



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

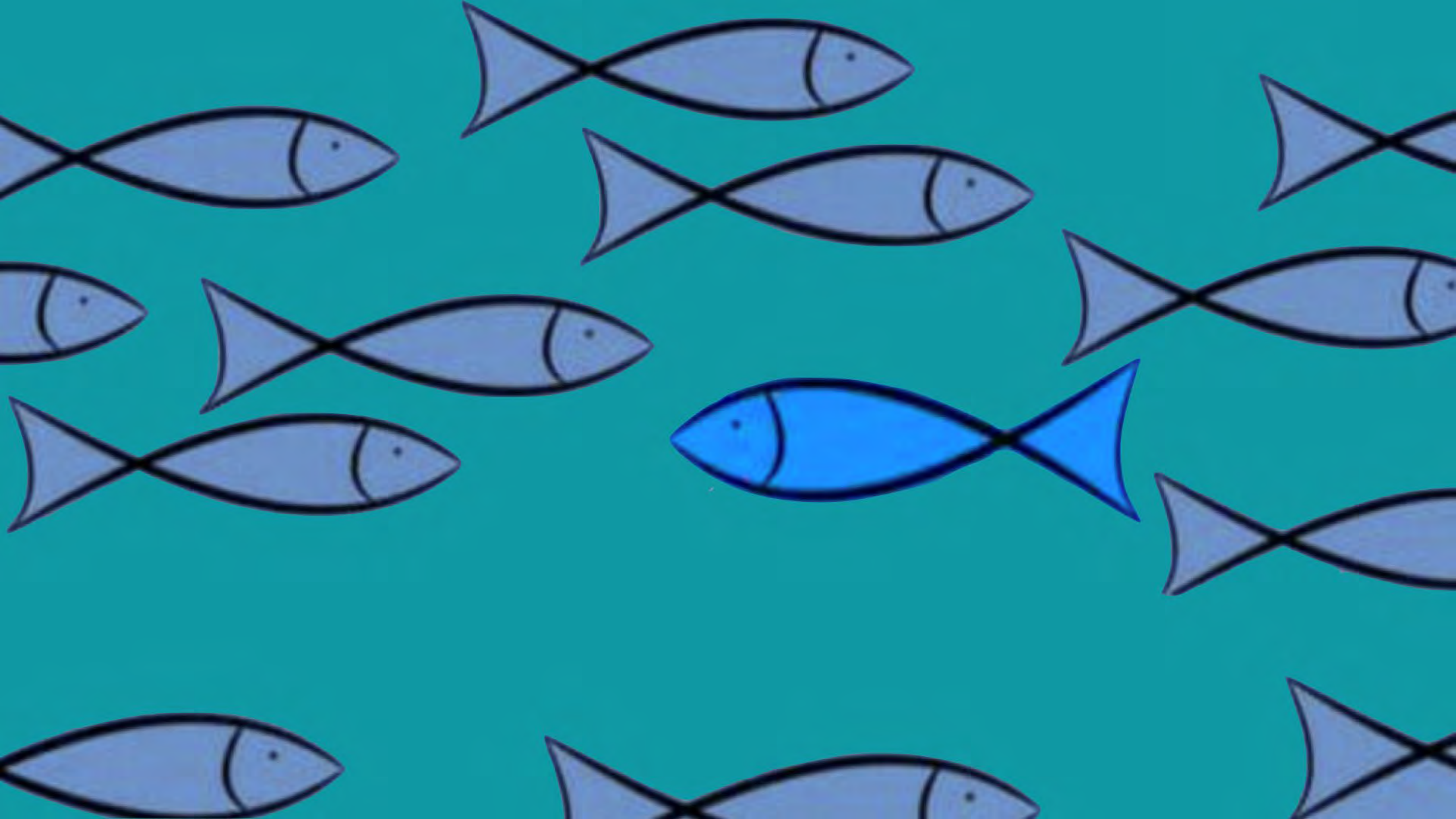
... CONNECT



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





Q&A



WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT...

