

Futility of Medicine

A Study of Romans 8:20-23



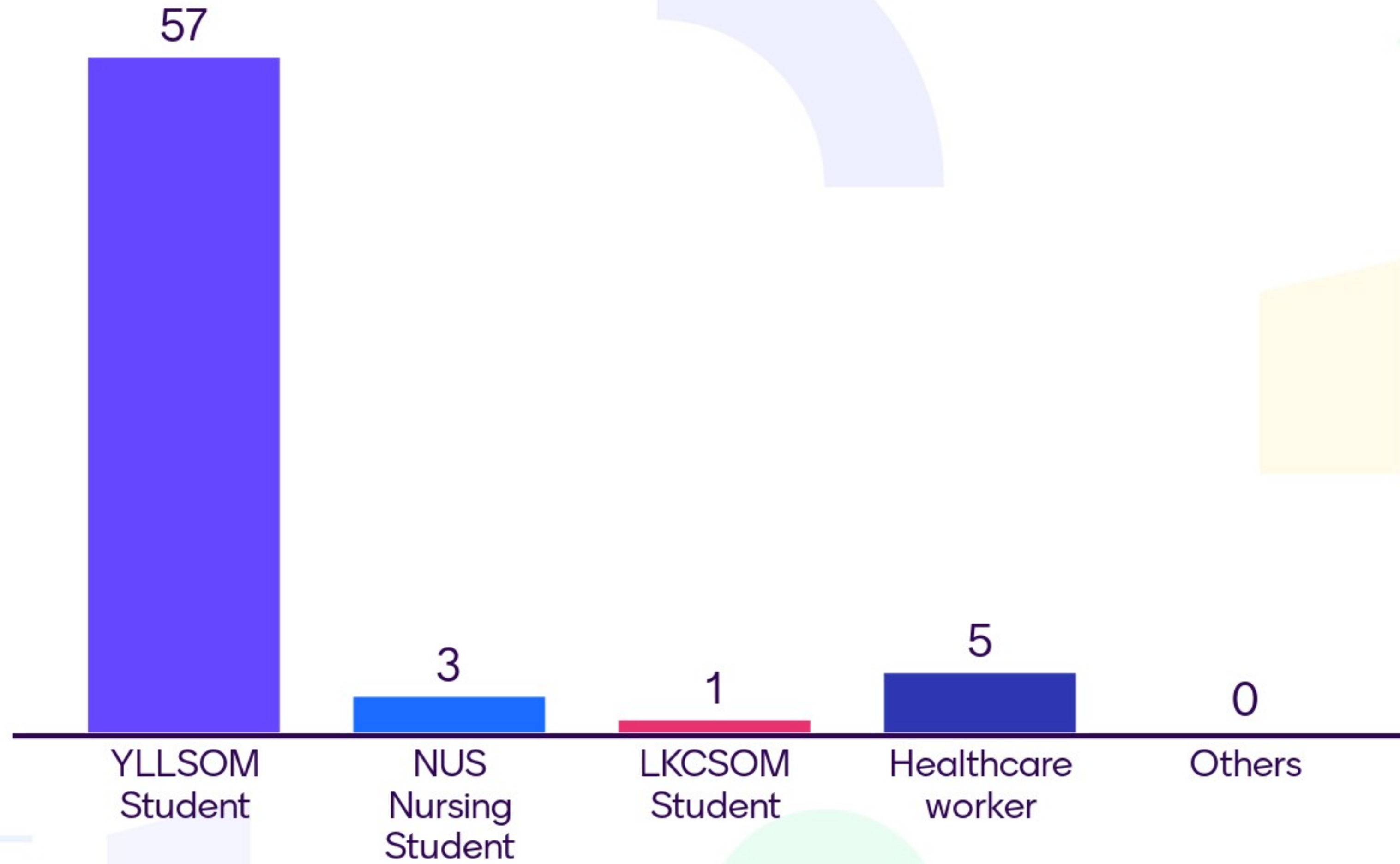
Myself

- Saved in 2019
- Redemption Hill Church
- Married to Belinda (2017) with Emma (2019) and Caleb (2021)
- Favourite Resources: John MacArthur (GTY), Steve Lawson, RC Sproul (Ligonier)
- Work: SSR NUH Orthopaedics Surgery
- Hobbies: Running, listen to sermons

