“Where Is the Spiritual Heart of Man?”

Some newly converted family members to the Church of God and I are in disagreement about the location of the spiritual heart of man. I believe it’s hidden in the physical heart of man, but they believe the heart is in the mind. I cannot find many scriptures to concretely back up my theory since the heart and mind are used interchangeably in scriptures.

They presented some pretty strong arguments because the heart and mind are used interchangeably.

In the Bible, the heart is shown to have three capacities: to think (or believe), to choose, and to feel. The heart is really the “innermost part” of us to which David refers in Ps. 51. But it doesn’t tell us about a link between the spiritual heart and any physical organ. Consider this; what happens to someone with a diseased heart who gets a heart transplant? Does the very essence of the person change because he’s lost his old heart and received a new one? No.

Then consider what happens to the person plagued with Alzheimer’s disease or stroke who has suffered brain damage. She has lost her previous capacity to think, choose and feel, but what happens at death? Wouldn’t she enjoy full use of those capacities again, unhindered by an uncooperative brain? But even *before* death, does God no longer indwell the heart of a believer with brain damage? No, because He promised He would never leave us or forsake us.

I think, to be honest, that the question of the location of the spiritual heart of man is a moot one. It’s like asking, “What color is love?” Instead of trying to pin down a physical location of a spiritual thing, perhaps our time would be better stewarded developing our hearts, as you so obviously

have!

The Lord bless you and keep you.

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

“Did Jesus Preach to the Cherokee Indians?”

Dear Sue,

I heard in a newspaper article a while ago that some time in his life Jesus travelled on a Phonecian sailing vessel to North America and ministered to the Cherokee Indians there. The article said that there was evidence of this because the Cherokee believe in a single, all-powerful God, which is something unusual in Native American religions; that the Cherokee believe many of the same things from the Gospels; and that they had drawings of a man with a beard (who looked like the stereotypical image of Jesus) in their art and that this was strange because no men in the tribe grew beards.

I really don’t know if all this is true or not, it seems to be but I know that the newspaper I read this from is not a reliable source and is known for making phony stories to get sales, but I can’t help but wonder if this one is true. Have you ever heard anything about this?

You know what you said about the newspaper being known for making up phony stories to get sales? There’s your answer. <smile> I’m sure the article gave no documentation for their “story” (written from the perspective of the “Well, it COULD have happened!!” school of “journalism”). That’s because

there’s nothing to it. . . they just stole some ideas from Mormon claims that Jesus came to North America. There is no New World archeology that supports such a claim.

Furthermore, Greek culture had absorbed the Phoenician civilization before Jesus was even born. Alexander the Greek took the Phoenician city of Tyre around 332 B.C. and it was all downhill from there, so the Lord Jesus couldn’t have taken a Phoenician sailing vessel anywhere.

It’s not surprising that native North American spirituality included the concept of one God—ever hear of the term “the Great Spirit”? Don Richardson’s book *The Peace Child* shows that cultures and peoples all over the world are aware of biblical truth that has been handed down since the time of Noah and the tower of Babel when civilizations really began migrating all over the world.

If I were you, I’d stay away from the tabloids.

Hope this helps.

Sue Bohlin

Probe Ministries

“Why Didn’t God Just Not Create the People Who Wouldn’t Believe in Him?”

I have a question about God’s omniscience versus the existence of hell. I know the Bible says (and I believe it) that God is good and loving, as well as holy and just. It also says that

He is omniscient, knowing the end from the beginning, and knowing from eternity-past the choice that every human being that ever lived/will live will make – either to accept His offer of eternal life, or to reject it.

If both of these statements are true and biblical, my question is this: If God knew (even before creation) that millions of people would make the choice to reject Him (and thus end up in hell by their own choice), why did He simply not create them in the first place? I know this might sound simplistic, but why would He create all of those people who would ultimately reject Him and end up in hell, if He KNEW that would be their final and eternal destination? (A non-Christian friend of mine calls it "a cruel joke.")

