, the submission of a wife to her husband has a different flavor because of our one-flesh intimacy. Obedience is a function of a power differential, seen best in the parent-child and government-citizen relationships. If the husband-wife relationship is characterized by the husband giving commands and the wife obeying, that kind of power inequity will destroy intimacy. Nonetheless, wifely submission does involve cooperating with and deferring to her husband.

The only time a woman should come out from under her husband's leadership is when that would mean sinning. For instance, I know of husbands who wanted their wives to have abortions, to dance at a strip club to make money, to engage in pornography, and other immoral, unacceptable behaviors. In those cases, to submit to their husbands would have meant taking a stand against God and His standards of right and wrong, so it is wrong to submit in those admittedly (but unfortunately real) extreme situations.

I'm glad to hear you're studying the Bible to see what God says about His intent for the marriage relationship. He has ordained that husbands be what some have called "servant leaders," serving their wives by leading them as men under submission to Christ, and He has ordained that women should serve our husbands by submitting to them as we submit to Christ. This is not an effect of the Fall, because as you read Genesis 2 you can see that Adam had authority over Eve when he named her, and Eve was created for Adam to be his helper and meet his needs. (The reason we rebel against this arrangement is our own self-centeredness, exacerbated by the effect of feminism's objection to the idea of women being submissive to their husbands.)

It's wonderful that your wife has good judgment, and I humbly suggest that you see this as an asset to your marriage. But having good judgment and being right don't have anything to do

with who submits to who. If you have been gifted with a wise wife, then it is your responsibility to seek out her input and perspective before making a decision of what to do. There is a big difference between listening to your wife and saying, "That sounds really good. Let's do that," and saying "Yes dear, whatever you say dear, you just tell me what to do and I'll do it."

Are you a wimp? I don't know and sure wouldn't want to call you any names! <smile> Are you passively allowing your wife to dictate how things should be done in your home, instead of discussing things as equal partners? May I strongly suggest you read Stu Weber's extraordinary book *Tender Warrior*, which Ray and I believe is the best book out there for men. In fact, the cover of the book is appropriately intriguing: "every man's purpose, every woman's dream, every child's hope."

I hope this helps, and I send this along with a prayer that you and your wife will find joy in God's intention for husband and wife roles and functions.

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

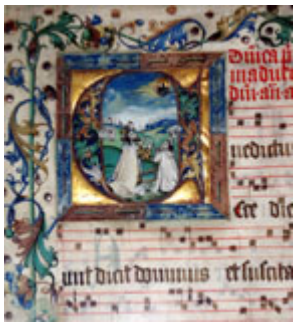
"How Did the Bible Get Divided into Chapters and Verses?"

How Did the Bible Get Divided into Chapters and Verses?

I'm glad you asked! Many people don't realize that the original biblical documents were written without these

artificial divisions, which turn out to be unfortunate in some places, with context apparently ignored. For example, the creation account of Genesis 1 ends with verse 31: “God saw all that He had made, and behold, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.” The chapter division ends before the end of the story of Creation Week; it would certainly make more sense to put 2:1-3 with the rest of Genesis 1:

> 2:1 Thus the heavens and the earth were completed, and all their hosts.
> 2:2 By the seventh day God completed His work which He had done, and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had done.
> 2:3 Then God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it He rested from all His work which God had created and made.



You may be surprised to learn that the Bible was not divided this way until the Middle Ages. However, if you’ve ever seen a medieval illuminated manuscript (with the colorful and gilded artwork), you’ll note there are no verse numbers on these magnificent pieces of art.

The Hebrew Old Testament was divided into verses by Rabbi Nathan in 1448.{1} Stephen Langton (c 1150-1228), an Archbishop of Canterbury, is believed to be the first person to divide the Bible into defined chapters.{2}

Robert Estienne (1503-1559), also known as Robert Stephens or Stephanus, was a 16th century printer in Paris. He divided the New Testament into verses, and was the first to print the

Bible divided into standard numbered verses in 1555.{3} In 1560, the Geneva Bible, an English translation of the Bible made by the English exiles in Geneva, first divided the entire Bible into the verses that we still use today.{4}

Hope this helps!

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

Notes

1. www.worldinvisible.com/library/kenyon/storyofbible/2ck05.htm
2. en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stephen_Langton
3. en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Estienne
4. www.learnthebible.org/Divisions%20of%20the%20Bible.htm

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"Is It Spiritually Safe to Watch TV Shows Like Star Trek?"

I read your article on space aliens (UFOs and Alien Beings) and thought it was interesting. I have a question regarding watching TV shows such as the new Star Trek series. My husband is a big fan of it and a new Christian. I've expressed my opinion to him that I don't think there's life on other planets, and he feels there might be. Could this show be harmful by opening us up to a spiritual attack?

Thank you for your letter. I personally don't believe that

there’s anything wrong with watching the new Star Trek series. Further, I don’t believe that simply watching this show poses any serious spiritual danger. Of course, with any movie or TV show, there’s always the danger that the show will teach or promote ideas that are actually false. It’s therefore important to think carefully and critically about the ideas being presented. But this isn’t simply a danger arising from movies or television. We can also be exposed to false ideas through radio, books, magazines, the internet, and even friends and relatives.

Thus, I don’t think there’s anything wrong with watching this TV series. But as the apostle Paul said to the Thessalonians, I think we need to “Test all things” and “hold fast what is good” (1 Thess. 5:19).

Hope this puts your mind at ease.

Shalom,

Michael Gleghorn
Probe Ministries