Marriage, Civil-
Partnership &
Cohabiting

Gender Identity

Sexual Orientation

Singleness

Divorce & Remarriage

Suffering

Persecution of God's
people

Israel & Palestine /

Antisemitism & Zionism

Immigration

Assisted suicide

**Forgiveness & Justice /
Forgiving others &
knowing I am forgiven**

Christians and the pub

Doubting my faith

Being on His path



SEEKING A BIBLE-SHAPED PERSPECTIVE ON...

ASSISTED SUICIDE

FORGIVENESS & JUSTICE

FORGIVING OTHERS & KNOWING I AM FORGIVEN

CHRISTIANS AND THE PUB

DOUBTING MY FAITH

BEING ON HIS PATH

***WE DO NOT INTEND TO COVER EACH OF THESE COMPLEX SUBJECTS COMPREHENSIVELY TODAY, BUT WE CAN DEFINITELY EXPLORE SOME RELEVANT BIBLICAL TRUTH**



GRACE AND TRUTH

BIBLE-SHAPED & COUNTER-CULTURAL

These are not simply theological issues - they are real life matters that impact individuals, families and communities

We must not handle such matters without both the truth and the grace embodied and emanated by Christ

To avoid the truth is not to be kind at all, to present the truth without kindness is not Christlike at all



REMEMBER

BE FULL OF GRACE & TRUTH (JOHN 1:14)

SPEAK THE TRUTH IN LOVE (EPHESIANS 4:15)

ANSWER WITH GENTLENESS & RESPECT (1 PETER 3:15)



ASSISTED DYING / SUICIDE



ASSISTED DYING / SUICIDE

BIBLE-SHAPED & COUNTER-CULTURAL

This is an issue that can 'seem' like a simple yes/no theological question, but the real-life pastoral situations require sensitivity, understanding and kindness

Our 'baseline' understanding on this issue surrounds the sanctity of human life and trust in God's timing

Due to the recent political debate, Elim joined other Christian organisations in making a public statement



We, the Elim Foursquare Gospel Alliance, affirm the sanctity and intrinsic value of all human life, created in the image of God. We stand with the majority of doctors in this country who do not want the legalisation of assisted suicide.

We strongly oppose any legislation which undermines the intrinsic value of people, threatens the protection of the vulnerable, or poses significant ethical and societal risks. Instead, with compassion for those for whom this legislation is trying to serve, we call for much greater investment in palliative care to ensure good professional care and dignified support is given for those at the end of life.

We believe life, even in disability or suffering, remains sacred and deserving of protection. Death should never be seen as a final medical solution.



Christian Views

From a Christian perspective, liberalising the law on euthanasia would be hugely problematic for at least three reasons:

1. **Human life bears God's image** and it is not for us to terminate.
2. According to the Christian worldview **we are part of community** joined to each other. We are not autonomous. The decisions we make impact other people.
3. If the law was changed there would be a **great risk that people would feel pressured into accessing assisted suicide or euthanasia**. At present if you are a burden on your family and the state and have a sensitive conscience you don't need to feel guilty about being a burden in the sense that there is nothing you can do about it. If assisted suicide or euthanasia became available, though, then there would be a mechanism sanctified with legal approval, that you could take.



ASSISTED DYING / SUICIDE

BIBLE-SHAPED & COUNTER-CULTURAL

There is a significant difference between ceasing medical care that is keeping someone alive and offering euthanasia

The motives of those suggesting and campaigning for this move are not necessarily unkind or evil

Our concern is really about how this undermines the sanctity of life of in our nation's laws and culture



ASSISTED DYING / SUICIDE

BIBLE-SHAPED & COUNTER-CULTURAL

If it becomes law, someone will be the person who administers the lethal dose

There will be pressure on those who disagree with the idea in principal to have to take part in its practice

It goes against oaths (e.g. 'Hippocratic') or declarations made by many doctors before commencing practice



“I shall never intentionally cause harm to my patients, and will have the utmost respect for human life.”

EXETER UNIVERSITY - DECLARATION OF A NEW DOCTOR

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FORGIVENESS AND JUSTICE
/ FORGIVING OTHERS AND KNOWING THAT
I AM FORGIVEN



FORGIVENESS AND JUSTICE

BIBLE-SHAPED & COUNTER-CULTURAL

Forgiveness is at the very heart of the gospel and the expressed heart of God

And so is justice!

