

# **“Is God Punishing Me With Singleness?”**

At times I feel tormented regarding sexual issues. I was 21 when I got saved and still a virgin. I committed at that time to be obedient to God's sexual standards. For 27 years I have prayed for marriage and family. I am now 48 and still a virgin. There have been times over the years that the God-given(?) sexual feelings were just tortuous. However, God has not answered my prayers for marriage.

Even though I know that I am within God's will, I feel tremendous shame because I feel like I'm just not good/attractive enough to attract a husband. I look at other women who have husbands and/or children and I just feel like I am defective compared to them.

Also, it seems that plenty of people have premarital sex with impunity and that the way to get a husband is to fornicate (This is what I see demonstrated). Also, a church in my area is going to great lengths this Mother's Day to celebrate and honor single mothers. Those of us who waited and those of us who did it right and married before having children are expected to serve and bless the single mothers, most of whom are single mothers by choice. This just kind of makes me feel like my choice is silly.

I even kind of blame God for making me unattractive so that men won't want me. I just feel so much shame, torment, and low self-esteem. I feel like God might be punishing me or playing games with me.

I am so sorry. That is a very difficult burden to bear. And you are not alone! Proverbs says, "Hope deferred makes the heart sick" (13:12), and there are a lot of heartsick people who would so love a spouse and children, but it hasn't

happened.

It sounds like you may have been listening to the enemy's slanderings about God—that He is not good, and He does not really love you, and He is withholding goodies from you because He is capricious. In order to live in peace with your life as it is, may I respectfully suggest that it starts with learning to “live loved,” as the author of *The Shack* puts it? I suggest that you pray every day, “Lord, show me how You love me.” And be looking for the various ways in which He shows His love to you. It is essential to seek God's help in being content; otherwise, we can turn into grumpy, critical, self-pitying people that others don't want to be around. An “attitude of gratitude” goes a long way in embracing life as it is instead of focusing on what we DONT have. That's why I strongly encourage people to keep a gratitude journal, recording three things every day for which we can thank the Lord.

I do understand shame, and lived with a “shame disability” for many years before God set me free from it when I accepted His gift of His acceptance, as well as the gift of self-acceptance. I pray you will receive this gift as well, learning to embrace His love for you and see the many ways in which He communicates His love and delight in you, every day.

Sue Bohlin

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**“God DISPATCHES Evil Instead**

# of Sending It”

Why don't you teach that Isaiah 45:7 is the simple mistranslation it is? Otherwise, without untangling this one verse, one is left with a god of darkness and evil rather than the God of light and peace.

Isaiah 45:7 I form the light, and DISPATCH darkness: I make peace, and DISPATCH ADVERSITY: I the LORD do all these things.

Thanks for your letter. I'm assuming you are referring to a previous email response of mine, [“Is God the Creator of Evil?”](#). I did, of course, refer the person to what I consider to be a better translation of this verse.

However, the difficulty with the version you have cited is, quite simply, that it offers a rather unlikely translation. The Hebrew term in this verse primarily means “create.” It is the same term used in Genesis 1:1 to describe God's creation of the heavens and the earth.

According to the Enhanced Strong's Lexicon, there are 54 occurrences of this term in the Old Testament. The AV translates as “create” 42 times, “creator” three times, “choose” twice, “make” twice, “cut down” twice, “dispatch” once, “done” once, and “make fat” once. But its primary meaning, as any good lexicon will note is to create, shape, form.

Thus, I still think it's better to point out that, in its original context, the passage is an affirmation of the sovereignty of God over whatever happens in the world. Nothing happens apart from His will or permission. That includes whatever calamities or natural disasters occur. And while I would agree with you that God is not the cause of any moral evil in the world, the Bible still affirms that He is sovereign over whatever moral evil occurs. So you can prefer the version you cite if you want, but it takes a minority view

on how this passage should be translated (as a simple comparison of different versions will quickly reveal).

Shalom in Him,

Michael Gleghorn

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## **“Is A Course in Miracles Heretical? How Do I Talk to My Friend Who Believes It?”**

My friend says he believes in “A Course in Miracles.” I’ve been trying to help him to start to read the Bible instead so he sees the truth about Jesus. I’ve read [your article](#) that says the Course is anti-biblical and the work of an evil spirit.

I wonder now if this text is heretical also—not only anti-biblical? Also I’d be happy if you would describe more what heretical really mean according to the Bible. Because I think that I’ve read in the Bible that we shouldn’t associate with people who are heretics.

I really would be glad if my friend would become a christian who believes in Jesus Christ described in the Bible. So I’m wondering what attitude I should have towards him. I’ve read about Paul who in his apologetical work in Athens speaks about the unknown God worshipped in Athens. Is a similar approach good in this case? To speak about that all the love he wants is in fact in the Biblical Jesus?

