

# “Help Me Understand Biblical Inerrancy?”

A friend of mine with teenage daughters asked me recently if I understood the concept of Biblical inerrancy well enough to explain/justify it for her children. Seems a “pastor” in their local church was attempting to explain the “errors” in the Bible to a group and they were a bit concerned that this leader would indicate the Bible had errors. I was unable to find much on the Probe Web site regarding the inerrancy of the Bible and wondered if you had a document or publication that would cover the topic rather completely yet simply enough for me to understand and to present to these kids. Also, how does the concept of the inspiration of Bible and the inerrancy of the Bible interplay? It seems to me that if we truly believe the Bible was inspired by God and given to men by the Holy Spirit, it would follow that the Bible in its original autographs would be inerrant.

An excellent resource for a variety of biblical and theological questions is [www.bible.org](http://www.bible.org). After reading your letter, I visited their website, typed “inerrancy” in the search engine, and the following resources came up (see [bible.org/search/apachesolr\\_search/inerrancy](http://bible.org/search/apachesolr_search/inerrancy)).

The above link will give you a lot of help with the question of biblical inspiration and inerrancy. Another good resource is *When Critics Ask: A Popular Handbook on Bible Difficulties* by Norman Geisler and Thomas Howe (Baker Books, 1992).

You are absolutely correct in observing that the [inspiration of Scripture](#) (2 Tim. 3:16; etc.) logically entails biblical inerrancy in the original writings. Although inerrancy cannot be extended to the copies, the science and art of textual criticism has been quite successful in restoring the original text from the thousands of manuscripts available for scholarly

study.

Shalom,

Michael Gleghorn

Probe Ministries

**See Also *Probe Answers Our Email*:**

- ["Why Do the Gospel Accounts Contradict Each Other?"](#)
- ["Why Do You Believe the Bible is Inspired and the Qu'ran is Not?"](#)

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# **"If the Trinity Doctrine is Correct, Then Why Isn't It in the Bible?"**

Okay, smart guy. . .if the Trinity doctrine is correct, then why do Catholic encyclopedias themselves admit that it was never taught in the bible? Why does Jesus say that God is greater than he is? Why did Jesus pray to God if God is Jesus? If Jesus died on the stake, how could he bring himself back to life in three days?

Thank you for your recent inquiry. Let me see if I can shed some light on the things you have questions about. You ask:

*If the Trinity doctrine is correct, then why do Catholic*

*encyclopedias themselves admit that it was never taught in the Bible?*

You have misinterpreted what they said. What is *not in the Bible* is the use of the term "trinity." It, like many other terms, is a theological designation descriptive of what is *taught* in the Bible. And this concept of a tri-partite Being comes from many places in Scripture, from both Old and New Testaments.

Perhaps the most important is found in Matthew 28:18-20. From the very beginning, the early church baptized in the name of the "Father, the Son, and Holy Ghost" because it was one of the last things Jesus told his disciples to do: "And Jesus said, 'All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.'"

This practice of baptizing converts in the three names of the Godhead was faithfully followed by the Apostles as they spread out to proclaim the Gospel in the first century, and the practice was still in effect at the time of the first major church council at Nicea (A.D. 325). In fact, this was the major topic under consideration. It was here that what we know as the "Doctrine of the Trinity" was hammered out by these church leaders who searched the scriptures and shaped what they believed to be the truth about the Godhead.. I point this out simply to emphasize that the practice of the Church reflected a universal acceptance of the concept of the Trinity for almost 300 years before the Church got around (because of persecution under the various Roman Emperors) to clarifying and resolving this issue at Nicea.

I think it is also important, in light of your question, for you to know something about this historic Council. Constantine, the first Christian Emperor, called this council,

paid the expenses to bring 318 bishops (out of 1,800) from all over the Roman Empire to the little town of Nicea (which is near Constantinople), and served as both host and moderator during the deliberations, which lasted about six weeks.

Most of the bishops present were from the Eastern Mediterranean (Alexandria, Jerusalem, Antioch, Damascus, Ephesus) and they spoke Greek. In fact, only seven bishops represented the Western church, those who spoke Latin. Each major city throughout the Roman Empire had a bishop, and the bishops from the prominent cities I just named, by sheer representation, dominated the Council. So if anyone was responsible for coming up with the Trinity it was the Eastern church, not the "Catholic" church.

The elderly Bishop of Rome (who at that time was not considered a pope, but one bishop among equals), chose not to come himself due to illness. He did, however, send two of his associates.

All branches of orthodox Christianity—Eastern Orthodox, Protestant, and Roman Catholic, have universally accepted the conclusions of the Council of Nicea concerning the Trinity, namely, that the scriptures clearly teach God is One in Essence, but three in personality: unified, but also distinct. Incidentally, the term "catholic," for the first three or four centuries, was used to describe the *entire* church, the *universal* body of Christians sprinkled throughout the Greco-Roman world. At that time "Catholic" had nothing to do with the city of Rome. (\_\_\_\_\_, if you want more specific examples from scripture which teach a trinitarian God, let me know).

