



BIBLE-SHAPED & COUNTER-CULTURAL

“DO NOT CONFORM TO THE PATTERN OF THIS WORLD, BUT BE TRANSFORMED BY THE RENEWING OF YOUR MIND.
THEN YOU WILL BE ABLE TO TEST AND APPROVE WHAT GOD’S WILL IS—HIS GOOD, PLEASING AND PERFECT WILL.”

(ROMANS 12:2)

A PEOPLE WHO...



... ARE **CHRIST-CENTRED**

... ARE **BIBLE-SHAPED**

... ARE **FAMILY**

... ARE **VIBRANT**

... **DEMONSTRATE INTEGRITY**

... **EXTEND GRACE**

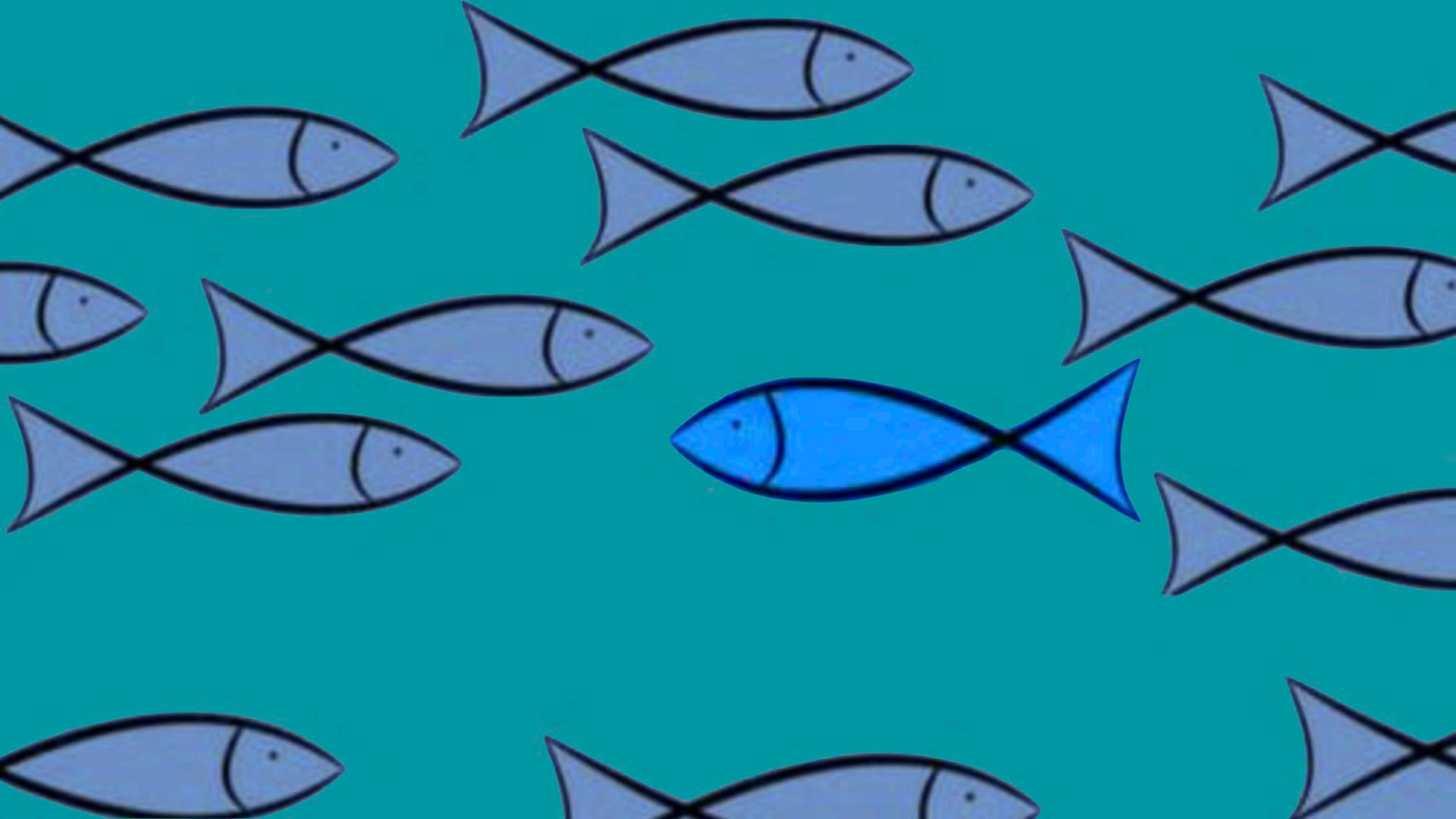
... **CONNECT**



The Bible

We believe the Bible, as originally given, to be without error, the fully inspired and infallible Word of God and the supreme and final authority in all matters of faith and conduct.