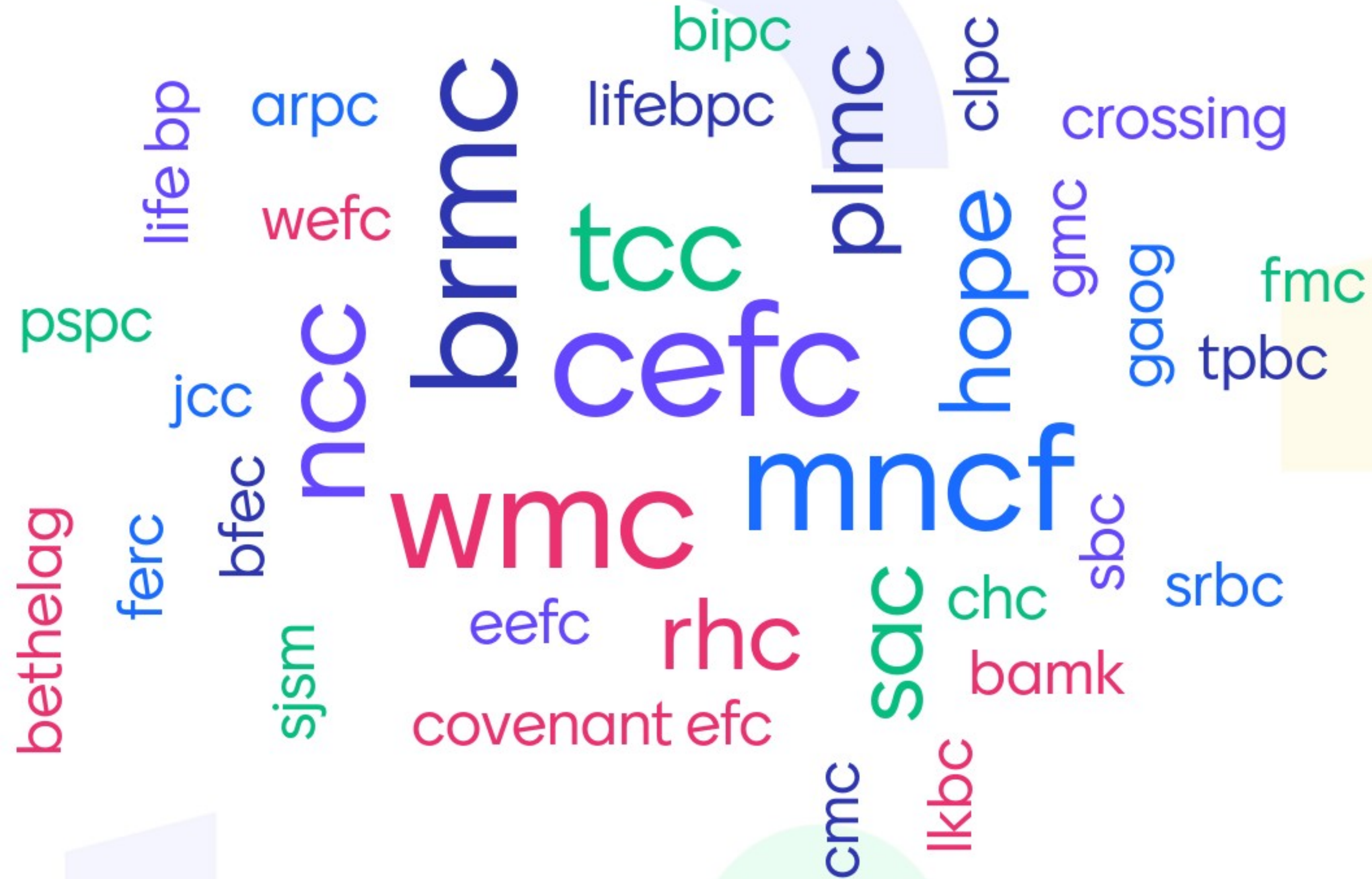


Get to know one another

