

# **“Did Christ HAVE to be Deity?”**

Greetings Don,

I came across [your website article](#) concerning the deity of Christ and thought I would respond. if you have the time and interest, please entertain some of my thoughts and get back with me if time allows. My questions surround the topic of the necessity of Christ being deity. I accept that He is, but wonder if He MUST be for both the atonement and eternal salvation. What I would like to do is copy the text from my interaction with a good friend yesterday. That way I won't have to rewrite our dialogue. When you have time, please interject if you would. WB is my good friend, a pastor. I am DB.

WB: Your questions about Christ's deity in regards to salvation do sound like the JWs. "God can do it anyway he so pleases" (even Calvin suggests this as well). If God wanted, he could have made a world without the possibility for sin as well. He can do it any way he pleases, but he has reasons for doing it the way he does.

DB: Yes, he does. But as God, he could do it any number of ways. If you hold to the middle/knowledge position, you would have to agree to this idea, and the idea that he chose the best possible way to redeem mankind. That, in-and-of-itself, doesn't demand that Christ be deity.

WB: The early church fathers reasoned (there, I used the dirty word "reason") that Christ had to be God for our salvation to be effectual. You have heard it before, even from me. Be patient as I explain it again. If I sin against you, how long does the sin remain? Answer: until you forgive me or until you die. Even if I die first, the sin remains as an offense

against you.

DB: No problems here at all. I agree wholeheartedly.

WB: If I sin against God, how long does the sin remain? Until he forgives me or until he dies. Since he does not die, and is an infinite being, then the sin is eternal: actually, my sin against him becomes an infinite offense. Now: how can an infinite transgression be forgiven? (I hope we don't have to revisit justification in all of this). Only an infinite being can pay for an infinite sin – only an infinite being can absorb an infinite curse and satisfy the infinite penalty of an infinite crime. Only an infinite being can bear an infinite wrath. If Jesus was a man, his death would have no efficacy.

DB: Here's where questions arise on my part. I agree that my sin is an infinite offense against God. Actually, God is eternal and infinite and we are neither (in the absolute definitions of those terms—i.e. “immeasurable or without beginning or end”). Hence, maybe there is some reservation on my part to claim I, a finite being, can commit an infinite act. I suppose since we live forever (in glory or judgment), our sins remain always or are cleansed and forgiven always; hence, they are infinite or erased. All that being said (I'm typing out my thoughts), I don't feel it requires that Christ must be deity to be a sufficient sacrifice for my sins. What is required is a perfect sacrifice. If Christ was a created being, one who was higher than angels and who took on the form of man, lived a perfect, sinless life with free will (like Satan but succeeding), his sacrifice would be sufficient. I don't understand how, using reason, it would not. Like us, he would have had a beginning. Like us, free will. Unlike Adam, he did not sin (even if he could have—if he was not deity, this would give even more credence to the example that even though he was a man, he did not sin vs. our position as Trinitarians). As he was sinless, created or not, his perfect example and sacrifice would be sufficient. It seems that if there coexisted TWO forms of deity at the same time, and it

was possible for them to sin against each other as does man, then a mediator, who would then have to be deity, would be required. To require deity to be sacrificed for the sins of finite man seems overkill and doesn't pan out in my mind as reasonable. It's certainly plausible, but I don't see how it has to be. Please correct me here. If God requires a perfect sacrifice, Jesus would have been a sufficient sacrifice if God said he was having lived a perfect life (as a perfect man or perfect Adam).

WB: The applicability of Christ's atoning work to us as human beings depends upon the reality of his humanity.

DB: Absolutely.

WB: The efficacy depends upon the genuineness and completeness of his deity. DB: Not if God only requires a perfect, sinless sacrifice vs. the sacrifice of a deity. I still fail to understand why reason disallows this. It seems to me we are predisposed to this position to embrace our view of the trinity vs. the other way around. Reason, in my mind, doesn't exclude this argument.

WB: The JW's reject this saying that God can do anything he pleases. Okay, why didn't he just let a muskrat die for our sins then? The beauty of the cross is not that we have been redeemed, but that the eternal Holy God was willing to undergo the kenosis (humiliation from glory to earth to servant to criminal to death to tomb).

DB: I agree—that is the beauty of the cross. But if God created for himself a son with free will (much like Satan—and NO, I don't think they were brothers!!!) to be a sacrifice for a lower mankind who despises them both and who hates them, then his suffering and sacrifice on our part for the love of his father, who he could disobey at will, is a lovely story as well. That's just as moving in my mind. If he was deity and couldn't sin (if he was impeccable), we can only glory in his

suffering, not his resistance to sin. Again, reason warrants that conclusion.

WB: This reveals God. And it is this that is the centerpiece of the Christian faith (our salvation was the result, and the reason, but the emphasis is on the grand mystery of God himself. (How boring it would be to send someone else to do his dirty work).

DB: I addressed this above.

Hello \_\_\_\_\_,

Thanks for your e-mail. Don is overwhelmed with other duties and asked me to respond in his place. I hope you understand.

Since you claim to accept the doctrine of Christ's deity, I will simply assume this is a belief we share. Thus, rather than offering any arguments for this important doctrine, I will simply assume it is true for the purpose of this response.

Let me make just a few points by way of introduction. First, I think you raise an important issue that needs to be carefully considered and discussed. Second, I will have to reply in a somewhat abbreviated fashion, merely outlining what I consider to be some important points. Third, at the time of this writing, I freely admit that I CANNOT offer a conclusive argument that it was necessary for Christ to be God in order to provide an acceptable atonement for the sins of man. However, I want to offer a cumulative case for this position which I think is nonetheless compelling. This will involve both a response to some of your statements, as well as a brief, positive presentation of some evidence which I think makes it at least highly probable that Christ would indeed have to be God to provide an acceptable atonement for our sins. Finally, I offer these thoughts for your consideration since you wrote to Probe requesting a response. Although I have to reply rather quickly because of many other pressing

duties, I am also offering a tolerably thoughtful response that I ask you to read carefully.