*Why does Jesus say that God is greater than he is? Why did Jesus pray to God if God is Jesus?*

Consider John 1:1-4: "In the Beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him;

and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. In Him was life, and the life was the light of Men.”

This passage also addresses part of your first question as well. Note that there are two terms used in verse one: “the Word,” and “God.” What does it say about the Word?

“The Word **was**” – the Word existed in the beginning (Eternity Past)

“The Word was **with** God” – (Greek, *pros*, “face-to-face with”)

“The Word **was** God.” – (Full Deity. . .or God Himself).

Whoever the Word was, the Word possessed (1) eternal existence like God, (2) had face-to-face fellowship with God, and (3) is designated AS God.

Who was the Word? John 1:14 tells us: “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.” That’s Jesus. The second person of the Trinity came and dwelt among us. He became the God-Man. Jesus was just as much man as if He had never been God, and just as much God as if He had never been man. . .two natures distinct, but linked together in one Person.

As a true human, Jesus had feelings, grew to manhood (cf. Luke 2:52), could become weary, thirsty, depressed, and die a human death. When Jesus said, “I thirst” on the cross, He was speaking from His humanity. When He said things like, “Your sins are forgiven you,” or “Rise, take up your bed and walk,” He was speaking from His deity.

In Christ’s humanity, while here on earth, the Father WAS greater, because now Christ was relating to God the Father, not only out of the equality He possessed with His Father in eternal existence, eternal fellowship, and full deity, but now also relating to Him as a man. This also answers your question about why Jesus prayed to the Father. The answer is simple: Jesus was praying from His humanity. He was a man with normal

human emotions. He felt the need to pray as all men do.

\_\_\_\_\_, your questions have focused entirely on the divine nature of Christ, but His humanity is equally important for us. Consider this passage from Philippians 2:6-11: "Who, although He existed in the form of God, He did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped (competed for), but He emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond servant, made in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. Therefore, God has highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the Name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those who are in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father..."

The total uniqueness of Christ as the God-Man is absolutely necessary for human salvation. He is the Mediator Who, through His death, provides for us a bridge, or access, to God if we will accept it. And His humanity is necessary to accomplish this, because *Deity doesn't die*: "Therefore, when He comes into the world, He says, 'Sacrifice and offering (animals) Thou hast not desired, But a body (His humanity) Thou hast prepared for me. . .Behold, I have come to do thy will, O God.'" (Hebrews 10:5-7)

Further, the scripture makes it clear that the entire plan of redemption to bring about the salvation of human beings involved the entire Trinity. In fact, all the great acts of God throughout the scriptures involved the active participation of the Godhead:

- Creation of the Universe (Ps. 102:25; Col. 1:16; Job 26:31)
- Creation of Man (Gen. 1:1-3, 2:7; Colossian 1:16; Job 33:4)
- The Incarnation (Luke 1:30-37)

- Baptism of Christ (Mark 1:9-11)
- Christ's Death on the Cross (Psalm 22; Romans 8:32; John 3:16, 10:18; Galatians 2:20; Hebrews 9:14)
- Christ's Resurrection (Acts 2:24; John 10:18; I Peter 3:10)
- Inspiration of Scripture (II Timothy 3:16; 1:10,11; II Peter 1:21)

To each of the above events, the scriptures ascribe an active participation by each member of the Trinity.

*If Jesus died on the stake, how could he bring himself back to life in three days?*

If Jesus is God as well as man, He would have no trouble rising from the dead. The verses cited above (See Resurrection) indicate that Jesus, God the Father, and the Holy Spirit were all actively involved in the process of bringing Him back to life.

I might also add that historically, it is undisputed that during the early centuries there was rapid growth and a dramatic impact by Christianity across the Roman Empire. It is very difficult to explain this, if you just leave a dead Jew hanging on a cross. Nothing short of His actual resurrection can explain the boldness and unfailing commitment of the first disciples to proclaim it so, and, who were, with few exceptions, called upon to seal their affirmation to the truth of this event with their own, violent martyrdoms.

\_\_\_\_\_, I have taken some time to try to answer your questions. They are all good and important questions. And I hope you can see that there are good answers to these questions. But what is most important is if you really want them and believe them. Your note sounded angry, or hurt. Perhaps you have been "burnt" in the past by some who claim to be Christians but who have deeply disappointed you. I hope not to do that.

And I hope this information is helpful to you, \_\_\_\_\_. I am a busy man, but if you sincerely want answers to your questions, I definitely have time for that. The ball is in your court.

Jimmy Williams, Founder  
Probe Ministries

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## **“Why Are Bikinis and Short Skirts Immoral?”**

**Sue, do you ever wear a bikini? Or have you ever worn one? And couldn't a lot of the old biblical rules for dress be mostly for those people back in biblical times? And please tell me this: Is there a certain length when a woman's dress or skirt becomes immoral? For example, are all skirts and dresses above the knee immoral? Just curious.**

*Sue, do you ever wear a bikini? Or have you ever worn one?*

I take it you ask such an intensely personal question because of my answer to email [Is It a Sin to Wear a Bikini?](#). No, I don't wear a bikini, and I never have.