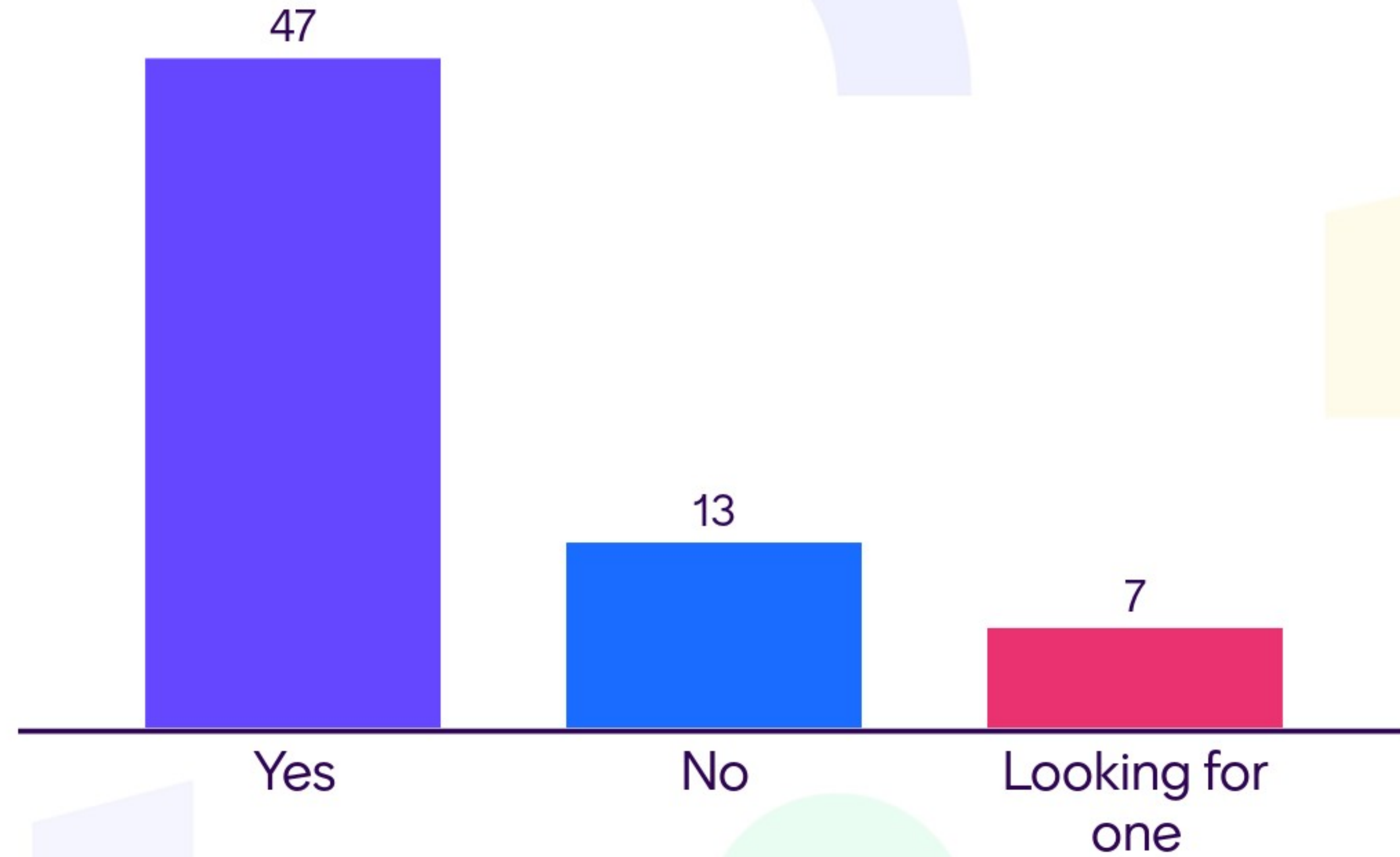
Where are you from?