ELIM FOUNDATIONAL TRUTHS





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SUBJECTS WE PLAN TO COVER...

- 'One True God' - a Bible-shaped approach to other faiths**
- 'Supernaturally Speaking' - a Bible-shaped approach to spirituality**
- 'You Are What You Eat' - a Bible-shaped approach to hedonism and holistic health**
- 'Money Matters' - a Bible-shaped approach to money and materialism**
- 'Sexual Sense' - a Bible-shaped approach to love and sexuality**
- 'Who You Say I Am' - a Bible-shaped approach to identity and self worth**
- 'Light of the World' - Being a Bible-shaped People (Question & Answer)**



Q&A - 1ST DECEMBER:

**SUBMIT QUESTIONS / ISSUES YOU WOULD LIKE
US TO TRY AND ADDRESS BY POSTING THEM IN
THE BLUE SUGGESTION BOX AT THE BACK OR
EMAILING INFO@ELIMABERYSTWYTH.COM
(NO PROMISES!)**



SEXUAL SENSE

A Bible-shaped approach to love and sexuality



**A SERIES ABOUT SOME SUBJECTS THAT WE
NEED TO TALK ABOUT IN CHURCH - AN
OPPORTUNITY TO EXPLAIN WHAT WE ARE
FOR AS PEOPLE OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD**



**WE ARE FOR A GODLY AND BIBLE-SHAPED
APPROACH TO LOVE AND SEXUAL ETHICS**



SOME FOUNDATIONAL THOUGHTS

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People interpret the Bible on this (and every) subject in extremely different ways

We must shape our thinking around scripture to impact our world, not the other way around

The matter of sex and sexuality is distinct from, though related to, matters of gender and identity



... for Adam no suitable helper was found. 21 So the Lord God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and then closed up the place with flesh. 22 Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man."



23 The man said,
"This is now bone of my bones
and flesh of my flesh;
she shall be called 'woman,'
for she was taken out of man."



24 That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh.

25 Adam and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.



LET'S TALK ABOUT IT

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Sex is talked about in our society all the time - apart from in our churches?!

We are right not to sensationalise the subject, but if we don't talk about it then where will our influence come from?

If we don't disciple ourselves and our children in the area of sex then the world, their friends and the internet will!



LET'S TALK ABOUT IT

BIBLE-SHAPED & COUNTER-CULTURAL

Some approaches toward sex and sexuality in the church have made it into a taboo subject

'More intimate than lovers' was a difficult lyric for some!

If we want to make sense of sex with a Biblical approach, we must find a context and a way to discuss it



IS THERE A SPIRIT BEHIND IT?

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Sexualised imagery, information and content is almost inescapable in our society

Sex is something of a god and much of the world's attitude toward it echoes the worship and devotion to ancient gods and goddesses of fertility, beauty love and sexuality

It demands attention, devotion, money and more



SEXUAL INTIMACY IS GOD'S DESIGN



26 Then God said, "Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground."



27 So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.



28 God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground."

BE FRUITFUL

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At the heart of God's blueprint for human flourishing is sexual union between a man and a woman

They were created in God's image, both male and female from one flesh, and were told to be fruitful and reign

To be fruitful = procreate through sexual union, which is only naturally possible for a biological male and female



INTIMATE TRUTH

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The understanding of what it means to become 'one flesh' in Genesis 2 is a matter of some discussion

There is no doubt that it includes sexual intimacy

Intimacy is much a whole lot more than sex and is God's heart for His people - at the heart of the Trinity and of Christ's relationship with His bride



**THE BASIC BIBLICAL PATTERN FOR HUMAN
FLOURISHING IN SEXUAL INTIMACY IS IN
THE CONTEXT OF A LIFELONG COVENANT
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ONE MAN AND
ONE WOMAN**



BROKEN BLUEPRINT?

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There are many nuances and other questions that we may ask, or struggle with, around this

There are also many examples in the bible of this pattern not being expressed - polygamy, adultery, prostitution...