*And couldn't a lot of the old biblical rules for dress be mostly for those people back in biblical times?*

What “old biblical rules for dress” would those be?

Actually, what we find in terms of “biblical rules for dress” are principles that transcend time and culture. Basically,



1) Men should dress like men and women should dress like women, and not blur the lines of gender (Deut. 22:5).

2) Women should dress modestly (1 Tim. 2:9-10). (For great insight into the transcending principle behind Paul's prohibition on braided hair, gold, pearls or expensive clothes from this verse, see this recent post by my friend and fellow Tapestry blogger Sandra Glahn: [blogs.bible.org/tapestry/sandra\\_glahn/not\\_with\\_braided\\_hair...or\\_pearls\\_](https://blogs.bible.org/tapestry/sandra_glahn/not_with_braided_hair...or_pearls_))

3) We should do everything in love, which includes choosing dress and behavior that will not cause each other to stumble. Causing a brother to stumble by lusting is not loving.

There is nothing about these principles that is limited to biblical times.

*And please tell me this: Is there a certain length when a woman's dress or skirt becomes immoral? For example, are all skirts and dresses above the knee immoral?*

People wiser than me have said that the answer to this question depends on the culture, because styles and morals changes over time and geography. There are moral absolutes (like not murdering) and there are relative morals, which would include dress. For example, some monks at the University of Dallas related to my colleague Todd Kappelman that several of them were teaching in Papua New Guinea where both the temperature and the humidity were very high. The young women students sat in the classroom dressed only in some kind of skirt. Toplessness would have been shameful in the U.S., but in a stifling tropical location, the natives thought nothing of it.

The men, too, wore only abbreviated loincloths and strings. On one occasion, the monks went to visit a group of men who were "doing laundry"—their loincloths were hanging on the line and

they were lounging around naked. Like our response to being caught in the shower when someone comes to the door, they each quickly grabbed a cord and wrapped it around his waist. Then they were no longer embarrassed, even though their genitals were exposed. That's the way that culture works.

So, since styles and times change, we have to look at the heart issue that reveals one's motive in choosing the way we dress. If a woman chooses garments in hopes of making men look at her admiringly in a sexual way, or if she chooses clothes in hopes of making other women compare themselves to her and be jealous, then I would say that is sinful because it falls short of God's desire for us to honor Him and love each other.

That means there is no absolute line, particularly in relation to the knee, that defines morality.

I would also point you to an excellent answer on the ["Got Questions"](#) website:

*Whether or not to wear a bikini is a question many women struggle with, but for a Christian woman, the issue takes on additional implications. The Bible tells us that God calls women to modesty, which means to not draw attention to themselves: "I also want women to dress modestly, with decency and propriety, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or expensive clothes, but with good deeds, appropriate for women who profess to worship God" (1 Timothy 2:9-10). God also calls us to purity: "Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity" (1 Timothy 4:12). The question is whether or not a bikini is consistent with modesty and purity.*

*Another issue to consider is that God calls all people to control their thought lives, so as women, we should not cause men to lust: "You have heard that it was said, 'Do not commit adultery.' But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman*

*lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart" (Matthew 5:27-29). When we cause men to look upon our bodies lustfully, we are inducing them to commit the sin of lust and this is displeasing to God.*

*A further consideration is that our bodies, like our minds and hearts, belong to God and are to be used for His glory, not our own. Romans 12:1 tells us, "Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God-this is your spiritual act of worship." When we offer our bodies to God as "living sacrifices," we are saying in effect, "My body is yours, Lord. Use it for your glory." It's hard to imagine a bikini-clad body being used for God's glory. [Sue's note: This is not talking about the husband-wife relationship, where there is total freedom to dress to please and arouse one's spouse in private. See the Song of Solomon in the Old Testament.]*

*Of course, wearing a bikini in a private location, like a fenced-in back yard is probably acceptable, providing there is no visual access to the yard by the neighbors. According to the verses above, we have the responsibility not to put the males around us in a position that they might lust or have impure thoughts (see also Matthew 18:7).*

[www.gotquestions.org/Christian-bikini.html](http://www.gotquestions.org/Christian-bikini.html)

Hope you find this helpful.

Sue Bohlin

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# “How Does the Bible Support Your View That God Intends for Males to Grow into Masculinity and Females to Grow into Femininity?”

Your article [“What is a Biblical View of Transgendered People and Hermaphrodites?”](#) makes this statement: “The biblical view is that God’s intent for every male is to grow into masculinity, and for every female to grow into femininity.” What Bible passages support that contention?

I would define masculinity as the characteristics of being male, and femininity as the characteristics of being female, per God’s intention. I would also suggest that as a culture, we have a too-narrow idea of what it means to be male and to be female. I think that masculinity is a [spectrum](#) from the rough-and-tumble, athletic-loving male to the sensitive, artistic, musical, aesthetic-loving male, and everything in between. I think that femininity is a spectrum from the girly-girl to the tomboy/jockette, and everything in between, and it pleased God to make both male and female, masculine and feminine, in His image. That’s a VERY wide range!