Please allow me to focus on your statements beginning with the remark, "Here's where questions arise on my part." You state:

*"I don't feel it requires that Christ must be deity to be a sufficient sacrifice for my sins. What is required is a perfect sacrifice. If Christ was a created being, one who was higher than angels and who took on the form of man, lived a perfect, sinless life with free will (like Satan but succeeding), his sacrifice would be sufficient. I don't understand how, using reason, it would not."*

I wonder HOW you actually KNOW this to be true? Granted, you MAY be right. But HOW do you really KNOW? I note that you appeal to "reason" – a faculty for which I too have great respect – but it's important to remember that reason, like ALL of man's faculties, is fallen. This remark is not intended to denigrate reason. But it's common knowledge that man often makes errors in reasoning about all sorts of things. Not only that, we often begin our reasoning from false presuppositions, which often results in correctly reasoning to false conclusions. Finally, we almost never have all the essential information which we would need to reason to the right answer – even if we didn't continually commit errors in our reasoning.

I would argue that the question of whether or not it was necessary for Christ to be God in order to provide an acceptable atonement for the sins of man is the sort of question about which it would be quite easy to reason incorrectly. I would also argue that YOU BEAR THE BURDEN OF PROOF here. This is so for the simple reason that Christ was in fact God (as you admit), and the Father did in fact send His Son to be "the propitiation for our sins" (1 JN. 2:2). Since God is a rational moral agent, it seems fair to assume

that He had some good reason for actually doing things as He did. Not only this, I think it's fair to ask whether God would have sent His only Son as the sacrifice for our sins if He could have achieved this end in some other way. It is at least odd that God would have sent His only Son to do what a morally perfect creature could just as easily have accomplished. Since God did in fact send His Son, however, you clearly bear the burden of proof in demonstrating that this was, in fact, not necessary. I don't think you can do so. Hence, I think your argument is ultimately unsuccessful.

Let me briefly illustrate this last point from a section of the dialogue between you and your friend:

*WB: The applicability of Christ's atoning work to us as human beings depends upon the reality of his humanity. DB: Absolutely. WB: The efficacy depends upon the genuineness and completeness of his deity. DB: Not if God only requires a perfect, sinless sacrifice vs. the sacrifice of a deity. I still fail to understand why reason disallows this. It seems to me we are predisposed to this position to embrace our view of the trinity vs. the other way around. Reason, in my mind, doesn't exclude this argument."*

Concerning your final comments, I would agree that reason, in itself, doesn't necessarily exclude the possibility that God only requires a perfect, sinless sacrifice rather than a Divine one. But remember my comments on "reason" again. Just because human reason cannot exclude the possibility that you mention does not in any way prove that a Divine sacrifice was not necessary! And since you bear the burden of proof here, I must ask you HOW, specifically, you KNOW that God does NOT REQUIRE A DIVINE SACRIFICE? Since this is what God actually did, I would argue that it is more reasonable to believe it was necessary than that it was not. Admittedly, this does not PROVE my argument is true, but I do think it's more reasonable. And I am not obligated to assume the burden of

proof here anyway.

I think you make an interesting, and potentially revealing, comment when you write:

*"It seems that if there coexisted TWO forms of diety at the same time, and it was possible for them to sin against each other as does man, then a mediator, who would then have to be diety, would be required."*

Again, I wonder HOW you KNOW this? Why, specifically, would a Divine mediator be required? Certainly reason does not demand this! Why would any mediator "be required" at all? It's quite possible that the gods could mediate their own dispute, just as two men might do. It's also possible that a man, or a talking raccoon, could serve as a mediator. But here's what's interesting. If your logic is valid, and a god must mediate between gods, why would it not also follow that a God-Man must mediate between God and man?

But here's another point. The example of reconciling two gods likely involves the reconciliation of equals. But this is not the case when we consider the reconciliation of man to God. Here, the parties are NOT equal. God is the Creator, man is His creation. It seems at least reasonable to believe (and is in fact true, I think) that the Creator may have a particular character which requires that reconciliation be achieved ONLY through a means which is perfectly consistent with all His attributes. And this, of course, may radically limit the means by which such reconciliation can actually be achieved. Again, I personally think it would be odd for the Father to send His only Son to accomplish on behalf of man what a morally perfect creature was capable of. Indeed, you yourself confess:

*"To require diety to be sacrificed for the sins of finite man seems overkill and doesn't pan out in my mind as reasonable. It's certainly plausible, but I don't see how it has to be."*

But since this is what God actually did, you bear the burden of proof in demonstrating that such a sacrifice was, in fact, overkill! Since God is a rational moral agent, it is at least reasonable to think that a Divine sacrifice may indeed have been NECESSARY. And if it was necessary it cannot, by definition, be overkill.

Let me conclude with two more observations. First, we both agree that Jesus was, in fact, the God-Man. I could easily demonstrate from the Scriptures both that Jesus believed this of Himself and that His disciples believed it as well. But here's the point. Every time that Jesus, or one of His disciples, makes the claim that He is the ONLY way to God there is, at least potentially, an implicit argument that only a God-Man can reconcile man to God! I could quote many verses, but let me offer just a few. When Jesus says to Nicodemus, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so MUST THE SON OF MAN BE LIFTED UP; that whoever believes may in Him have eternal life" (JN. 3:14-15, emphasis mine), He is speaking as the God-Man. I admit that it is not necessary to interpret such a statement as requiring a Divine sacrifice, but it certainly has this potential – and that's something to think about. In other words, since Jesus is the God-Man, He could be implicitly understood as saying that ONLY such a One as He is capable of reconciling man to God. It's the same with many such statements of Jesus (e.g. JN. 14:6, etc.). And Jesus' disciples, who also believed in His deity, repeatedly claim that there is no other way for man to be reconciled to God. For example, in Acts 4:12 Peter declares, "And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved." Again, this does not PROVE that a Divine sacrifice was necessary (the burden is yours to show it was not), but it may certainly be read as implying its necessity.