**Or is it better to simply declare that I believe ACIM is the work of evil? But if it's heretical—can I associate with him more than to just state my faith in order to help come to believe in the Biblical Jesus Christ?**

Thank you for your inquiry regarding *A Course in Miracles* as it relates to heresy. Allow me to give you a definition of heresy from which I tend to operate. I trust you will find it adequate! A heresy is a crime of perception—an act of seeing something that, according to some custodian of reality, is not truly there. Heresy, therefore, is always relative to an orthodoxy.

In the case of ACIM it is a heresy of orthodox Christianity. That is to say that the teachings of The Course are opposed to biblical orthodoxy. An example would be that The Course teaches that “no one is punished for their sins, and the Sons of God are not sinners” (p. 88). The Bible teaches a different understanding of man and his relationship to sin. Romans 3:10 tells us that no one is righteous. Romans 3:23 tells us that all have sinned. The word all is all inclusive—it means everyone, no one is exempt. We have all sinned. Our sin has separated us from God (Isaiah 59:2).

Another example that clearly shows us how different or unorthodox The Course is related to the Bible is the idea that “the separation is a faulty formulation of reality, with no effect at all” (p. 241). Ephesians 2: 1-3 tells us that we were dead in our transgressions and sins. Spiritual death is to be separated from God. Without God's intervention those of us who are without God are destined to eternal death. The Course erroneously teaches that we are not really separated from God, but that our perceived separation is a faulty understanding of who we really are—we are One! There is no separation. The Bible, on the other hand, is quite clear—we are self-deceiving if we do not recognize our sin and its result, our separation from a holy Creator God.

There are numerous other examples that could be pointed out as opposing teachings between the two texts (The Course and the Bible); some are included in my article. According to Helen Schucman The Course was given to her by Jesus. She sat in a trance state and auto-wrote what he dictated. However, the teachings of Ms. Schucman's "Jesus" are diametrically opposed to the teachings of Jesus in the Bible. Therefore, if we view the Bible as being orthodox (Truth), then we would by definition consider the teachings of The Course as heresy. In other words we have two Jesuses at play. One as represented by Ms. Schucman in The Course and another as revealed in the scriptures—the Bible: an authentic Jesus as the Bible reveals and a false "Jesus" found in the pages of ACIM.

The Law of Non-contradiction comes into play at this point. The Law of Non-contradiction simply states that two opposing statements cannot be true at the same time. They can be true at one point in history, but not concurrently. It also says that two opposing views can both be in error or that one of the two may be correct, but once again they both cannot be true at the same time. In our case we believe the Bible to be True and since the Bible teaches doctrine that opposes the teachings found in ACIM then The Course must be in error and exemplifies false teaching. The "Jesus" of ACIM is a false Christ (see Matthew 24: 20-24).

In regards to your concern whether you should continue your relationship or friendship with a friend who accepts ACIM as a legitimate teaching of Jesus, allow me to make a brief comment. I would continue to interact with them and allow them to share their thoughts. If they showed a desire to continue seeking God's Truth I would lovingly point out to them the discrepancies between the two texts. Once I had established the inconsistencies between the two I would then attempt to help my friend come to an awareness of the Law of Non-contradiction. Once I have had success regarding the above I would, then, begin a discussion concerning the trustworthiness

of the scriptures. I would recommend Josh McDowell's text *The New Evidence that Demands a Verdict*. It can be found at your local Christian bookstore or on Amazon.com. It is well worth the read and it will be a tremendous resource for you in sharing with your friend. [Ed. note: Also check out the ["Reasons to Believe" section](#) of the Probe website.]

If your friend, on the other hand, is not open to dialoguing and openly sharing his or her thoughts and beliefs about The Course and God's revealed Word then I would reconsider another course of action. I would remain open to them and offer my friendship, but they would not be my confidant or my closest of friends. I would be cordial and agreeable as long as they continued to show an openness concerning their knowing God's Truth. I believe Paul's example on Mars Hill is highly instructive for us and how we might proceed in sharing our faith with someone who stands outside orthodoxy.

I pray that you would have God's favor as you share your faith with your friend. May the Holy Spirit guide and direct your ways as you make Him known to those whom you come into contact.

Blessings,

Russ Wise  
Christian Information Ministries  
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## **"Would Clones Have Souls?"**

**If we were ever able to clone humans, would they have souls?**

This is a common and important question. The tough part is that we don't know for certain the origin of individual souls. One view in theology is a creationist view that supposes that God individually creates each new soul some time after fertilization or perhaps even just before fertilization (Jeremiah 1:5). Another view suggests that something in the union of sperm and egg contributes to the origin of the soul. However the Bible does not give us direct testimony one way or the other. We do know that identical twins form when the early embryo—in the 2–8 cell stage—somehow divides completely in two. If sperm and egg were necessary for each individual, then only one person from an identical twin pair would have a soul and the other would be soulless. I think we can all agree that that doesn't make sense. So I assume a clone would have a soul since it is a form of technological twinning.