But there is a difference between male and female, between masculinity and femininity. When people of one gender long to be the other other, and indulge the fantasy of being or becoming the other, there is a hatred and contempt for the gender that they are—and that means something is wrong. God chose their gender, which means it is good; to hate what God has made means someone’s thinking is skewed and needs to be adjusted, to come into alignment with God’s.

I say this to lay a foundation for the scriptures that answer your question: I believe that “male and female” and “masculine and feminine” mean the same thing. When they don’t, I believe, it’s because we have adopted a too-narrow understanding of masculinity and femininity.

From the beginning, the binary nature of “male and female” has been God’s design and God’s intent:

Genesis 1:27: “God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.”

Genesis 5:2 “He created them male and female, and He blessed them and named them Man in the day when they were created.”

Genesis 6:19 “And of every living thing of all flesh, you shall bring two of every kind into the ark, to keep them alive with you; they shall be male and female.”

Then, in the New Testament, the Lord Jesus reiterated this truth:

Matthew 19:4 “Have you not read that He who created them from the beginning made them male and female. . .”

Mark 10:6 “But from the beginning of creation, God made them male and female.”

Then there’s this:

Deuteronomy 22:5 “A woman shall not wear man’s clothing, nor shall a man put on a woman’s clothing; for whoever does these things is an abomination to the Lord your God.”

The point of this law, like that of many other OT laws, is to underscore the importance of not blurring distinctions, of maintaining boundaries between separate things. One of the reasons for this importance is so that God’s people would think clearly about reality. The differences between male and

female are God-designed and good, because He reveals His glory differently through men and through women. (Note throughout the Psalms the way God reveals Himself to be a God of strength and protection, masculine glories, as well as a God of nurture and caring, feminine glories. Our masculinity and femininity both come from the heart of God.)

Scripture also teaches that God's plan and design is for things and people to grow to the mature forms of what they are (references to animal husbandry; parables of crops growing; God's intention for us to grow to maturity [Ephesians 4:13]). Apples do not grow up to be corn, and lambs do not grow up to be bulls. Boys grow up to be men, girls grow up to be women.

My husband the scientist points out from Psalm 139 that we are "fearfully and wonderfully made," as God knits us together in our mother's womb. Part of that is genetics, which is that God determines if we are male or female. These days, some people are unhappy with their gender as if it were a mistake or a joke, but God has made that determination for His glory and our good.

Thanks for asking.

Sue Bohlin

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## **"If God is Immaterial, What is He Made Of?"**

I got into a debate with an atheist on the existence of God. I used the Cosmological Argument, and then demonstrated how God is timeless, space-less, and immaterial. He countered my

conclusion with this question. "If God does not exist inside of time, space, and is not made of material, then in what way does God exist, and what is He made of, nothing?" I don't know how to answer His objection, so I would appreciate it if you could help me out here. I hope that you will e-mail me your advice and direct me to some resources.

Probably the closest relevant biblical description we get of God comes from Jesus in John 4:24, "God is spirit." But God is a personal (or better, tri-personal spirit) characterized by intelligence, will, etc. In this respect, many Christian philosophers prefer to think of God as an unembodied Mind.

In either case, however, the important thing to realize is that God, as you already know, is not a material or physical being. God is spirit; that is, God is an immaterial, or spiritual being. We could also describe God as a spiritual substance. Obviously, this is a long way from saying that God is "nothing"! A spiritual being is not a physical being, but it is every bit as real as a physical being. Indeed, in the case of God, He is actually more "real" than the physical universe (which only exists because He created it and continually sustains it in being).

For some excellent resources on the cosmological argument, please see William Lane Craig's site here:

[www.reasonablefaith.org/site/PageServer?pagename=scholarly\\_articles\\_existence\\_of\\_God](http://www.reasonablefaith.org/site/PageServer?pagename=scholarly_articles_existence_of_God).

Craig is a top-notch Christian philosopher and is a world-recognized expert on the cosmological argument (as well as other issues).

Shalom in Christ,

Michael Gleghorn

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# “Do Non-Christians Have Spiritual Gifts?”

I love your ministry and I find myself going to your website a lot as I prepare for Middle School Sunday School lessons. I am going to be teaching on spiritual gifts to teenagers. My 14-year-old son asked a very astute question. He says he knows some very “gifted” non-Christians at school and wondered if the spiritual gifts are only for those who have been born again or if our purpose in life is intertwined with our spiritual gifts. For example, a non-Christian singer who has been given an excellent voice but is not using it for God.

Thank you for the blessing of encouragement! I’m so glad our website is valuable to you!!

I think one’s theology determines the answer. I know lots of people say that spiritual gifts are only given to the born-again believer as if God has nothing to do with people before they trust Christ.

I don’t think it works that way though; I think that since God reveals Himself as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, Who created us for the purpose of bringing us into the circle of Their love and delight and pleasure and fellowship, that a case can be made that God is everyone’s loving Father (“one God and Father of all,” Ephesians 4:6)—but unbelievers don’t recognize it. That doesn’t make Him NOT our Father; it doesn’t make Jesus NOT “the Savior of all men, but especially of believers” (1 Timothy 4:10); it doesn’t make the Holy Spirit NOT the giver of good gifts. So I think God lavishes all kinds of gifts on all people, but they are especially expressed more fully in those who are consciously connected to Him. I keep hearing stories from Christians who saw evidence of their spiritual



gifts even before they were Christians; after they came into the Kingdom, they knew what they were.