Second, consider this. In Paul's famous verse on substitution, 2 Cor. 5:21, we read: "He (the Father) made Him (the Son) who



knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.” Luther referred to this as the “Great Exchange.” Christ takes our sin on Himself and gives us His righteousness in its place! Now an argument could be made that, in order to be acceptable to God, man must be clothed in His righteousness. If this is so, then it would seem to follow that a Divine substitute was not superfluous, but ESSENTIAL. For how could we become “the righteousness of God” in Christ, unless Christ was actually God? It’s reasonable to believe He could only give us God’s righteousness if He was, in fact, God. And if such righteousness is essential for our reconciliation to God, then it follows that a Divine substitute would be necessary to achieve this goal. Again, I fully admit that this argument is NOT CONCLUSIVE—it is merely suggestive. But as I’ve said repeatedly (I’m sure you’re sick of it!), you bear the burden of proof – not me. Thus, I think I’ve offered some good reasons to believe that a Divine sacrifice was indeed necessary and not overkill. I also think I’ve demonstrated that you’re far from proving your own position (if in fact it’s actually your position; I’m not saying it necessarily is).

Wishing you God’s richest blessings,

Michael Gleghorn  
Probe Ministries

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## **“What About the Person Who Never Heard of Jesus?”**

I have a question. I have a Jewish person asking me “What about the guy who lives in a far off place and has never heard the name of Jesus proclaimed—is he going to hell?” My

immediate answer is that God finds a way to speak to your heart. Now, the Jews of the times of Abraham and Moses who believed in one God—after the cross I would say that John 3:16 holds true—but to a Jewish person who never looked at The New Testament—is there a sensitive yet clear and concise way to answer this?

I agree with you about God finding a way to speak to your heart.

We are now hearing many stories of people coming to faith in Christ as the result of a dream or vision where He appears to them, inviting them to trust in Him. This is particularly happening in the Muslim world. Many people instantly know it's the Lord Jesus when He appears to them, but some do not. In some dreams and visions, He tells them who He is, and in others He does not—He just loves them and calls them to come to Him. After the dream/vision, the Lord provides someone to identify Him as they continue to seek Him. (We see something similar in the story of Cornelius in Acts 10.)

So, from what I understand, people are putting their trust in Christ, but some don't know anything more about Him than that He is God, He loves them and He invites them to trust in Him. Two recurrent invitations continue to appear in the dreams and visions we are hearing about: 1) "I am the way, the truth and the life," and 2) "You belong to Me." As people are then able to get a copy of the Bible or talk to a Christian, their knowledge of Christ, the Cross, and the Christian life grows, as well as their faith and their understanding of who Jesus is and what He did.

For years, I have heard that God's only plan for evangelism is for us to share the gospel. But these stories show that sometimes, Jesus goes directly to a person. And, in Revelation 14:6, there is an angel who takes the gospel to men.

So what that means is that if a person has never heard of

Jesus through the preaching of the gospel, that is no obstacle for God. He can, and testimony shows that He does, appear directly to—and call a person to—have faith in Him. We still need to diligently pursue the Great Commission and take the gospel to all nations, since evangelism through the changed lives of Christ-followers is still God's main plan. But God's hands are not tied by our inability (or laziness, or selfishness, or disobedience) to get the gospel to everyone He has chosen for eternal life.

Concerning your specific question about a Jewish person who never looked at the New Testament, it's possible he might be in the same category as people who never heard of Jesus. . . however, in today's Jewish culture, part of what defines a Jew is "not believing in Jesus." It's not a valid definition, and it's not true, but it's hard to imagine anyone growing up in a Jewish culture—particularly in North or South America—who wasn't aware of the Jesus of Christianity in the surrounding culture.

So, I think the bottom line is that God would judge a Jewish person by the same standard as anyone else: "What did you do with the light you received?"

Your Jewish friend asks an important question, and it gives you the opportunity to talk about the character of God. I am grateful that our God is not only just, but loving, and I believe that He will allow the blood of Jesus to cover those who had no chance to reject Him, such as babies who die before or after birth, or the mentally impaired.

God promises that if we seek Him, we will find Him (Deut. 4:29). And since dead people cannot seek God and cannot choose life, that means that it's all God's grace allowing us to recognize our need for Him and seek Him in the first place! I would think that this same heart that longs for us to turn to Him, and gives us grace to turn to Him and seek Him, would also respond in love to the cry of a heart that says, "God, if

you are there, here I am! I don't know you, but I want to! Reveal Yourself to me!"

I hope this makes sense.

Sue Bohlin

See answers by  
[Kerby Anderson](#)  
and [GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

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## **“What Are Your Views on Hair Dyeing and Colored Contacts?”**

I would like to know if there is anything in the Bible which would support my beliefs on hair dyeing, colored contacts, and anything else that goes along with unnatural changes. I believe that God made our hair color and eye color and everything else about us for a purpose and it's not respectful to change it. Anyways, this really bothers me because it seems that everybody does it and I would really like some feedback. Also, is it even worth it to say anything about it or does it even matter?

If there is anything in the Bible about these things I am not aware of it. God gave us dominion over the earth and commanded Adam and Eve to subdue it and rule it, which is the foundational philosophy behind science and technology.

The more important issue, though, is the reasons people would

do these things. As usual, it's what's in the heart, our motivations, that matter. Colored contacts are a function of technology, for instance, but there's a big difference between donning a different eye color as a touch of whimsy and fun, or doing it as part of a scheme to change one's appearance to avoid detection during a scam such as a bank robbery.

In terms of hair color, I think it's worth noting that usually it's women who color their hair, and why? Because we are both taught by the culture and we recognize instinctively that beauty and femininity go together, and making oneself as beautiful as possible is part of the feminine heart. But again, the motivation makes a big difference: a woman can color her hair to "go out and get a man" instead of trusting God to make her attractive to HIS choice of a spouse. That is very different from the woman who colors her hair to keep her gray from being an obstacle in ministering to the audiences she has been called to speak to (because our culture unfortunately values younger-looking women, even women that everyone knows are over 50.) In that case, coloring her hair is her way of living out the apostle Paul's comment in 1 Cor. 9:22 that "I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some." These are very real scenarios: I'm thinking of two specific women who personally told me their vastly different reasons for coloring their hair.

So the motivation makes all the difference, and as is usually the case, we can't know what's going on in other people's hearts. So the better route, I think, is to just trust those decisions to the Lord and leave them there.