This is a tough question. I was tempted to write back and say, "We just don't know," and ultimately that's probably true. "Why" questions are about motives, and unless someone tells us, it's awfully hard to read another person's mind. . . especially God's! But as I thought more about it, I realized that I COULD pass on the observation that our choice is a precious thing to God because choice is the foundation for true love. If God didn't create the people who wouldn't choose Him, then that would be the equivalent of removing the choice.

At any rate, He did, and He knows what He's doing, and I guess we just need to trust Him.

I think we need to see the Lord as reluctantly letting people choose hell instead of gleefully sending them there. He doesn't want ANYONE to perish (2 Peter 3:9), but some insist on it. That's not cruel on His part, it's a way of supporting our choices.

Nonetheless, the bottom line is that it's a mystery. Non-believers aren't going to trust His heart when they don't trust anything about Him in the first place, are they?

Sue Bohlin

“What is a Biblical View of Transgendered People and Hermaphrodites?”

Hello, I would like to know the biblical insight on transgenderism ***[Definition: appearing as, wishing to be considered as, or having undergone surgery to become a member of the opposite sex]*** **and other sexual defects of the human body. There are lots of issues like hermaphroditism and inter-sexualism** ***[a set of medical conditions where the sex chromosomes, external genitalia, or an internal reproductive system are not considered “standard” for either male or female]*****. Please try to clear these issues up with sound doctrine.**

There are really two issues here: 1) transgendered people and 2) the intersexed (new term) or hermaphrodites (older term).

The first is usually an emotional problem, not really a sexual one. The “transgendered” label reflects a sexual identity confusion and not a true condition. God doesn’t create a person with the genitals of a male and the consciousness and heart of a female. In Genesis 1:26, the Bible says, “And God created man in His image, in His likeness; male and female He created them . . . . and it was very good.” In addition, 1 Corinthians 14:33 says that “God is not a God of confusion but of peace,” so deliberately creating someone with self-contradiction appears to go against the very nature of God.

Maleness and femaleness are God’s choice, determined at conception. But growing into one’s masculinity or femininity and *embracing* it can be thwarted by very early events that

prevent children from having a clear sense of their gender. Gender identity is a developmental issue, and it starts at birth. All the many, many layers of affirmation and validation of one's personhood that contribute to self-understanding (of which gender is a part) start getting laid down the moment one is born, and they go on hour by hour, day by day, for years in childhood. No wonder so many people think they were born gay, lesbian, or transgendered! They can't remember all the way back to birth when the messages they received about who they were, had yet to be delivered. In addition, some people perceive the messages of parents and family differently than what was intended, and those perceptions ARE their reality.

The biblical view is that God's intent for every male is to grow into masculinity, and for every female to grow into femininity. When that doesn't happen, the culture has come up with new labels to describe something new and different: transgendered, transsexual. I believe God isn't affected by these new labels nor does He have to honor them: He sees the people behind the labels as His precious, broken children. It's only recently that the culture has tried to suggest that "a woman in a man's body" and vice versa is a variation of what is normal and right. The biology of sex alone tells us that homosexuality (under which these other categories of emotional/sexual dysfunction should be put) is not normal. The Bible tells us (Genesis 1:26) that God's intent is heterosexuality, with definite boundaries between men and women in both appearance and behavior. (I can give you more information on this concept if you want.)

I recently attended a national Exodus conference, a gathering of about 900 people who are walking out of homosexuality and those who minister to them. It was interesting to me to see people there who would call themselves transgendered, as well as transsexuals who had had sex-change surgery. They were at the conference because of a growing awareness that they had interfered with God's plan for their lives; God had revealed

His intent for their gender at birth. They had been living as the opposite sex in a false self that was tragically far from what God had intended for them, and that explained why the great pains to which they had gone to fix their brokenness didn't bring the peace and relief they thought they would get through assuming a new identity and/or having surgery.