We are so grateful for God's forgiveness toward us as individuals saved by grace that we sometimes forget that justice is just as important



18 "Come now, let us settle the matter," says the Lord. 'Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool.



FORGIVENESS AND JUSTICE

BIBLE-SHAPED & COUNTER-CULTURAL

Hundreds of years before Christ was punished (justice) on the cross for our sin (forgiveness), God wants to 'settle the matter'

The forgiveness of God toward us seems unfair - it is, but it was Christ who paid the necessary price

Since Adam and Eve hid themselves from The Lord in the garden, God has wanted forgiveness to change our lives



12 As far as the east is from
the west, so far has he
removed our transgressions
from us.



FORGIVENESS AND JUSTICE

BIBLE-SHAPED & COUNTER-CULTURAL

We receive forgiveness, not by works or worthiness of our own, but by faith in Jesus

The punishment we deserved has been carried to the cross by Christ and we can be set free

But there is actually a string attached to this...



12 And forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven our debtors...

...14 For if you forgive other people when
they sin against you, your heavenly Father
will also forgive you. 15 But if you do not
forgive others their sins, your Father will
not forgive your sins.



FORGIVENESS AND JUSTICE

BIBLE-SHAPED & COUNTER-CULTURAL

The parable of the unmerciful servant goes even further to illustrate the injustice of not extending mercy received

We are not just free of the consequence of our sin (death)

We are set free to live in the grace and goodness of God and to reflect His heart and His Kingdom



HOW MANY TIMES SHOULD I FORGIVE?



21 "Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, 'Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Up to seven times?' 22 Jesus answered, 'I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.'"



FORGIVING OTHERS

BIBLE-SHAPED & COUNTER-CULTURAL

I do not believe this is to say that you should keep putting yourself in a position where someone is abusing you and you keep having to forgive them

I understand this to mean that you can find the grace and power to keep forgiving someone no matter how many times you remember the hurt they caused

77 is not a 'magic' number - it is a number pointing us to God



31 Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice.

32 Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.



FORGIVING OTHERS

BIBLE-SHAPED & COUNTER-CULTURAL

The power to forgive is the power to move yourself beyond the pain that was inflicted upon you

Forgiveness is not the same as forgetting what happened nor does it necessitate an invitation for it to happen again

God is righteous and just - wrongdoing is His to 'avenge'



19 Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: 'It is mine to avenge; I will repay,' says the Lord.



FORGIVING OTHERS

BIBLE-SHAPED & COUNTER-CULTURAL

The world around us tells us to seek revenge and give those who have wronged us what they deserve

But God knows what living in bitterness and anger can do to our hearts and wants us to be set free

We have to learn to trust God to have His way and work out forgiveness and justice in His own way and wisdom



8 'For I, the Lord, love
justice; I hate robbery and
wrongdoing.



FORGIVING OTHERS

BIBLE-SHAPED & COUNTER-CULTURAL

This is the God in whose image we are all created

We all have an innate sense of right and wrong (though this is severely corrupted in some)

Injustice can and should make us rightly angry and passionate to achieve justice for those who suffer