Now there are also natural talents, which are different from spiritual gifts. Singing, for example, is a talent, not a spiritual gift. For one thing, it's not on the lists in Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12, Ephesians 4 and 1 Peter 4. Secondly, you can lose a singing voice, but Romans 11:29 says that the gifts and calling of God are irrevocable.

Have you seen the spiritual gifts evaluation my husband Ray and I put together?

[www.probe.org/how-do-you-determine-your-spiritual-gift/](http://www.probe.org/how-do-you-determine-your-spiritual-gift/)

Hope you find this helpful.

Sue Bohlin

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## **“I'm 15 and I'm Afraid I'm Gay”**

Dear Mrs. Bohlin,

I really need your help, I am 15 and frightened of being homosexual. About one and a half years ago I was at an all-girls summer camp where a girl told me she had decided to become bisexual. I didn't know why but this upset me a lot. I had two weeks of camp left, and I was terrified that everyone was gay, finally I became scared that I was gay. I hadn't really thought that I was attracted to girls before, but I used to be a tomboy and envied all the “girly-girls”. Ever since I went to camp and that happened my fear has gotten

worse and worse, I haven't told anyone for fear of being told that I was. I heard about the "ex-gays" and read a few articles of yours. I don't know what to do. Please help me I'm very scared, all I want is to live again normally. I've been raised Christian and my parents are divorced. I'm sorry to bother you, but I need your advice. God bless you.

\_\_\_\_\_, I'm so glad you wrote to me!

When God made you a female, He made you more emotional than analytical, more intuitive to other people than most males, and very relational. This means you are open to being influenced by other people, especially when you were only 13. For someone to tell you she had decided to label herself as bisexual at the very beginning of puberty, when you both have a LOT of growing, maturing, and learning about yourselves ahead of you, no wonder you were upset! That's way too much pressure to process information and label oneself at the beginning of adolescence. Which is a time of intense confusion to begin with, totally apart from the whole sexuality issue!

It makes sense you'd be scared that you were gay, for the same reason that when people take health or medical classes that cover different kinds of illnesses, it's typical to think they're experiencing the symptoms of a bunch of them. It's typical to be susceptible to ideas, especially at a time in your life where you "try on" all kinds of identities and values and beliefs to see if they fit.

If you were a tomboy, it's because God loves tomboys and that's why He makes you that way! It's our culture that incorrectly limits femininity to only the "girly-girl" end of the [femininity spectrum](#). Femininity also looks like jeans and t-shirts, tree-climbing, sports- and outdoor-loving girls. It makes sense for you to envy girly-girls because they are a different kind of girl than you are, but they aren't a BETTER kind of girl than you are! It makes sense because of the false message that tomboys are inferior to girly-girls. Nope! If God

won't agree with it, it's not true!

Now for another part of the equation: what we know from talking to literally thousands of gay-identifying folks over the years is that envy drives a lot (if not most) of same-sex attraction. Both guys and girls are drawn to whatever they feel they lack. Instead of saying, "This means I'm gay," it would be far wiser, and true to God's design, to say instead, "Hmmm. I see where I need to work on myself so I become the kind of person I admire, or to develop the kind of attributes I admire."

I was teaching at Probe's [Mind Games conference](#) for high school juniors and seniors when I said that many people who are afraid they're gay, or who think they might be, need to give themselves grace to finish growing up. Being attracted to same-sex peers is part of normal adolescent development, complete with intense crushes, but all we hear in the culture is, "If you like other girls (or boys), it means you're gay." No, it doesn't. It means you haven't finished growing up yet. One of the students came back the following year as an alumnus and come up to me in private to tell me, "When you said this last year, it was the first time I'd ever heard it. I was able to relax and just give myself permission to finish growing up. And you know what? In the past year, I have! I find myself attracted to girls now, instead of being so stuck on my attractions to other guys. Thanks for speaking truth to us."

Let me encourage you to bundle up your fears and your feelings and hand them to Jesus, who loves you more than you can possibly imagine, and He will help you sort through them. In fact, the more you concentrate on your relationship with Him, the better every other part of your life will become. In fact, I respectfully urge you to pray every day, "Jesus, show me how You love me," and then pay attention to the little intimate ways in which He says, "I sure do love you, \_\_\_\_\_!" When you know God loves you, that gives you a confidence in yourself that nothing else can even come close to. And it helps you

sort out the rest of life, and put people in their proper perspective.

Relax and give yourself time to finish growing up without the unnecessary complication of being paralyzed by fear that you're gay. God doesn't make anyone gay; He DOES make people to be relational, and the more we do life in community, with friends who will love and accept just as we are, we can grow into emotionally healthy adults.

So. . . how does this hit your heart? Does it make sense?