Concerning intersexed people (hermaphrodites), allow me to share what my friend Rev. Mark Chalemin (now serving as Education Director at Coaches Outreach) and I collaborated on to answer this question for someone else:

> By definition a hermaphrodite is "a person born with both male and female sex organs." Within this definition there are three labels; true, female pseudo, and male pseudo. The first category is extremely rare with only 350-450 known cases. The second type, and the most common, is female pseudo resulting in 1 of every 14,000 births. The main cause for this is a condition known as Congenital Adrenal Hyperplasia. In these cases there is an overproduction of testosterone causing some "masculinized" features in the female. This does not mean that there is any real gender confusion. There is not. As with any female, her chromosome is XX. Any slight mutation, that may accompany is treated early by corrective surgery. The same situation may occur in baby boys with the same treatment. (There is a movement to stop this surgery, which is being called genital mutilation by some of those who have had it, and allow children's bodies to grow and develop naturally, even if they are different.) It seems that even with ambiguous genitalia, these kids "know" if they are intrinsically male or female.
>
> In either situation, the sexual identity, given by God, may perhaps reveal traits normally associated with the opposite sex. For example, the baby girl may grow up to be naturally more athletic or aggressive than the average woman, but she is very much a woman. Similarly, the baby boy may have a naturally heightened sensitivity and/or affinity towards the

> arts. Nevertheless, he is still very much a man.
>
> What is God’s take in all of this?
>
> God views every individual as He made them. While He did not make clones, he did create males and females with certain unique sexual characteristics. He also intended for males to manifest primarily masculine characteristics, and for females to manifest primarily feminine characteristics, although both sexes reflect aspects of both the masculine and the feminine in varying degrees. Along with those traits, He has provided direction on how we are to relate to one another. There is no prohibition regarding a slightly more “masculine” female or a slightly more “feminine” man. God views them as he does anyone else, with love and delight, and He desires that they experience all the freedom all He designed them to have, within the boundaries of the sexual identity God gave to them. The fact that some individuals are born with evidence of mutations in their sex-determining genes doesn’t change their value in God’s eyes any more than someone born with the mutation that causes cystic fibrosis or sickle-cell anemia.

You asked for sound doctrine; I can only respond with the wise and loving boundaries that God has established for sex (which is usually the issue here, right?). All sexual behavior is to be contained within marriage (see the many condemnations of fornication). Men are to act and appear as men, and women are to act and appear as women (Deuteronomy 22:5). Even those born with genital ambiguity are expected to submit to His boundaries. I realize this is a very politically incorrect perspective in a sex-saturated culture that declares sexual expression is a right for everyone. But it isn’t. God wants every person, regardless of their genital or chromosomal condition, to submit his or her sexuality to Him and to glorify Him in whatever state we find ourselves.

I hope this helps.

Sue Bohlin

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I was moved by this email I received from someone who lives with the challenges of intersex every day, and wanted to share it here:

A pastor friend was removed from being a pastor due to the nature of his birth (intersexed) in having both male and female parts, but condition helped with surgery, now married with children.

I am at the foundational level of intersexed in being an XXY male, was 53 before learning of my condition, but had gone through the change of life and also excessive breast tissue for a male.

I am always offended when we as intersexed people are spoken of in the same breath with homosexuals or added to their agenda when those of us who follow Jesus are as much opposed to the gay lifestyle as any other who will not compromise God's Word to validate sin or lust. I also believe that a true Eunuch is one who is unmarried and celibate which is only for those with the gift to remain that way.

To this day I have never heard a sermon or teaching regarding hermaphrodites in the church—covered by the same grace but forced into the basement due to ignorance and an imposed shame for being "so born from our mother's womb," something we had no choice about, unlike those acting on their homosexual feelings or those with a mental condition rather than a genetic defect which is temporary.

Your article about "transgendered" was interesting but I am more concerned about attitudes we encounter for being who we are which to me is just unique. Scars today only say that healing happened and no more open wounds. . . Just as Jesus is

proud of His scars that say healing happened.

To me there is just the Natural man, Spiritual man and the carnal Christian, only three kinds of people on the planet with a variety of physical and mental differences. But attitudes we encounter as intersexed people would lead folks to think maybe there is an additional “type” who doesn’t fit any mold or classification or addressed in scripture. But again the only problem I see is attitudes springing from ignorance; one can not love God without loving all the people of God, yet the subject is rarely if ever addressed completely to make us at least feel as if we fully belong among other people more normal than we are and that we are not freaks. The real us is spirit!