Sue Bohlin

P.S. For the record, my contacts are dyed light blue to make them easier to find when I drop them on the floor, and my "silvering" hair is coming in so beautifully I could never find a color that's better than this. ☐

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# **“Your Answer on Generational Curses Really Helped with our Bipolar Daughter”**

Actually, this is a thank-you email.

Our (adopted) daughter is only five years old, and has very obvious childhood-onset bipolar. Unfortunately, this is a new diagnosis among children, and many people refuse to believe that such young, innocent children's lives could be affected by mental illness. Believe me, there is nobody who would want to believe that more than the children or the parents of the children who are suffering with these illnesses. But, unfortunately, they do exist. In fact, there is now PROOF that a dog that can sense-out a seizure just before it happens can also sense-out a bipolar episode. This is probably do to the nature of bipolar, as they now believe bipolar is a form of epilepsy.

Recently a Christian teacher asked me, “Could this be a generational curse? After all, God doesn't want any of His children to suffer. We will definitely be praying for your daughter.” This got me thinking, and I ended up at your website reading the article [“Could My Children's Autism be the Result of a Generational Curse?”](#) Boy, was I thankful to learn about what a generational curse really amounts to. Our daughter is on medication, and even that BARELY works.

Going to your website not only taught me about generational curses (enough to where now I can go back and speak with the woman more informatively!), but it also reminded me that this is NOT my fault. I tend to try to lay blame somewhere, and the best person to blame is myself. I can second-guess everything

I've done "wrong," imagined and perceived, and say that is why she is suffering. And believe me, she IS suffering, and doesn't mind saying so! For several months, we lied to her and told her bipolar simply means you are very smart. I got tired of lying to her. Today I finally agreed with her, and said, You're right. It IS a bad thing, but you can learn to live with it. Either you can defeat it, or it can defeat you. If you want to NOT let it get the best of you, you have to work very hard at it, especially when you're older.

But we'll get through it together.

It's so hard, I just can't begin to tell you what it is like to deal with a mental illness, especially in such a young child. We love her with all our heart and might. She has shown us how to love unconditionally. Sometimes, though, it takes everything inside us to stay strong.

Thank you for explaining about generational curses, and the fact that sometimes an illness is an illness, not necessarily a sin.

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

BLESS YOUR HEART!!!! I am so sorry to hear about this trial your family is going through, and will be for a very, very long time. Our pastor's young son was also diagnosed with BPD when he was even younger than your daughter. It makes for a living hell some days, doesn't it?

I am delighted that you were able to find this article and that it encouraged you. How unfortunate that the teacher has such a profound misunderstanding of God and the role of suffering in our lives. What do people do with verses such as 1 Peter 4:19, which talks about those who "suffer according to God's will"? I guess they skip over them.

Recently, I had the privilege of chatting with the pastor of Wedgwood Baptist Church in Fort Worth; you may remember that

this was the church where a gunman murdered a number of students and staff at a “See You At The Pole” rally a few years ago. Dr. Al Meredith, who obviously knows something about suffering, suggested to me a wonderful book called *Don’t Waste Your Sorrows* by Paul Billheimer, which I am in the process of reading right now. It’s excellent, and I recommend it to you in view of the suffering you are experiencing.

I would also like to suggest that you pass on the blessing to your daughter that you received in owning the truth that her CPD is not your fault; she is not too young for you to bless her with the truth that it is not HER fault, either. Often when children experience suffering of various types, they personalize it and believe that they did something to cause it. The fact that it’s illogical doesn’t stop them! The message of “It’s not your fault” is a type of revelation; children usually cannot know or figure out this truth without someone else telling them. You just might relieve her of a terrible burden she could be carrying needlessly by sharing this wonderful freeing news with her.

I pray you and your family will know God’s comfort and peace as you live out this challenge to His glory and your benefit.

Blessings,

Sue Bohlin  
Probe Ministries

Posted 2004

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**“Can                      a                      Book                      Like**



# Conversations With God be Wholly True?"

Recently, I was at a bookstore and came upon *Conversations with God: An Uncommon Dialogue* by Neale Walsch. In perusing certain parts of the book, the question of the book's reliability came into mind. To put it concisely: Is there a possibility that such a book, such a dialogue with God, could be wholly true? In the same way that God spoke to the authors of the various books of the Bible, could it not also be possible that God continues to speak to men so that His Word may be known and understood in these times? I find it hard to believe that God stopped talking to men two thousand years ago, thereby limiting the expression of His Word to a single book we call the Bible. Any clarification on this matter would be greatly appreciated. Thank you.

To answer you concisely, as long as any book on the market contradicts the Bible at any point, it cannot be wholly true. The Bible is without error and can be trusted; it is our benchmark of what is true. If anything varies from what God has told us is true, it cannot be trusted. There have been a number of books purporting to be from God, among them the Qur'an, [A Course in Miracles](#) and Betty Eadie's [Embraced by the Light](#), but since all of them contradict the Bible they cannot be from God. *Conversations with God* belongs in that category. It is a dangerous book.

I do believe (and experience) that God still speaks to us today, but when He does He will NEVER contradict what He's already said in His book. What we need to know is in there. If He didn't include it in the Bible, we don't need to know it.

A letter from a discerning believer is making the rounds on the internet, exposing further some of the dangers of this book:

Two particular books, *Conversations with God* and *Conversations with God for Teens*, sound harmless enough by their titles alone. These books have been on the *New York Times* best sellers list for a number of weeks. These publications makes truth of the statement "Don't judge a book by its cover/title". The author purports to answer various questions from kids using the "voice of God." However, the "answers" that he gives are not biblically-based and go against the very infallible word of God. For instance (and I paraphrase), when a girl asks the question "Why am I a lesbian?" His answer is that she was born that way because of genetics (just as you were born right-handed, with blue eyes, etc.). Then he tells her to go out and "celebrate" her differences. Another girl poses the question, "I am living with my boyfriend. My parents say that I should marry him because I am living in sin. Should I marry him?" "God's" supposedly reply is "Who are you sinning against? Not me, because you have done nothing wrong." Another question asks about God's forgiveness of sin. His reply: "I do not forgive anyone because there is nothing to forgive. There is no such thing as right or wrong and that is what I have been trying to tell everyone do not judge people. People have chosen to judge one another and this is wrong because the rule is 'judge not lest ye be judged.'" And the list goes on. Not only are these books the false doctrine of devils but in some instances even quote (in error) the Word of God. These books are being sold to school children (through The Scholastic Book Club) and we need to be aware of what is being fed to our children.