Warmly,  
Sue

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## **“Why Doesn't God Answer Prayers to Take Away Gay Feelings?”**

I was reading your [article](#) about Gay Teen Suicides and Bullying, about how some people pray and pray for God to take away their gay feelings and there is a reason that he doesn't that they don't know about. I'd like to know what that reason is. My best friend committed suicide when we were both 18 because he couldn't accept that he was gay. I learned to accept it and now I'm 36 and quite happy. Luckily, I have found a church that accepts me for who I am and I know that God loves me as does Jesus but I am always curious to hear the ideas and opinions of Christians on what the supposed cure for this condition might be.

First of all, \_\_\_\_\_, I am so very sorry to hear of your best friend's suicide. I'm sure that has left a wound on your soul that troubles you to this day.

I want to VERY respectfully suggest that "accepting one's gayness" is not the best solution to the grief and sadness that comes bound up in realizing one has same-sex desires. That would be like seeing the "check engine" light on your car and deciding to learn to live with it. I know the culture's pro-gay message is that there's nothing wrong with homosexuality so just accept it, but that's not God's position. Which leads me to answer your question: why would God not take away someone's gay feelings?

First, because everyone has an area of weakness that makes it easier for us to recognize our need for God and depend on Him more fully, which is His design and intent for us. Some people have physical trials; others struggle with a weakness for alcohol, drugs, or other forms of self-medication. Some struggle with same-sex attractions. Whatever our area of weakness, this is the very avenue by which God can reveal Himself to be strong, to be *enough* for us. And it is the best way for God to develop us into the people He made us to be, permeated with Christ like character and maturity.

So often, people pray and ask God to relieve their symptoms and make their lives easier (and this, of course, goes way beyond asking God to take away gay feelings. It's something we all do). Being broken and fallen people, when we pray for that, what we're really asking is, "I want You to make me comfortable so I won't need You." But Jesus doesn't answer this prayer because there is something so much bigger than our comfort at stake; He wants our hearts. He wants our dependent trust. He wants us to repent of the sin and separation from Himself that results in our brokenness. He wants to heal the real brokenness, not just the *symptom* of the brokenness. True brokenness is our broken relationship with God.

The struggle (against same-sex feelings) itself is not an evil. The struggle can be a holy instrument in God's hand if we let it. Please read through to the end of my answer for more on that.

Secondly, it's helpful to understand the bigger picture of why someone has attractions for someone of the same sex in the first place. No one is born gay; we are such complex creatures, being made in the image of God, that feelings, attitudes and beliefs are shaped over time by our life experiences, and filtered through our temperaments. This is complicated by the fact that we live in a fallen world that has been poisoned by sin, which is separation and independence from God. Fallen people love each other in fallen ways, or not at all.

The three-Personed God (One God in Father, Son and Holy Spirit), who have enjoyed love and fellowship with each other for all eternity, created us in Their image (Gen. 1:26). This means we are created for relationship: to connect and bond with others in ways that would make us feel loved and secure. Living in a fallen world means that sometimes, we don't connect and bond with the people God intends to love and accept us, and there are serious repercussions from that.

After listening to people's stories in literally thousands of intake interviews, my friend Ricky Chelette of [Living Hope Ministries](#) has identified several common denominators that provide perspective to same-sex desires:

- Little boys are born at some point on a gender spectrum that ranges from the rough-and-tumble athletic boy to the emotionally sensitive, artistic and/or musical, aesthetically gifted boy. Little girls are born at some point on a feminine gender spectrum that ranges from the girly-girl to the tomboy jockette. Our spot on the gender spectrum is God's choice for His glory and our benefit. Most male same-sex strugglers are on the sensitive end of the spectrum.

- God's intention is for babies to bond first with Mom, then with Dad, then with same-sex peers, then with opposite-sex peers. Learning to exercise our "attachment muscles" is an essential part of becoming emotionally healthy. Most Moms don't have any trouble bonding with their babies. (But when something disrupts the process, it seriously messes people up.)

- When emotionally sensitive little boys are born into a family with a rough-and-tumble, emotionally insensitive Dad, the little boy can find himself more comfortable identifying with Mom and her emotionally sensitive femininity than with his Dad. It's as if Dad speaks Spanish and the little sensitive boy speaks Chinese. They may *want* to communicate with each other, but they don't speak the other's language. Unless the "Spanish-speaking" Dad purposes to learn Chinese to relate to his son on his level, there can be a disconnect between the two.

- There's a point in a toddler boy's development where he should realize, "I'm a boy. I'm more like Dad than like Mom." When Dad involves his son in his world and communicates love and acceptance to his son, he comes to believe that he belongs in the world of males with his Dad.

- The wise author Toni Morrison says that a child knows he's loved when he walks in a room and his parent's eyes light up. All children are created with the need to receive "the three A's": attention, affection and affirmation. When a Dad pays loving attention to his son, when his eyes light up when his son enters the room, when Dad affirms his son for who he is and not just what he can do, a boy will probably feel secure in his Dad's love and acceptance. But if there is a disconnect between a Dad and his son, if the Dad thinks it's too much trouble to try and connect with a son in ways that the son can receive, there will be a father-shaped hole in the little boy's heart. A rough-and-tumble boy can try and fill that hole with all kinds of activities and risky behaviors to earn his

Dad's attention, affection and affirmation. An emotionally sensitive boy can easily detach himself from Dad and connect himself more strongly with Mom, or detach from everyone. Both kinds of boys are at risk for trying to get a legitimate need met in unwise, illegitimate ways.