I hope that helps. An interesting question to ask is, What if clones did not have souls and were biologically viable? You would face the possibility of having a *homo sapiens* standing in front of you with no soul. If so, how would you know they *didn't* have a soul? The question is not as easy to answer as you might expect.

Respectfully,

Ray Bohlin, Ph.D.

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**“In Redeeming Darwin Are You**



# Saying God Used Evolution?"

I read [the description of "Redeeming Darwin"](#) and [an email](#) supposedly explaining what you mean by "redeeming Darwin." Neither explain exactly what you do in this program; are you saying that God used evolution? If so, I find this extremely unbiblical. Or are you saying that Darwinism as it now stands ("molecules-to-man" – i.e., macro-evolution) is true but that it can somehow be used to evangelize? Or are you saying that Darwinism as I described above is NOT valid, but that an actual 6-day Creation by God is what IS true?

I apologize that our description is not clearer. We will take another look at it to see what we can do to increase the clarity.

At Probe Ministries we reject the Darwinian evolutionary mechanism proposed for the origin and diversity of life. The [Redeeming Darwin](#) curriculum explains a few of the problems with Darwinism and explores the alternative provided by the relatively new Intelligent Design Movement.

Since Intelligent Design principles are used by both young and old earth creationist perspectives we use scientists in the film from both ICR (John Morris) and Reasons to Believe (Fuz Rana) to explain what they like and don't like about ID.

As a ministry we do not take [a position on the age of the earth](#) question.

Respectfully,

Ray Bohlin, PhD

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# **“Why Did Jesus Seem to Want Parables To Obscure His Message?”**

In Matt 13:10 the disciples ask Jesus why he spoke to the people in parables. It seemed that His answer was Him not wanting them to understand and in doing so being saved. If God desires for everyone to be saved and gave His most valuable treasure (His Son), why did He not reveal His Word to all so that they would come and be healed and saved?

Great question! God does indeed want all men to be saved (1 Tim. 2:4; 2 Pet. 3:9). In Matt. 13:10-17 Jesus is referring to God's judgment on willful unbelief. The religious leaders had just accused Jesus of casting out demons by the power of Beelzebub, the ruler of the demons (Matt. 12:24). People were willfully rejecting God's revelation in the person, teachings, and deeds of Jesus. Notice that Jesus says that in them Isaiah's prophecy is fulfilled (Matt. 13:14). Notice, further, what this prophecy says in Matt. 13:15. They have willfully "closed their eyes" lest they should see, understand, repent and be forgiven.

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and be forgiven.

Hope this helps. Shalom in Christ, Michael Gleghorn

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## **“Is Smoking Marijuana Okay for Christians?”**

**Genesis: 1:29: “And God said , behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth...” My question is, Does this mean that it (herb) is OK for Christians? And I am talking about the herb that you smoke.**

Consider the whole verse:

Gen 1:29 Then God said, “Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the surface of all the earth, and every tree which has fruit yielding seed; it shall be food for you.”

God gives Adam and Eve seed-yielding plants and fruit trees for *food*. The herbs are for eating, not smoking.

Consider this also: the eternal principle behind the biblical command not to be drunk (Eph 5:18) is that we are not to become intoxicated with anything that would deprive us of self-control and the ability to be filled with (controlled by) the Spirit. Getting high is wrong for the same reason getting drunk is wrong.

Secondly, marijuana is illegal. Smoking weed is also wrong because the government, which is God’s instrument, has laws against it.

Additionally, consider this: smoking ANYTHING harms your lungs. We are commanded to be good stewards of all that God has put in our hands (Gen. 1:28), which includes our bodies. And we are furthermore instructed to glorify God in our body, which is not our own: "Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body" (1 Cor 6:19-20.) 1 Cor 10:31 says, "Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God." If getting drunk is a sin, how does one get high to the glory of God?

So no. Any kind of herb that you would smoke is not OK.

Sue Bohlin

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## **"What About the Water Vapor Canopy Hypothesis?"**

You say that the literal translation makes the most sense, yet you say that there are things about it that make no sense. Well here is my suggestion. I am a literalist... I believe what the Bible says about creation – literal. 6 days. But read your Bible about the creation of the "sky." God separated the waters from the waters. It doesn't say that he created mists, or clouds from the waters to make up the sky... it says he separated the water from the water. In fact, wind, rain, and rainbows are not mentioned anywhere in the Bible until the flood... so what if the atmosphere was different in the original times? What if there was literally a solid water "layer" above

the sky... this would create an atmosphere like a green-house effect on earth... therefore totally changing the oxygen and most importantly CARBON levels in the air... which would totally ruin all "carbon-dating" tests prior to the flood... which would then in effect also explain why people lived longer prior to the flood. Not only were we closer to perfection then... but there was probably better levels of oxygen in the air... and oxygen is known to have healing properties (especially O<sub>3</sub>). Just a thought to consider...