*Conversations with God* is a very unsafe book in anyone's hands.

Sue Bohlin  
Probe Ministries

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# “Print the Truth About Islam!”

I read your article [A Short Look at Six World Religions](#). Why are you lying to people about Islam? The prophet Muhammad himself is quoted to have said to his followers that even he would not enter paradise without the mercy of Allah, and the prophets were all free of any kind of sin. The word is composed of the Arabic words “Al” meaning “the” and “ilah” meaning “God.” The word “Allah” means “the God,” “the Creator,” the only one worthy of worship. Who can help you except for the one who created the heavens and the earth? Who can hurt you except for the one who created the heavens and the earth? When Jesus, whom we love as one of our prophets known to us and Isa bin Maryam, Jesus the son of Mary was on the earth, drinking God’s water and breathing God’s air, who could have stopped God had He decided to destroy the earth including Jesus? Don’t mix the creation and the Creator. Even the Christians cannot deny the singular power of Allah when they claim that He came in the form of Jesus (May Allah protect us from worshipping any figure of creation) Allah is one in control of everything. That belief may seem logical, but it is not a product of anybody’s mind because the mind cannot create a reality that already exists. The identity of God for the creation is that of the creator. How can Allah be seen as distant when according to Islam, He is closer to you than your own jugular vein? Allah is said to have 70 times the love for His creation that a mother has for her child.

I am a white American and I am pleading to you out of brotherly love for you and the people you reach to get your facts straight and print the truth about Islam. Allah loves the believers who when they do wrong, they turn to Him in

repentance, yet we all know that Allah does not like lying. The Word Islam means "submission." The way of all the prophets was submission to God. Noah (Nuh) preached submission to Allah, Moses (Musa) preached submission to Allah, and Jesus (Isa) preached submission to Allah and all other of the 124,000 or more prophets between Adam and Muhammad came with submission to Allah. To become Muslim, we say "La ilaha il lala Muhammad ur-rasululah mean that "There is none worthy of worship except Allah and Muhammad is his final messenger." Please come to Islam.

I think perhaps as a white American, you are infusing your understanding of Islam with concepts about the biblical God. In effect, you are borrowing aspects of the God of the Bible and applying them to Allah. Noah, Moses and Jesus did not preach submission to Allah; they preached about a RELATIONSHIP with Yahweh, who is not the same as Allah.

I am not lying to anyone about Islam. I think perhaps you are mistaken about both what I said and the nature of the one true God, whose name is "I AM," and Who has also revealed Himself to be the loving Daddy (Abba) who is full of grace and truth. There is no grace in Allah. There is only the legalism of submission without personal intimacy.

You pleaded with me to come to Islam. I plead with you, please come to a PERSON—Jesus. He IS true Christianity.

Sue Bohlin  
Probe Ministries

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# “My Boyfriend is Muslim”

My best friend/boyfriend is Muslim. I have been brought up in a very Christian oriented family and have faith through Jesus Christ. My friend, has been attending church with me and at first was receptive to Christianity as he was overwhelmed with the amount of love in the church. He is very educated and does a lot of reading. He has read several books about Christianity many of them pointing out flaws in the religion. And at the same time is searching to find out if Islam is right. As of now he is content that Islam is right due to its proofs through sciences. Are there any books that go through Koran or talk about who Muhammed really was that will help him to find the Lord? Also, what are good Christian books that I can point him to that would give him EVIDENCE – in Christianity.

First of all, let me encourage you that NOTHING you do or say will be as effective as your prayers on your boyfriend's behalf. That's where the real power is, OK?

Secondly, check out the website “Answering Islam,” [www.answering-islam.org](http://www.answering-islam.org) . . . They really understand the different worldviews.

Third, I can't recommend strongly enough Lee Strobel's excellent books *The Case for Faith* and *The Case for Christ*. Mr. Strobel was a hardened atheist journalist who talked to a number of intelligent, articulate Christians who were able to “give an answer for the hope that is within,” and he came to faith. Wonderful, wonderful books, but be sure to read them first so you can talk intelligently with your boyfriend.

Fourth, I say this as a Titus 2 woman (where God instructs the older women to teach the younger)—DON'T MARRY HIM! Scripture is very strong about believers not marrying unbelievers. I send this with a prayer that you will guard your heart and your sexual purity so that you do not find yourself so soul-

connected to him that you feel you have to marry him to make things right. It's entirely possible that God wants to use you to draw your boyfriend to Himself, but don't cross over any lines that would compromise your obedience to God's best as revealed in His word, OK? (I say this as a mom who just saw my son marry a wonderful Christian girl who was worth waiting for and fighting the temptation to settle for less than God's best.)

So glad you wrote!!

Blessings,

Sue Bohlin  
Probe Ministries

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## **“Scriptures That Prove Trinitarians Wrong”**

I dare you to put this on your website!

As I see it, I could write thousands of words to try and prove a Trinitarian wrong. The reason I say this is because the Trinity belief changes depending on which Trinitarian you talk to. There exist hundreds of Trinity-teaching churches, all of which have different interpretations of what the Trinity is or is not. I have heard that Jesus was a Man-God, despite the scriptural reference that no man has ever seen God. I have heard that they (God the Father and Jesus) are the same, but NOT the same..????

In actuality, there is no clear-cut description of the Trinity Doctrine. It itself is written in such a way that you could

come up with literally hundreds of combinations to make it work. And believe me, that has been done. Catholics, Mormons, Protestants, Lutherans and countless other religions have their own interpretations of the Trinity teaching. How can that teaching be right if all these differing opinions exist on its meaning? Is not at least ONE of them absolutely right?