- Most little girls don't have trouble connecting with Mom, but if Mom is not warm and nurturing (or if something happens to disrupt the relationship), they can live with a mother-shaped hole in their heart. A Dad's role is to support and cherish his daughter's femininity, regardless of what form it takes. If he remains distant and unsupportive, or if he treats her like a son, she can have serious questions about her feminine identity: "If Dad doesn't think I'm okay, then I'm not." Or, if there *is* no Dad, she can be wracked with doubts about herself; a Dad's attention, affection and affirmation is huge in a little girl's life as well. Girls can have a father-shaped hole in their heart as well.

- From four to ten years old, the next stage of development is for boys to learn to attach to other boys and girls to attach to other girls. Both sexes usually have intense "BFF" (best friends forever) friendships that are not romantic or erotic, they are just emotionally intense as they learn to exercise their friendship attachment muscles. If a boy doesn't learn to make these connections with buddies, he will continue to walk around with a "buddy hole" in his heart. If a girl doesn't learn to make these connections with other girls, she will walk around with a "girlfriend hole" in her heart. And since nature abhors a vacuum, and because we are all fallen creatures, we will try to stuff all kinds of things into the holes in our hearts.

- At puberty, sex hormones flood the body and hit the mother hole or father hole or friend hole in the heart. That aching desire to connect and attach, the painful longing to be nurtured and to bask in attention, affection and affirmation ("the three A's"), then gets sexualized. If the adolescent boy



or girl fantasizes about the object of their affections accompanied by masturbation and orgasm, brain chemicals get released that act like emotional super-glue. Physical (synaptic) connections are made between the object of affection and sexual pleasure, and then strengthened with repetition. When someone buys into the lie that "if I feel it, it must be true," the end result can be a homosexual identity.

- (This last point is not limited to same-sex strugglers by any means.) When people experience the trauma of abuse or neglect, when they don't get their God-given emotional needs met, they stop growing emotionally. They shut down inside. Their bodies keep growing but inside, they are still the emotional age of the point when they stopped growing. Although this sounds like an insult, it's actually a simple descriptor: many people are emotionally four to ten years old. (Ever see road rage?) This is why wounded people tend to live lives driven by drama, self-centeredness, a lack of self-discipline, and emotional dependency (which is relational idolatry).

Why doesn't God take away homosexual feelings? Because they are not a separate part of the person like a nasal polyp or an infected appendix that can be cut out to restore health. Feelings are a part of us. They are the *product* of beliefs, actions, and the way one sees life and reality. Feelings are like the caboose on a train; they trail along at the end, pulled by the parts that do the work.

God will not "zap" us because to do so would be to eradicate who we are. He will not remove feelings because feelings are part of the *imago Dei*, the image of God. He made us, He loves us just as we are, and He wants to work with us to transform our thinking and our understanding of who He is, who we are, how life works, and what is true. Romans 12:2 says, "Be transformed by the renewing of your mind." When we change the way we think and the way we do life, our feelings will eventually change. (Not necessarily 180 degrees, but some degree of transformation is part of the power of the Gospel!)

Homosexual feelings come from legitimate, unmet longings for connection, for the “three A’s.” God wants us to be connected to other people; He created us to function best in community. He wants us to experience His love, and the love of other people, in the context of relationship. God wants us in HIS community of believers, and the church is a second chance to be in a different family. He wants to meet our needs for connection and relationship through healthy God-honoring friendships. Many people testify that their same-sex longings decreased as their security as a man or as a woman grew because of belonging to the world of men or the world of women in God’s family. As they took their place in the Body of Christ with their new (church) family and friends, the longings and desires shifted to age- and gender-appropriate feelings. They finished growing up.

But even in those who did not experience a shift in orientation, they still report having a home with God’s people, with relationships that help fill the hole in their hearts.

Let me suggest a related but less emotionally charged illustration. In his excellent book *Changes That Heal*, Dr. Henry Cloud writes,

*It is not unloving for God to say no, even to our healing. He knows that sometimes we need to work out our healing instead of his doing it for us. For example, if I am depressed because I don’t bond with others, for God to “heal” my depression would prohibit me from learning how to bond and becoming loved. He may then say no to my prayer for healing from depression for my benefit. We like Job, must trust God’s no and his timing. It does not mean that he doesn’t love us. It may mean that he wants something better for us.*

I believe that God says “no” to zapping away homosexual feelings because He has something better. He is passionate

about growing us up to maturity (Eph. 4:13-15). There is no shortcut to maturity; it means struggling through to connect, attach and bond with healthy people until we finish growing up.