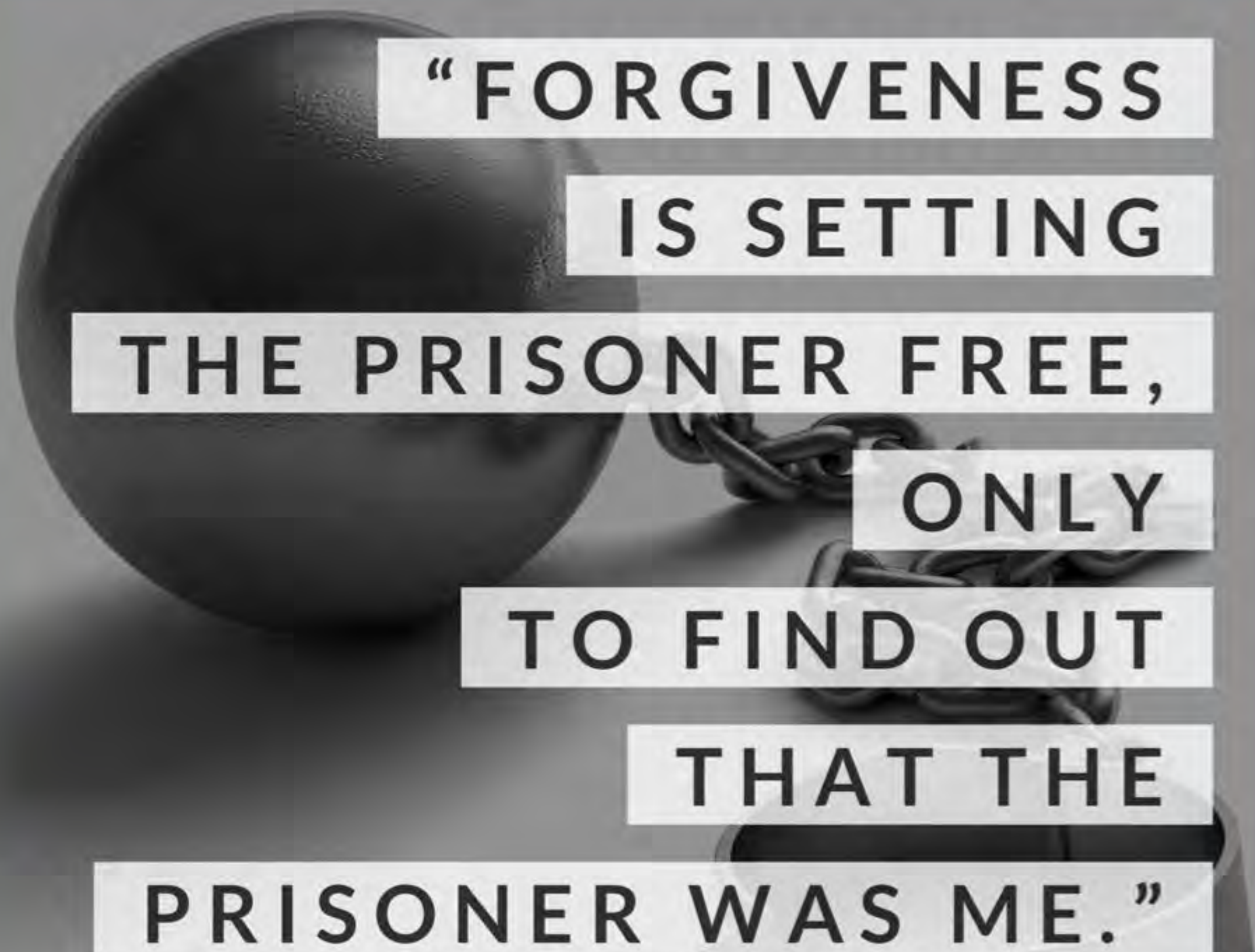
KNOWING I AM FORGIVEN

BIBLE-SHAPED & COUNTER-CULTURAL

Knowing we are forgiven is sometimes a matter of faith over feelings - trusting what God has said more than what our hearts and minds may sometimes tell us

We can only know this forgiveness if we have understood the price God was willing to pay for us

If we know this then we find the power to forgive others



**“FORGIVENESS
IS SETTING
THE PRISONER FREE,
ONLY
TO FIND OUT
THAT THE
PRISONER WAS ME.”**

**– CORRIE TEN BOOM
HOLOCAUST SURVIVOR**



CHRISTIANS AND THE PUB



CHRISTIANS AND THE PUB

BIBLE-SHAPED & COUNTER-CULTURAL

I think this question is about whether Christians should have any involvement in drinking, partying, clubbing etc.

Due to different culture and upbringing, many may see this as a strange question, but from opposite angles!