Here are a few points of view that should inspire any honest-hearted, truth-seeking person to carefully examine in an effort to shed light upon this teaching. Please keep in mind that the earliest DOCUMENTED proof of the Trinity teaching dates back to the Nicene Creed, a government-sanctioned document the purpose of which was to unify a splitting house of worship...notedly, the Roman Catholic Church. All other reports are speculation as to the meaning of certain author's beliefs. All pre-Nicene opinions that I am aware of (not saying that I am familiar with them all) are from "fathers" of the Roman Catholic Church. It was the Nicene Creed that for the first time put it into an official, church stand.

All scripture quoted is from the New International Version of the Holy Scriptures. I invite you to read your own version of the Bible to compare to these quotes.

## JESUS IS AN EQUAL PART OF THE GODHEAD

2 Peter 1:17 : "For he received honor and glory from the Father when the voice came to him from the Majestic Glory saying, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased." This scripture not only tells where Jesus' glory came from, but also when...and it is critical. Jesus did not possess any glory on his own, it was given by the Father to him when he was 30 years old in front of witnesses at Jesus' baptism. If he was deity in his own right, he would not have needed the Father to give glory to him, nor would he have had to wait until his baptism to receive it. Here, it is stressed in the scriptures that Jesus is God's SON, not God himself. This points to Jesus' subordinate place along the side of his

Father. It is therefore reasonable to deduce that they are NOT equal.

John 14:28: "You heard me say 'I am going away and I am coming back to you.' If you loved me, you would be glad that I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I." Jesus here points out in no uncertain terms that he and the Father are not equal. In contrast to other scriptures that only insinuate a point, this scripture is direct in nature and states very clearly that the Father is greater than Jesus. They are NOT equal!

Philippians 2:9-11 "Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of the Father."

God did the exalting and did so to his OWN glory. This entire passage speaks to God's sole authority to do what He wants, in this case exalting His own Son. Jesus is NOT the exalt-ER, but the exalt-EE. One cannot exalt another unless there is superior position, rank or authority. Jesus is clearly the lesser of the two.

1 Corinthians 15:25-28: (speaking of Jesus) "For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. For he 'has put everything under his feet'. Now when it says that 'everything' has been put under him, it is clear that this does not include God Himself, who put everything under Christ. When he has done this, then the Son himself will be made subject to him that put everything under him, so that God may be all in all." Can a logical person even conceive that these two, God the Father and his Son, Jesus are equal from this scripture? This is one of the most direct passages describing their relationship in terms of rank, or position. Any part of the Godhead described by most Trinitarians is equal to the power of the other. This



directly rejects that teaching. Here, in these verses, it is crystal clear who has the authority and who has been given authority. They CANNOT be equal.

### **JESUS IS ALL-KNOWING, AND THEREFORE IS GOD**

Matthew 24:36, Jesus speaking: "No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father." While Jesus was certainly blessed by God with extraordinary powers, the claim that Jesus is all knowing is completely and utterly denied by Jesus' own words here. Jesus does not know the hour in which the actual end will take place. If he were God, he most certainly would know for it is his (God's) master plan. There exists no scripture, let alone Jesus' own words, that says he is all-knowing. Some apostles asked Jesus that, since he knew all things, would he please explain this or that...but to claim that these scriptures say Jesus knows all would be in direct conflict with Jesus' words here. We know it has to be one way or the other, so which is it? For me personally, I will trust in Jesus' words that he does NOT know the hour of the coming of the end and therefore does not know all things.

[Note:. . .And six pages of verses and commentary from Revelation edited]

Thank you for your response and I will enjoy putting this on our web site. I can tell you are zealous in what you believe and I sense a strong disdain towards those who differ from you. I am sorry that with my heavy schedule I cannot address all your points but let me address just a few. Your response is typical of JW's who have misunderstood the doctrine of the Trinity and have used Bible verses out of context.

Let's take a look at a few.

The doctrine of the Trinity teaches that there is one God who has revealed Himself in three distinct persons all are equal in nature. They are distinct in person. The Father is not the

Son. The Son is not the Holy Spirit. One God revealed in three distinct persons. JW's mislead people when they say the trinity teaches Jesus and the Father are one in the same person. They are distinct in person, but equal in nature.

In regard to the passage from John 6:46 states, "No man has seen God..." you interpret this to mean no man has ever seen God at all. Let's take a look at some passages and see if this is the case. Isaiah 6 states, "In the year King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord seated on the throne, high and exalted..." Isaiah appears to have seen the Lord. In Exodus 3, Moses speaks with God at the burning bush. Deuteronomy 34:10 states, "Since then, no prophet has risen in Israel like Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face." There are other passages where men have seen and spoken with God. So what John 6:46 is saying is, no one has seen God in His full glory. That no one could withstand. However, God has revealed Himself in veiled form, which we could see and withstand. Jesus is God the Son veiled in flesh. Philippians 2 if you read the entire passage states, that Jesus emptied himself or made himself nothing. He temporarily clothed himself in flesh and revealed himself to us. Later in Revelation 1, we see Jesus in glory.

The allegation that the Trinity was not taught until the Nicene council is incorrect. The Watchtower printed this in their magazine 'Should You Believe in the Trinity.' There they quote pre-Nicene fathers as rejecting the Trinity. One interesting note, the Watchtower does not footnote any of its references. They use endless dots .... why are there no footnotes or references pointing to the exact location of these quotes. Typical Watchtower deception. In my article on the Probe web site called "Why You should Believe in the Trinity," I quote several pre Nicene church fathers and give the exact reference. Here are a few the Watchtower misquoted.

Justin Martyr (165 A.D.): "...the Father of the universe has a Son; who being the logos and First-begotten is also God" (First Apology 63:15).

Irenaeus (200 A.D.) : (referencing Jesus) "...in order that to Christ Jesus, our Lord, and God, and Savior, and King, according to the will of the invisible Father, . . ." (Against Heresies I, x, 1).

Clement of Alexandria (215 A.D.): "Both as God and as man, the Lord renders us every kind of help and service. As God He forgives sin, as man He educates us to avoid sin completely" (Christ the Educator, chapter 3.1). In addition, "Our educator, O children, resembles His Father, God, whose son He is. He is without sin, without blame, without passion of soul, God immaculate in form of man accomplishing His Father's will" (Christ the Educator Chapter 2:4).