Some years ago, someone sent this email about the value of struggling:

*A man found a cocoon of a butterfly. One day a small opening appeared, he sat and watched the butterfly for several hours as it struggled to force its body through that little hole.*

*Then it seemed to stop making any progress. It appeared as if it had gotten as far as it could and it could go no farther.*

*Then the man decided to help the butterfly, so he took a pair of scissors and snipped off the remaining bit of the cocoon. The butterfly then emerged easily, but it had a swollen body and small, shriveled wings.*

*The man continued to watch the butterfly because he expected that, at any moment the wings would enlarge and expand to be able to support the body, which would contract in time.*

*Neither happened! In fact, the butterfly spent the rest of his life crawling around with a swollen body and shriveled wings.*

*It was never able to fly.*

*What the man in his kindness and haste did not understand was that the restricting cocoon and the struggle required for the butterfly to get through the tiny opening, were God's way of forcing fluid from the body of the butterfly into its wings so that it would be ready for flight once it achieved its freedom from the cocoon.*

*Sometimes struggles are exactly what we need in our life. If God allowed us to go through our life without obstacles, it would cripple us. We would not be as strong as what we could*

*have been, and we could never fly.*

I hope you find this helpful.

Sue Bohlin

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## **“I Can’t Recommend Probe Because of Your View of Creation”**

Dear brother,

I am a Pastor and also teach Bible at \_\_\_\_\_ School. I have used some of your materials in my Church and ministry. I have also made Probe.org a resource for my Senior Bible Class. I must confess that I was greatly disappointed recently to see [your view related to creation](#). While I admire your view that six literal days of creation make the most sense I do not at all understand how you allow “overwhelming” scientific evidence to move you from that sensible position. Seems to me that one could make the same argument of the miracles or even the resurrection to be contrary to “overwhelming” scientific evidence. It would also seem from a scientific point of view the evidence was at one time overwhelming that the earth was flat. While I do not think it is your intention to place science above the Bible this is certainly what is happening among many of our youth today. I am sure in the long run it makes little difference but I can no longer recommend your ministry to my students or my church. Rather than be a “fence sitter” to use your description I would urge you to stand up

**for the faith once delivered to the saints in the inspired Word rather than the ever changing observations of science.**

Pastor,

I regret your decision to deprive your students of our material because of one cautious position on an issue of secondary importance. However, I understand your position. But your response has raised issues and questions I feel I must respond to.

*While I admire your view that six literal days of creation make the most sense I do not at all understand how you allow "overwhelming" scientific evidence to move you from that sensible position.*

This evidence is something that requires a simple and plain reading of facts that I and the other young earth creationists I have asked, have no answer for.

*Seems to me that one could make the same argument of the miracles or even the resurrection to be contrary to "overwhelming" scientific evidence.*

Not at all. There is no pertinent scientific evidence to contradict miracles in Scripture. But there is present and currently observable evidence to lead anyone to question the young earth view of a thousands of years old earth and universe.

*It would also seem from a scientific point of view the evidence was at one time overwhelming that the earth was flat.*

A spherical earth was recognized from the early Greeks onward. You are victim here of the naturalists' contrived view of the flat earth. The Bible never taught it and even early science

never did.

*While I do not think it is your intention to place science above the Bible this is certainly what is happening among many of our youth today.*

That is certainly not my intent and I fully recognize the strong tendency that you mention. My contention is that it is not absolutely clear that Scripture teaches a young earth.

*I am sure in the long run it makes little difference but I can no longer recommend your ministry to my students or my church.*

I truly do not understand this position. But I have run across it frequently among my young earth friends. I find it sad and counterproductive.

*Rather than be a "fence sitter" to use your description I would urge you to stand up for the faith once delivered to the saints in the inspired Word rather than the ever changing observations of science.*

Where in Scripture does it say the earth and universe are only thousands of years old? There are many uncertainties here both scripturally and scientifically, I for one, do not consider myself so informed to conclude which position is correct. There is a resolution, I just don't know what that is. At least I am not refusing to consider all the evidence at hand. The young earth model now admits that all the supposed radioactive decay necessary to indicate billions of years actually occurred. But since the earth CANNOT be that old the decay must have been accelerated a million times or more. This means incredible heat and radiation that would have annihilated all life on earth, even the life on the ark. But that couldn't have happened so they appeal to miracle and heat release nowhere indicated in Scripture. That is special

pleading which I find disappointing.

Respectfully,

Ray Bohlin, Ph.D.

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## **“Is Laminin All That Louie Giglio Says It Is?”**

There are some crazy-popular YouTube [videos](#) featuring Louie Giglio about a cross-shaped molecule called Laminin that holds us together. What’s your take on it?

As a biologist myself I was intrigued when I heard about it and watched one of his YouTube videos. He really had to pump the crowd to get the reaction he wanted when he put it on screen. He almost always uses the crafted diagram, not an actual photograph, because the diagram shows the cross far better. Seemed a little forced to me.

Some observations:

1. The cross is not Jesus, so we are not held together by a symbol of Jesus. The cross is just the symbol of crucifixion, maybe.
2. Any adhesion molecule is going to need a way to interlock with another and this shape works well.
3. As mentioned above, when you see an electron micrograph (tiny tiny photo) the cross shape is not so clear. Textbooks will naturally lay it out differently.
4. Sorry, no goose bumps for me.

Respectfully,

Ray Bohlin, Ph.D.

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