Thank you for reading and writing.

I am very familiar with the Canopy Hypothesis you describe. I even accepted and taught it for several years. While definitely still around, it has fallen into disfavor in many creationist circles for two primary reasons.

The first is biblical. The description of Day Two in Genesis describes the separation of the waters and that God placed an expanse in the midst of the waters. This has usually been interpreted as the atmosphere. However, on Day Four, God places the sun, moon, and stars in this same expanse.

The second involves the inherent instability of any water vapor canopy above the earth's atmosphere. So far calculations show that it would require a miracle of constant intervention to keep it in place until the flood. There is also a difficult problem with the condensation of the canopy into water droplets to fall as rain for forty days and nights. This would release a tremendous amount of heat that would cause additional problems.

Hope this helps.

Respectfully,

Ray Bohlin

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# “If Judged at Death, Why Judged Later?”

I found your article on [what happens at death](#). My question is, if we are judged at death immediately, why do we say in the creeds that at the second coming Jesus will judge the quick (living) and the dead since the dead have already been judged? Anxious to hear back from you. Thanks.

Thanks for your letter. There is what some have called a “judgment of faith” which takes place immediately at death and a “judgment of works” which takes place at some time afterward.

The “judgment of faith” may be in view in Hebrews 9:27. A good biblical example is the story of the rich man and Lazarus in Luke 16:19-31. Notice that the rich man finds himself in “Hades” after death, while Lazarus is in Paradise. This judgment is based on one’s relationship with the Lord and has nothing to do with works per se.

However, the Bible also speaks of a “judgment of works.” For unbelievers, this judgment will apparently take place just prior to the creation of the new heavens and new earth (see Rev. 20:11 – 21:1). Notice that even death and Hades are cast into the lake of fire at this time (Rev. 20:14). In other words, “Hades” (where the rich man went at death) is not to be equated with the lake of fire (which is where unbelievers will spend eternity after the Great White Throne judgment).

Believers will also experience a “judgment of works” at the judgment seat of Christ (see 1 Cor. 3:10-15). This judgment does not determine whether the person is saved or not, for this judgment only includes those who are already saved. It

rather determines whether one will receive eternal rewards or not. Apparently, some believers will not receive any rewards (1 Cor. 3:15). Theologians do not agree on precisely when this judgment will take place. But most believe that it follows the initial “judgment of faith” at some later time. It certainly occurs before the creation of the new heavens and new earth (where resurrected believers will spend eternity in joyful fellowship with God and one another).

Hope this helps clear up some of the confusion.

Shalom,

Michael Gleghorn

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## **“I’m Doubting the Truth of the Bible and God’s Existence”**

I was wondering about some matters pertaining to truth, specifically the truth of the Bible and existence of God. I’ve grown up in Arkansas in the bible belt my entire life and of course of been surrounded by churches, christianity, and an unquestioning world view that God exists and the bible is the truth.

Recently, I’ve started questioning reality and my perception of the world. I know it is dangerous to get caught up in humanly philosophies and crap like that, but a lot of things don’t make sense to me about God. I’m trying to look at truth from all perspectives so I’ve been reading this book called

*The God Delusion*. I know you might say I'm crazy and I'm going to be completely disillusioned by some stupid science and philosophy, but some of what it says doesn't seem to be completely crazy. Right now, specifically I'm struggling with contradictions that the Bible seems to present. I'm wondering whether all the Gospels are in agreement as to the birth of Jesus. I'm sure there are several other contradictions that atheists would point out also. If you could address some of those and give me another viewpoint.

Thanks for your letter. There's nothing wrong with wanting to think carefully about what you believe and why. There's also nothing wrong with reading Dawkins' book, *The God Delusion*—although many serious scholars don't think very highly of his arguments or condescending attitude. For a good critique of Dawkins' book, you may want to also read [The Dawkins Delusion](#) by Alister E. McGrath. It would offer an informed rebuttal of many of Dawkins' claims by a world-class scholar with doctoral degrees in both molecular biology and theology.

I deal with alleged contradictions in the infancy narratives in [my article on the virgin birth](#) here on the Probe Web site. A more in-depth article can be found here: [www.tektonics.org/af/birthnarr.php](http://www.tektonics.org/af/birthnarr.php).

Two other sites you should be familiar with are [Bible.org](http://Bible.org) and [ReasonableFaith.org](http://ReasonableFaith.org). The latter site is that of Christian philosopher/theologian William Lane Craig. I would highly recommend his articles on the existence of God, the historicity of Jesus, etc. Both sites have lots of great resources.

Wishing you all the best in your studies!

Michael Gleghorn

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