Tertullian (230 A.D.): "...the only God has also a Son, his Word who has proceeded from himself, by whom all things were made and without whom nothing has been made: that this was sent by the Father into the virgin and was born of her both man and God. Son of Man, Son of God, ..." (Against Praxeas, 2).

Hippolytus (235 A.D.): "And the blessed John in the testimony of his gospel, gives us an account of this economy and acknowledges this word as God, when he says, 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God.' If then the Word was with God and was also God, what follows? Would one say that he speaks of two Gods? I shall not indeed speak of two Gods, but of one; of two persons however, and of a third economy, the grace of the Holy Ghost" (Against the Heresy of One Noetus. 14).

Origen (250 A.D.): (with regard to John 1:1) "...the arrangement of the sentences might be thought to indicate an order; we have first, 'in the beginning was the Word,' then 'And the Word was with God,' and thirdly, 'and the Word was God,' so that it might be seen that the Word being with God makes Him God" (Commentary on John, Book 2, Chapter 1).

Not only in these instances, but also throughout their

writings the ante-Nicene fathers strongly defend the deity of Christ.

I would challenge you to ask the leaders at your kingdom hall, Why doesn't the watchtower magazine, on Page 7 footnote their references? Also, where exactly are these quotes located in the writings of the church fathers? If you know a little about church history, you will know that the early church suffered persecution under the Roman Empire. It was not until Emperor Constantine converted that they could have a church council. At Nicea then, they simply articulated what they already believed and taught.

2 Peter 1:17, states, "For he received honor and glory from God the Father...." Take a look 17:5 where Jesus prays, "And now Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began." Now take a look at Isaiah 42:8. God says, "I am the Lord, that is my name. I will not give my glory to another..." God will not give his glory to another. Yet Jesus shared in God's glory before the world began. He shares God's glory because He is in nature God.

Let's look at John 14:28 where Jesus says the Father is greater than I. Greater refers to position not to nature. For example, you would agree with the statement, "George Bush is greater than you or I." As the chief executive officer of our country, that is indeed true. But is George Bush a superior being to you or I? No. Greater refers to position, not nature. In the Trinity, there is an economy, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. They are equal in nature, greater refers to position. In Hebrews 1:4 it states, "So he (Jesus) became as much superior to the angels as the name he has inherited is superior to theirs." Here Jesus is not an angel because He is superior in nature to them. Or as the New World Translation states, "So he has become better than the angels," Jesus is better, meaning superior in nature to the angels. If Jesus was an inferior being to the Father, He would have said, "the Father is better or superior than I."

Let's take a look at the verse you quoted in Philippians 2. You begin at verse nine, but you need to look at the verse in its context. Begin at verse 1. Paul is exhorting the Philippians to exemplify humility as Christ did. How did Christ demonstrate humility? Verse 6 states, "Who (Christ) being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God a thing to be grasped." The Greek word there is "morphe" which means essential attributes. In other words, Jesus essential attributes was the nature of God. He humbled himself unto death and was exalted by God at the resurrection and sits at the Father's right hand. Another interesting note, verse 11 states, "and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord..." In Isaiah 45:18 God states, "I am the Lord and there is no other." Yet here when every tongue confesses Jesus is Lord, it brings glory to the Father. We can't have two Lords and if God states, He is the only Lord and Jesus has that title as well, what must we conclude?

In regard to the Revelation passages, it would be helpful to outline the book of Revelation. State the theme and how it plays out through the book. The Watchtower has interpreted it incorrectly in many areas. In Chapter 1:7 Jesus is coming to the earth. In verse 8 it states, "I am the alpha and the Omega, says Jehovah God, the One who is and who was and who is coming, the Almighty." God the Father is never referred to as coming soon. the one who is coming is Jesus. Verse 8 refers to the one coming soon in verse 7 who is Jesus. Jesus is called God in verse 8. The whole theme of chapter one is the Son of God. Even if you want to say verse 8 refers to Jehovah and not Jesus, look at 22:12-16. Who is the alpha and Omega there? Jesus. Jehovah is the Alpha and Omega in chapter one. You cannot have two Alphas and Two Omegas. You can only have one. It is Jehovah in chapter 1, Jesus in chapter 22. So we conclude Jesus is God the Son. In 1:17-18 it states, "I am the First and the Last. I am the living one; I was dead and behold I am alive forever and ever." The First and the Last here is Jesus who died and rose again.

In Isaiah 44:6, Jehovah says, "I am the First and the Last; apart from me there is no God." You cannot have two firsts and two lasts. You can only have one. Once again, Jesus is God the Son for He shares the same title. Just a study of Chapter one of Revelation reveals the deity of Christ. I would study Revelation without the Watchtower articles to see what it says for itself. It is the Watchtower interpretations that led to the numerous false prophecies of Jesus second coming in 1914, 1918, 1925, and 1975. Their record of false prophecies alone should have one question the credibility of this organization.

Sorry I do not have time for a detailed study of the rest of your passages. Perhaps at a later time. Thanks for your reply.

Patrick Zukeran  
Probe Ministries

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## **"What is a Christian Perspective on Reiki?"**

My friend is a Christian who practices [Reiki](#) and thinks that it's the Holy Spirit working through her. She has a heart for healing and I don't want to discourage her from pursuing that or deny that the Spirit is at work in her. But I fear that these counterfeits are keeping her from realizing her true potential in Christ.

I guess I have two questions: how can I lovingly discuss with her what the Bible says about these practices, when she doesn't fully accept it as God's Word; and can you tell me more about Reiki from a Christian perspective?

Thanks for your questions. It's terribly difficult to reason

with someone from the Scriptures if they do not already accept their Divine authority. If she's open to doing some reading in the area, you may want to encourage her to look into what conservative scholarship has said about the inspiration, authority, and inerrancy of Scripture. *A General Introduction to the Bible*, by Norman Geisler and William Nix is a fairly exhaustive treatment of the subject. Many books on Christian apologetics have chapters dealing with the trustworthiness of the Bible. One book you may want to recommend is *I'm Glad You Asked*, by Ken Boa and Larry Moody. It is an excellent, beginner's level text in apologetics and has a chapter entitled, "How Accurate is the Bible?," which might prove helpful. Suffice it to say, until a Christian accepts the Bible as the inspired word of God, it is difficult to use it as the final authority for proper Christian belief and practice. Such a person can always claim that the texts they don't like are simply not inspired by God, etc. Thus, this is a critical issue to deal with.