I also received this email:

Hi Sue,

Just read your blog on transgendered issues. Agree wholeheartedly. There is a third category that appears as XY = Female. This occurs due to a hormone receptor deformity that renders the fetus insensitive to androgen hormones. The degree of sexual formation differs between females with vagina and partially formed males—though nor hermaphrodite. This category is considered Partial Androgen Insensitivity Syndrome (PAIS) and Complete Androgen Insensitivity Syndrome (CAIS). To your point, these children are fully female (perhaps extremely so) and there is no confusion regarding their design. Genetically, they test as XY, but physiologically they are female from birth. I should note that they are all sterile and many require a Y-V vaginoplasty to create a vaginal opening and open the musculature for the vagina itself. They also require hormone therapy to complete the appearance of a female (breasts), but remain without follicular body hair with the exception of their head. Most often, whatever gonads they possess are removed early due to the tendency to rapidly

convert to cancerous tissue.

Again, I think your point is well made. God does things we may not anticipate, and sin corrupts the gene pool, but His design is male and female. We do not have the option to decide we do not like what he created us to be.

Updated June 2016

“Help! My Doubts Scare Me!”

Dear Sue Bohlin,

Hello. My name is _____. I e-mailed Ray earlier too. Anyways, I was reading an e-mail discussion you had with somebody, who didn’t believe in God. You said something in it about how it’s not an intellect issue, but a heart issue. This is hard for me to accept. I’m ashamed admitting this, but oh gosh its hard for me to admit. Maybe I won’t. I could say that I don’t believe in God, but that just sounds way too harsh. Have you heard of anybody who was a Christian, but then they began to have doubts and became agnostic? That’s how I feel. I asked Jesus into my heart when I was younger (I’m 18 now), but for a long time I’ve just been so skeptical. I guess I’m not a Christian, because a Christian knows that he or she is one, and I don’t. I don’t know how to express what I’ve been going through lately. Everyday I think about my doubt and it depresses me. I’m not sure if I’ll ever get rid of it and that scares me. I desire to believe in God so much, but it’s hard. I have so many questions. I wonder why God doesn’t show himself to me so I know for sure that He is there. I don’t know. Maybe He has but it’s just not enough. Maybe I don’t have enough faith.

Another thing that really doesn't help me is some of the stuff that I have read on the internet. Different books that I've read about have caused me to have even more doubt. Have you heard of *The Bible Unearthed…*, or *The Jesus Puzzle…*? I haven't read any of them, but read reviews. Anyways, the second one I think denies that Jesus was a historical person. That really bothers me. Earlier today I was reading something on the web where this person was being critical of Lee Strobel (who wrote *The Case for Christ*). I really like that book (not done with it yet), but after what I read on the internet about it, I wonder if it really shows that Jesus was a historical person. I don't know. Maybe I just let other people's conflicting views on Christianity get to me too much, but after reading these things, I start to wonder if maybe they are correct on what they are arguing.

Anyways, to me, my problem doesn't seem to be a heart issue because I really would like to believe in God. I desire to believe in Him and live for Him, but it's hard. Is there something that I lack? Do I just not have enough faith? I don't know, maybe I don't. Well I think I've made this long enough. If there's any advice you could give me I would appreciate it. Maybe you could pray for me. Thanks a lot.

I know you don't know me, but I REALLY wish I could reach through this computer screen and put my arms around you and give you a big hug and tell you IT'S GOING TO BE OK!!!!! It is *so OK* to have doubts, to wonder about where you stand spiritually, because, at 18, you are at the point you need to be—deciding for yourself what you should keep and what you should jettison of what you have been taught. You are an adult now but you probably don't feel that you have enough information to make an informed, committed adult choice about something as important as eternal destiny and one's relationship with God!

Good news—lots of other people are also in your shoes. But they don't ask for help, and bless you, you did, and there IS

help for you!! There are good answers, and you'll be stronger and more confident for having voiced your doubts and questions, once you're on the other side of this spiritual crisis. It's OK, _____. . . .God is walking through it with you.

> *I guess I'm not a Christian, because a Christian knows that he or she is one, and I don't.*

Well, no, actually that's not true. Many Christians have assurance that we are Christians, and many Christians fervently *hope* they are but they're not sure. That's an important issue all by itself: can we *know* we're saved and going to heaven? Can we lose our salvation? Our founder and first president, Jimmy Williams, addressed this issue in one of his e-mails.