There are also a lot of grace and redemption



TO BE CLEAR

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It has become necessary for Elim (and others) to legally clarify our belief and practice with regards to marriage

As Elim churches/pastors we may not hold or take part in any ceremony misaligned with our understood definition of biblical marriage

This is not discrimination, it is integrity to our beliefs



RADICAL LOVE

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We don't desire to force anyone to share our beliefs and we appreciate the current freedom we mutually enjoy to hold and express our different beliefs

We must have the space to disagree with people on such matters whilst genuinely respecting and loving them

We should love those we are at odds with so radically that that experience Jesus - as He has done for us!



**GOD IS FAITHFUL AND SELFLESS AND
KNOWS THAT IT IS BEST FOR US TO BE
FAITHFUL AND SELFLESS TOO**



14 You shall not commit
adultery.



UNADULTERATED TRUTH

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This is so foundational to God's ways that it is one of the moral laws included in the Ten Commandments

Our human nature leads us to ask what this means and what lines have to be crossed!

Jesus makes it clear - it is not just a matter of sexual interaction but of the heart



27 'You have heard that it was said, "You shall not commit adultery." 28 But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.



**JESUS RAISED THE BAR - WE ASK 'WHAT
CAN I GET AWAY WITH?' WHILST JESUS
POINTS TO THE MATTER OF THE HEART**



THE SEXUAL STATE

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The societal norms and expectations around sex have completely transformed within a generation

Handel's Queer 'Messiah' is a performance due to be given at the 'Foundling Museum' in London this 'Yuletide'

Many church movements are even turning their back on the clear biblical position on sexual ethics



SPEAK THE NAME OF JESUS

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There are some very legitimate areas for discussion and we must be a grace and truth fuelled part of them

We don't want to create barriers to anyone knowing and experiencing Jesus - His love is the most inclusive of all

But we must not sacrifice truth on the altars of relevance, popularity or compliance



19 For out of the heart come evil thoughts – murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander.



FROM THE HEART

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Jesus is very clear that adultery and sexual immorality come from the heart, not just the action

His Jewish listeners would immediately think of the sexual laws of Leviticus 18 to know what 'sexual immorality' meant

There are some key laws in there that are now at odds with our society



**OUR CHALLENGE IS TO IMPACT, AND NOT
BE SHAPED BY, SOCIETY IN THE AREA OF
LOVE AND SEXUALITY - LIKE JESUS, BEING
FULL OF GRACE AND TRUTH**



COUNTER CULTURAL

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We are not to judge others or to limit the grace of God

Jesus was radically inclusive of a number of people who had complicated sexual histories - the woman at the well, Mary Magdalene, the woman caught in adultery

To be like Jesus we must swim against the tide - not just in our sexual ethics, but also in the grace we express



SACRIFICE FOR SHAME

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We are all broken people and many experience much shame in this area

The shame we feel in this area is, like it was for Adam and Eve, a result of sin - our own or that of others

God immediately covered their shame by the provision of animal skins - for which a sacrifice had to be made



18 I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, so that you can become rich; and white clothes to wear, so that you can cover your shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so that you can see.



**THE TRUTH AND GRACE OF CHRIST IS
ENOUGH FOR YOU TO OVERCOME OUR
SHAME AND OUR STRUGGLES**



13 Foods for the stomach and the stomach for foods, but God will destroy both it and them. Now the body is not for sexual immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body.
14 And God both raised up the Lord and will also raise us up by His power.



15 Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take the members of Christ and make them members of a harlot? Certainly not! 16 Or do you not know that he who is joined to a harlot is one body with her? For "the two," He says, "shall become one flesh." 17 But he who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him.



18 Flee sexual immorality. Every sin that a man does is outside the body, but he who commits sexual immorality sins against his own body.
19 Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?
20 For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.



BIBLE SHAPES AND COUNTER CULTURAL

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God is our all in all and wants us to enjoy intimacy with Him forever above any desire we have in this life

We can show what real love and healthy sexuality is to the broken world around us

Christ is able to help us overcome any shame and struggle in the area of love and sexuality



1 Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God – this is your true and proper worship.



HELPFUL RESOURCES

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Elim 'Limitless' Youth - 'God and Sexuality' YouTube series

(www.youtube.com/watch?v=CglSz_HAHMQ&list=PL1oO89wGvJPm9tTL2KzvJQVZkGFV_TqLv&pp=iAQB)

David Bennett - former atheist and gay activist, now author and theology scholar based at Oxford University

(www.dacbennett.com)

'The Deep End' - podcast by Rapper Lecrae covering relevant issues for young adults upward (including a recent interview with David Bennett)