Having said that, I think you are exactly right about your friend. There are very good grounds for rejecting Reiki if one is willing to listen to the Bible. In a book entitled *Basic Questions on Alternative Medicine*, a corporate project by members of the Center for Bioethics and Human Dignity (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Kregel Publications, 1988), there is a short chapter on Reiki (pp. 61-63). I will draw some information from that chapter. Although Reiki claims to be an "ancient healing practice that Buddha (and Jesus) used," all records of it were lost. It was allegedly rediscovered by Mikao Usui, a Zen Buddhist monk, in the mid-1800s "during a psychic experience." Additionally, it is claimed that details about lost aspects of the practice have "been revealed through channeling." Channeling is the New Age term for mediumship and involves contact with, and usually possession by, "spirit guides." The authors of this chapter state that a second-degree Reiki practitioner "learns about spirit guides and how to contact and use them in healing sessions." They further

state that third degree Reiki masters give “complete control of healing sessions to their spirit guides.” Healing sessions appear to be based on the use of “life-energy” (i.e. *ki*, *chi*, or *prana*), which is sent from the practitioner into the patient’s body.

The greatest concern would seem to be the identity of the “spirit guides.” Since they are typically contacted in ways expressly forbidden in Scripture, and since they advocate unbiblical ideas and practices, it is honestly quite difficult to view them as anything other than the biblical demons. The authors of this chapter conclude by stating: “Reiki is antithetical to biblical Christianity. Channeling is a way of communicating with spirits to obtain information not otherwise accessible. It is denounced in the Bible as sorcery, mediumship, and spiritism (Lev. 19:26, 31; 20:6; Deut. 18:9-14...).”

It seems to me that Reiki has the potential to be spiritually harmful. I would pray for your friend and encourage her to give serious consideration to the biblical warnings mentioned above.

I wish you all the best with your friend.

Shalom,

Michael Gleghorn  
Probe Ministries

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*A former Reiki master who has become a Christian wrote this testimony to Sue Bohlin:*

“Reiki is something that is very mis-stated, and misunderstood, by those outside of the Reiki circle. Having been in it, I can tell you everything you need to know. I will tell you right up front that it was a hard one to shake, that



it was VERY real and beneficial, but that it is decidedly non-Christian.

"I highly recommend anyone looking into it to just stop. Prayer is very powerful, and is our direct link to God through Christ. If we petition directly for healing, it may come. If we have faith that it WILL come, our chances are far better. As with anything we are to test, does Reiki point either the practitioner or the client to Christ? No. Big no. It uses a Universal energy that is non-personal and can be manipulated. You can pray to God, to the Earth Mother, to Mother/Father God, etc. But it in fact leads you AWAY from Christ.

"It is all about what you FEEL in your hands, what you FEEL in your spirit, what the client FEELS in their body/emotions/spirit. In that regard it is very very real. My hands get hot, I hit a place of extreme peace and quiet, I heal people who feel a tingle or hot spot or whatever. Their headache, menstrual cramps, emotional distress, bruises, whatever, goes away. But is God glorified? No way. Is self glorified? Yes.

"If it is so good and right, why do practitioners go on to other things once they hit Master level? The teacher who taught me was going on to accupuncture and other new Reiki teachings. Always something else, something new, something you NEED to be a true master. Sound familiar? It is like everything else in this world, but Christ. There is no lasting peace, no connection with the universe, there is a big void in your soul that is not going away. WE ALL NEED CHRIST! I told my wife when she questioned my stopping in my search for peace once I found Christ (she had followed my years of searching through New Age theologies, etc) that Jesus Christ filled the hole. All the puzzle pieces fell into place and everything suddenly made sense. For a long time after that I tried to make Reiki fit into Christianity but it didn't. I prayed a lot about it. God firmly and solidly showed me in Scripture how it couldn't work. The two major things against it, regardless of

how well it works, are 1) it does not point anyone to Christ and in fact points people away from a single true God, and 2) it is no different than all the pagan rituals in the Old Testament that would have people pray to the rain god or fertility god, etc. They must have worked or people wouldn't have kept praying to them, and God's people wouldn't have been attracted to them. But either way it isn't what GOD has asked us to do. Everything we need is in Him. We can pray for any healing we need."

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## **"Why Do You Believe the Bible is Inspired and the Qur'an is Not?"**

I have read several of your articles on Islam, and have noted you state several times your belief that the Qur'an is not an inspired text, and the Bible is. Whilst I agree with you on this, I would be interested in the reasons and evidence you have for this belief.

Although I don't know how others might respond to your question, my own view is this. First, the Bible claims to be an inspired text: "All Scripture is inspired by God" (2 Tim. 3:16). Of course, this does NOT prove that it really is inspired. However, if the Bible nowhere claimed to be inspired, then we would hardly have good reason to believe that it was. Thus, what the text claims for itself is important.

Second, I think there is strong evidence to embrace biblical inspiration for a number of reasons. For sake of time, let me

mention only one: the accurate fulfillment (in the life, ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus) of very specific Messianic prophecies (made centuries before Jesus was even born). The specificity of these prophecies, and their accurate fulfillment in the life of Jesus, constitutes strong evidence for divine inspiration. After all, who else knows the future with that kind of accuracy other than an omniscient God?

Finally, if the Bible is inspired by God, then it would seem logically impossible for the Qur'an to also be divinely inspired. Why? Because both texts teach very different doctrines, doctrines that are not logically consistent with one another. For example, the Qur'an denies the doctrine of the Trinity and the doctrine of the Incarnation, etc. But the Bible teaches both doctrines. Clearly, both texts cannot be correct, for this would violate the law of non-contradiction. Thus, if the Bible is inspired by God, then it logically follows that the Qur'an is not (because it contradicts clear biblical teaching on a number of important doctrines).

Hope this helps.

Shalom,

Michael Gleghorn  
Probe Ministries