> *I don't know how to express what I've been going through lately. Everyday I think about my doubt and it depresses me. I'm not sure if I'll ever get rid of it and that scares me.*

I wish you could see God's heart as He watches you wrestle with your doubts and fears. He loves you so much (man, I feel like Monica on *Touched by an Angel* here!) and is very tender toward you as you experience these strong and scary emotions. I understand your fear that you'll never get rid of the doubt. But doubt is like darkness—you don't overcome it by pushing it away, you make it go away by bringing in light. As you seek light and truth and to know what is really true and real, God will show you the light. I am so grateful that you came to us at Probe instead of some New Age "all religions are the same" website!

> *I desire to believe in God so much, but it's hard. I have so many questions. I wonder why God doesn't show himself to me so I know for sure that He is there. I don't know. Maybe He has but it's just not enough. Maybe I don't have enough faith.*

What's important isn't the amount or strength of our faith, but the *object* of our faith. God is strong enough to handle your doubts and to show you, in ways so intimate you will know it's HIM, that He is real and He loves you very much.

> *Another thing that really doesn't help me is some of the stuff that i have read on the internet. Different books that I've read about have caused me to have even more doubt. Have you heard of* The Bible Unearthed*…, or* The Jesus Puzzle*…? I haven't read any of them, but read reviews. Anyways, the second one I think denies that Jesus was a historical person. That really bothers me.*

With good reason. Some of the best Christian apologetics books started out with the author's intention to disprove Christianity, and the facts overwhelmed the skeptics into belief. The entire world was affected by the life of Jesus Christ, in one way or another, but He didn't exist? Now THAT takes a lot of faith!

> *Earlier today I was reading something on the web where this person was being critical of Lee Strobel (who wrote* The Case for Christ*). I really like that book (not done with it yet), but after what I read on the internet about it, I wonder if it really shows that Jesus was a historical person.*

Did you know Lee Strobel started out as an atheist? I'm glad you're reading it; it was a wise choice. So is his second book, *The Case for Faith*. I found this statement from him in an interview online: "I have found that the testimony of history points compellingly toward Jesus Christ having returned from the dead in the ultimate authentication of His claim to be God. To me faith in Jesus is not blind or irrational. I have so much independent evidence that the New Testament writings are reliable that I would be swimming upstream against the evidence if I were to follow the teachings of the Koran or the Book of Mormon. The more I subject the New Testament to analysis, the more I pepper it

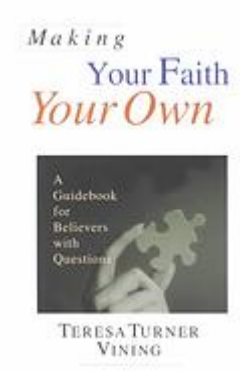
with questions, the more I walk away utterly convinced of its trustworthiness."

> *I don't know. Maybe I just let other people's conflicting views on Christianity get to me too much, but after reading these things, I start to wonder if maybe they are correct on what they are arguing.*

Just about every truth, especially those of eternal importance, will be countered with something counterfeit, because we're in a very real battle for our minds and souls. It's unfortunate that the counter-arguments can *appear* so compelling, but the issue is ultimate truth. Right now, you're on the right track in seeking truth and desiring to sort through the clamoring voices that attack it.

> *Anyways, to me, my problem doesn't seem to be a heart issue because I really would like to believe in God. I desire to believe in Him and live for Him, but its hard. Is there something that I lack? Do I just not have enough faith? I don't know, maybe I don't.*

It's been said that the Christian life isn't hard, it's IMPOSSIBLE. You can't live for God in your own strength—not for any length of time, anyway, without burning out and getting majorly discouraged. The secret is to allow Jesus to live His life through you by yielding to Him. That, by the way, is one of the things that sets Christianity apart from every other religion: God inside us, offering to live His life through us, without any loss of our own individuality. But right now, the big issue is what to do with your head/heart conflict. Fortunately, there is a PERFECT book that I believe will make all the difference in the world to you.