Some may wonder why it would be a problem at all, whilst others may wonder why or how any Christian would ever consider being in that context



CHRISTIANS AND THE PUB

BIBLE-SHAPED & COUNTER-CULTURAL

This is largely a matter of interpretation and of personal conscience informed by some clear biblical wisdom

I believe it is possible to be a devoted Jesus follower whilst holding widely differing views or personal convictions

Our fellowship as a family of believers should be stronger than our differences of opinion on matters such as this, though some may disagree - and many have over the years!




CHRISTIANS AND THE PUB

BIBLE-SHAPED & COUNTER-CULTURAL

Connecting a 'tea-total' perspective to our faith is very understandable and can be helpful in context

It is difficult to justify holding a view that suggests the bible teaches total abstinence where alcohol is concerned

Jesus first miracle was turning water into wine toward the end of the night at a wedding party (John 2) as well as advocating wine as part of passover (communion)



18 Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit



**DRUNKENNESS, OR ANYTHING ELSE THAT
ROBS US OF GODLY SELF CONTROL,
CANNOT BE GOD'S BEST FOR US**



CHRISTIANS AND THE PUB

BIBLE-SHAPED & COUNTER-CULTURAL

If pub like environments cause you to feel uncomfortable and are avoidable, then do not feel pressure to be there

If you find being in such places unhelpful to your faith or in the way of temptation then it is wise to stay away

We can do so without universally expecting the same of others who have a different experience



CHRISTIANS AND THE PUB

BIBLE-SHAPED & COUNTER-CULTURAL

Some ideas for situations where it is difficult not to engage:

- Make an opportunity to show you can have a good time without being drunk**
- Looks after others and help them when needed**
- Be designated driver**
- Go to part, but not all of the event**



CHRISTIANS AND THE PUB

BIBLE-SHAPED & COUNTER-CULTURAL

We should go to great lengths to try and avoid making others with different perspectives on this (and many other matters) unnecessarily uncomfortable or confused

Prioritise strengthening fellowship over personal 'freedom'

If you drink alcohol, learn to do so with control - if you can't then avoid it



DOUBTING MY FAITH



DOUBTING MY FAITH

BIBLE-SHAPED & COUNTER-CULTURAL

Join the club!

It is probable that everyone in the room has, at some stage and to some degree, been through moments and/or seasons of doubt that God is there, has the power to work in our situation or cares about what we are going through

Don't be afraid of moments of doubt - let them bring you closer to God as you journey through your questions




DOUBTING MY FAITH

BIBLE-SHAPED & COUNTER-CULTURAL

Doubt is a natural part of a journey of faith but does not need dominate our lives or our relationship with God

Bible characters who had moments of doubt... Sarai (Sarah), Moses, Elijah, Peter, Thomas and the list goes on!

But God proved faithful to each of them and as you trust in Him, He will prove faithful to you too!



'...call on me in the day of
trouble; I will deliver you,
and you will honour me.'



DOUBTING MY FAITH

BIBLE-SHAPED & COUNTER-CULTURAL

Look for the evidence of God being at work in your life and in the lives of others - both past and present

Be honest and talk about your questions with people you trust who are mature and experienced in their faith journey

Be honest with God - He knows your heart - whilst trusting in Him and the truth of scripture



Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see. 2 This is what the ancients were commended for. 3 By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.



**FAITH IS A GIFT... PUT YOUR TRUST IN THE
LORD AND ASK HIM HONESTLY TO HELP IN
ANY FAITH-STRUGGLE**



23 ““If you can”?” said Jesus.
‘Everything is possible for one
who believes.’

24 Immediately the boy’s father
exclaimed, ‘I do believe; help
me overcome my unbelief!’



BEING ON HIS PATH



5 Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; 6 in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.



BEING ON HIS PATH

BIBLE-SHAPED & COUNTER-CULTURAL

God is more concerned with who you are than where you are
If we correctly align our principles and priorities in Christ then
we will be more likely to know Him in the details - seek first
His Kingdom and righteousness... (Matt 6)

RPG - this is God's will for you...



16 Rejoice always, 17 pray continually, 18 give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.



BEING ON HIS PATH

BIBLE-SHAPED & COUNTER-CULTURAL

Does this decision...

- help me rely more fully on The Lord?**
- require me to be generous?**
- glorify The Lord?**
- love God and/or love people?**



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