It's called *Making Your Faith Your Own: A Guidebook for Believers With Questions* by Teresa Vining. I was privileged to read Teresa's manuscript and LOVED her book. One of its strengths is that she was in the exact place you are now, and she takes you through the questions AND the answers, and suggests you keep a journal as you work through the book so you can decide what you believe and commit to, and what you're not willing to. It is a terrific book on apologetics, and she is very respectful of the person with questions and doubts. I think you will love this book too.

> *Well I think I've made this long enough. If there's any advice you could give me I would appreciate it. Maybe you could pray for me.*

I'd like to pray for you right now!

Father, I lift up _____ to You and I thank You for her intellect and her honesty in facing her doubts and questions. Thank You that You are not in the least bit troubled by them because You know You are real and true and able to take her through this time to a point where she will know beyond a shadow of a doubt that YOU ARE. I ask You to send her little intimate glimpses of You and open her eyes so she'll know it's You saying "Hi." I ask that You give her a peace when she's pursuing truth and give her an uncomfortable restlessness when she's moving toward the darkness and deception that would seek to draw her away from You. Lord, I thank You for Your hand on _____'s life and on her heart and on her mind, and by faith I thank You for taking her to the place where she will joyfully serve You with all three. Lord, make her feel loved and protected and cherished by You.

In Jesus' name,
Amen.

Hope this helps, dear one!

Sue

“Help! I Opened Myself Up to the Devil!”

I am in need of help! When I was about fifteen years old, I was friends with a man who at that time I did not know was a Satan worshipper. He cut the palm of his hand, I cannot remember if he cut mine or not but, he then rubbed our palms together and he licked the blood from his hand. I really didn’t think much of it at that time. Now, I am thirty-seven years old. For the past three years I have been having a lot of trouble with people following me, putting devil symbols in my house and just a lot of different things pertaining to the devil.

I recently remembered this blood act with this man and now recall who he is. I recently found out that his daughter works with me and I really believe she knows what’s going on. Although she acts totally innocent. I need to know if there is anything I can do to stop all this evilness around me. If you have any suggestions, please let me know.

Wow. You really do have a stronghold in your life for the evil one to exploit, don’t you?

There is a powerful and wonderful resource that has freed thousands of people from exactly this kind of stronghold. Neil Anderson’s book *The Bondage Breaker* is excellent, and you should read the whole book, but especially Chapter 12, called “Steps to Freedom in Christ.” It is a series of prayers that

walk you through all the places where you allowed Satan to gain a foothold in your life, and it helps you renounce them and stop the demonic harrassment.

I hope this helps. I know it has helped SO many people in your shoes.

Let me pray for you before I send this.

Father God, I lift up _____ to you and ask that You bring complete freedom to her through the ministry of people in the body of Christ like Neil Anderson. I pray that You would show her exactly what she needs to do to revisit the time when Satan gained an entrance into her heart and mind and life, and that You would protect her from the evil one. Lord God, I pray the holy and precious Blood of Jesus over her and ask that You do whatever it takes to allow that powerful Blood to cleanse _____ and make her holy and pure and freed from the traps of the enemy. In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Let me know what happens, OK?

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

"Abortion Isn't Your Decision to Make For Others"

You assume your belief in the bible is the truth. If you disregard that book of stories to live by, then the arguments of right and wrong are invalid.

Now if your points against abortion were based on your feeling of terminating a life, not what you are told in a book then I

would have much more respect for your point of view.

For those who feel abortion is wrong…. good for them, they have that choice… others choosing to have an abortion will deal with it.

It's not your decision to make for others. You must understand that we all don't subscribe to your beliefs… and that's the great thing about our country, we are free to do as we feel right based on our upbringing.

I hope I have not misinterpreted your writings on this web page.

Thanks for writing about my abortion article at the Probe Ministries site.

> *You assume your belief in the bible is the truth. If you disregard that book of stories to live by, then the arguments of right and wrong are invalid.*

Yes, I do assume that the Bible is true. Just as you assume that your beliefs are true. I used to dismiss the Bible as a fanciful "book of stories to live by," but after I found out how unusual it is, how incredibly consistent it is internally even though written by scores of authors on four continents within a span of thousands of years, I came to the conclusion that it was actually quite a miraculous book, inspired by God, and worth my trust.

If we disregard the Bible, which claims to be God's communication with us, then why even talk about issues of right and wrong? Without God in the picture, who says there IS a right and wrong? Without God, the universe just IS. No meaning, no purpose—and certainly no right and wrong.

> *Now if your points against abortion were based on your feeling of terminating a life, not what you are told in a book then I would have much more respect for your point of*

> *view.*

So, if I based my position against abortion on feelings alone, you could respect that. . .but since I base my position on what I completely believe to be God's revealed truth, it's fluff? Feelings are a dangerous basis for opinions; they often have nothing in common with reality. How do you know that that $20 bill in your wallet is actually worth $20? Somebody told you it was, right? Does that make that belief invalid? But if you use that bill to buy $20 worth of merchandise, a store will accept that money. That's because it corresponds to reality. I believe that my position on abortion—regardless of where I got those beliefs—also corresponds to reality. The question that ought to be asked about my position is not "where did you get it," but "is it true?"

> *It's not your decision to make for others. You must understand that we all don't subscribe to your beliefs… and that's the great thing about our country, we are free to do as we feel right based on our upbringing.*

I'm sorry, where did you read that I make a decision for anyone else? I state that abortion is wrong because God says that it's wrong. I state that abortion is hurtful because that's what experience teaches us. That's a long way from stopping someone from having an abortion. You are more than free not to subscribe to my beliefs; but why would you challenge my right to hold them? I don't know how you ended up at that article, but the way the Internet works, you had to go out and search it out. It seems rather strange to me that you would look for and read an article on abortion, then castigate the author for not agreeing with you. . .???

> *I hope I have not misinterpreted your writings on this web page.*

Well, I think you probably have, but that's your right. Almost all the articles at the Probe site started out as radio transcripts for a 5-minute program that airs on about 400 Christian radio stations; then we put the transcripts online. I'm glad you read it, even though I'm not sure why you would want to, if you so easily dismiss others' positions if they're based on revelation and not gut feelings.

But have a good day.

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries

"How Can a Christian Be Superstitious?"

Sue, I have a Christian friend who is highly superstitious. This is very surprising to me. I would like to be able to give him scriptural references which apply to this. I cannot understand how he reconciles the sovereignty of God with superstition. He actually thinks that things like "knocking on wood" have affect on the outcome of situations. He is also highly intelligent. If you know if any articles which address this, I would appreciate that information as well.

I share your incredulity at your friend's belief in both superstition and a sovereign God!

Here are two powerful scriptures that I think are eye-opening concerning superstitious Christians:

Exodus 20:2-5 – The first commandment:

"I am the LORD your God . . . You shall have no other gods

> *before me.*
>
> *You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below.*
>
> *You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God . . . "*

Being superstitious is to trust in an act, like knocking on wood or not stepping on a crack, instead of in God. It is nothing less than idolatry! (This is why astrology is also wrong, also idolatrous—it is trusting in the stars instead of the Star-Creator!) When we trust in a superstition instead of in God, we are making it into an idol.

The other scripture is in 2 Kings 1:3:

> *"But the angel of the LORD said to Elijah the Tishbite, 'Go up and meet the messengers of the king of Samaria and ask them, `Is it because there is no God in Israel that you are going off to consult Baal-Zebub, the god of Ekron?'"*

I think this verse makes it clear that consulting (and of course, trusting) anything other than the one true God is an insult and affront to God.

I'll be interested in hearing his response to this information . . .

Sue Bohlin

Probe Ministries

“Help Me With My Adult Children!”

Hi Sue,

My name is _____ and I just read your article you wrote about Dr. Laura. I just have to tell you, I am a Jew born anew (but I have been backslidden for years now). Maybe God led me to your article. I couldn’t agree more with you. Dr. Laura just doesn’t understand because she is still blinded like I was. And I was an example like the apostle Paul. One second I thought Jesus was a good man, the next minute, all I did was whisper his name in a moment of deep despair, and I knew he was the son of God and I believed.

The reason I decided to drop you a line is about my two boys who are 21 and 19. Trying to live on their own. I haven’t been able to see them for 2 years now because I couldn’t afford it after a bad divorce after 18 years of marriage.

I actually was going to write Dr. Laura, than I saw your article and I thought maybe you could give me some insight. I am now remarried, neither of us are living for the Lord but I did just buy a Bible because my husband is interested in all the scripture I do discuss with him.

The dilemma is, my boys just can’t seem to buckle down and keep jobs and take on responsibility. They have no choice but to make their own way in this world, buy I still feel like I owe them even though I don’t make much money. My husband and I got them started in their apartment and we told them now you work and pay for all the things you need, however, the youngest I think has gotten into drugs and hardly works, so the older brother was feeding him and paying all the bills. Of course this is ridiculous but he now feels responsible. To make matters worse, the older son just called me to let me

know he got fired from his good job in the computer field. He said something about missing a meeting due to oversleeping. I don't believe he is telling the whole truth. They want to move closer to me but of course they don't have hardly a dime to their name. I am in such a despair because I desperately want to see my kids, yet I know I have to believe in a tough love belief if I want them to grasp reality. We cannot support them and we shouldn't have to. What does God's word say about situations like this? I am a little afraid to find out because I do feel like I failed as a mom and as a Christian.

Is there any hope for me? or for my kids?

P.S. I won't be mad if you do not respond. This is a little freaky that I am even asking a complete stranger for help, but I don't have a church home and I would like a Christian perspective. Thank you!

Dear _____,

First of all, I'm so glad to meet a sister in Christ who has deep-deep-DEEP roots in Judaism!!!

Secondly, my two boys are 19 and 21 also, and I understand COMPLETELY where you're coming from. I think huge numbers of kids/young adults struggle, because of our surrounding culture that says adolescence means you're entitled to privileges without responsibilities. But, of course, real life doesn't work that way.

:::::::::Putting my "Dr. Laura" hat on here::::::::::::

May I suggest that the feeling that you "owe your kids" is misguided? You've done your best and now they're adults. (I know, 19 and 21 doesn't LOOK like adulthood as it did when we were that age.) You gave them the huge boost of putting them into an apartment, which is more than many parents could or would do, and said, "You are now responsible for maintaining this. You are adults, now act like it." And they responded, it

seems, by saying, “Don’t wanna be an adult. I’m going to do whatever I want and not think about the consequences.”

If you bail them out now you will be teaching them that someone else (YOU!!) will pay the consequences for their foolish and self-centered choices. And what do you think that will mean the next time? You can be sure they won’t make MORE responsible choices!

Dr. Kevin Leman wrote a great book on child-rearing called *How to Make Children Mind Without Losing Yours*. It’s really a book on “reality discipline.” The whole concept is to use natural consequences—which is the way God set up the world, right? Consider His command: “If one will not work, neither let him eat” (2 Thess. 3:10). Those are natural consequences. Sounds like it’s in the same ballpark as, “If one chooses sleep over work, let him have to settle for a less-satisfying job.” Or, “If one will not work but takes drugs instead, let him discover there is no physical or financial support for that kind of selfish, immature mindset.”

You say they want to move closer to you but they don’t have money to do that. (And why not? Because of the choices they made?!) Well, guess what. In the real world, if we don’t have money, that limits our options. Why do you think they want to move closer to you? So you can give them money and pretend they’re little boys again! Not a good thing.

The book of Proverbs has LOTS to say about this issue, and I’m going to give you the privilege of digging out what applies to your situation. Look at it as a treasure hunt! <smile>

It’s okay to strengthen your spine, Mom. Your kids will be better off for it, and so will you. It’s okay to bite your tongue and not be “Mommy to the rescue.” It will help them accept responsibility for themselves if no one else will. And no one else should—they’re adults now!

I do hope this helps. You are SO RIGHT about needing to adopt

a “tough love” stance. Everybody will be better off for it down the road; your part is to trust in the Lord’s strength and not your own as you take that position of loving your kids wisely by helping them grow into their adult responsibilities by letting them feel the full consequences of their choices.

Warmly,

Sue Bohlin
Probe Ministries