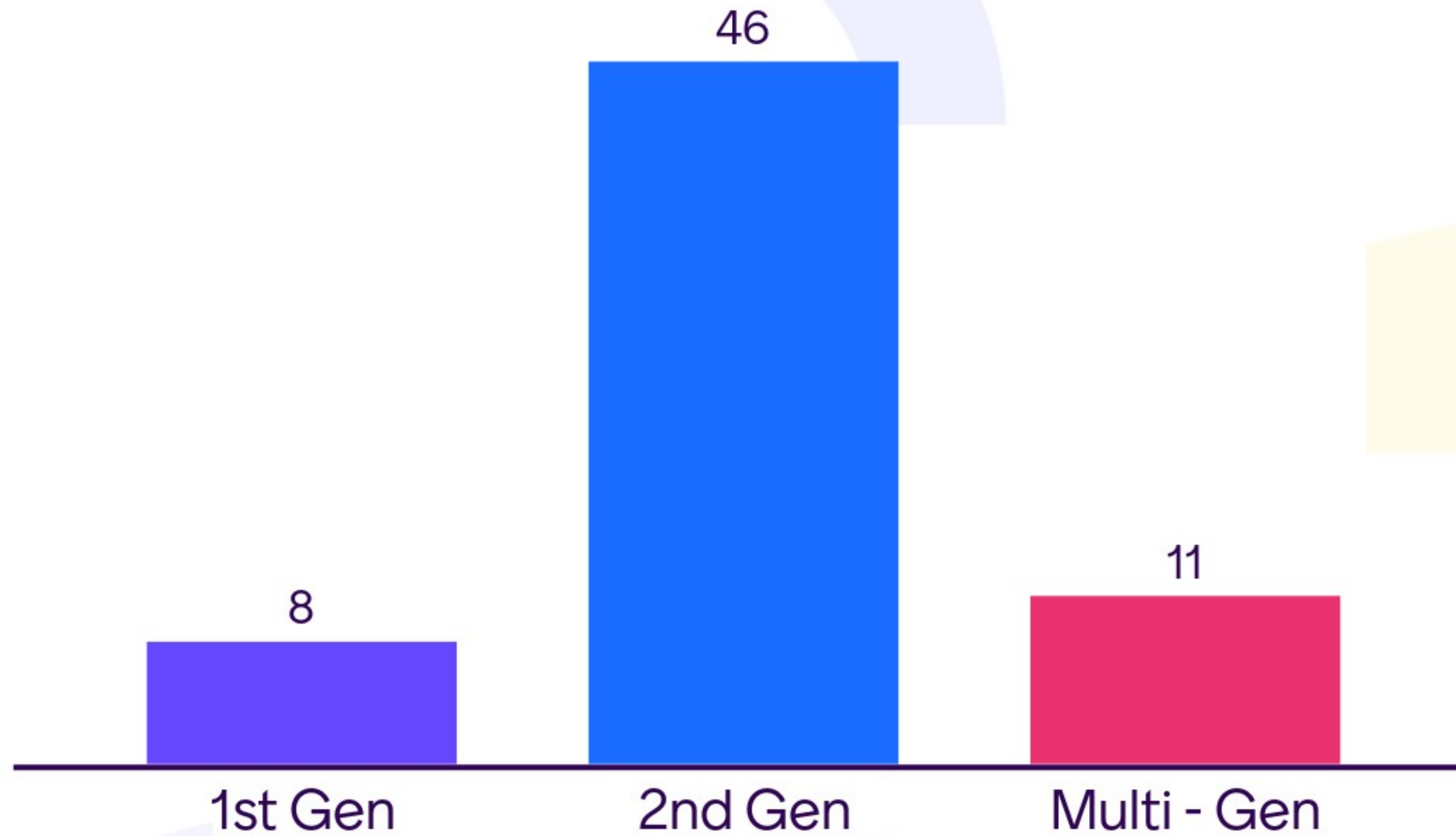
Which Church do you attend? (short form)



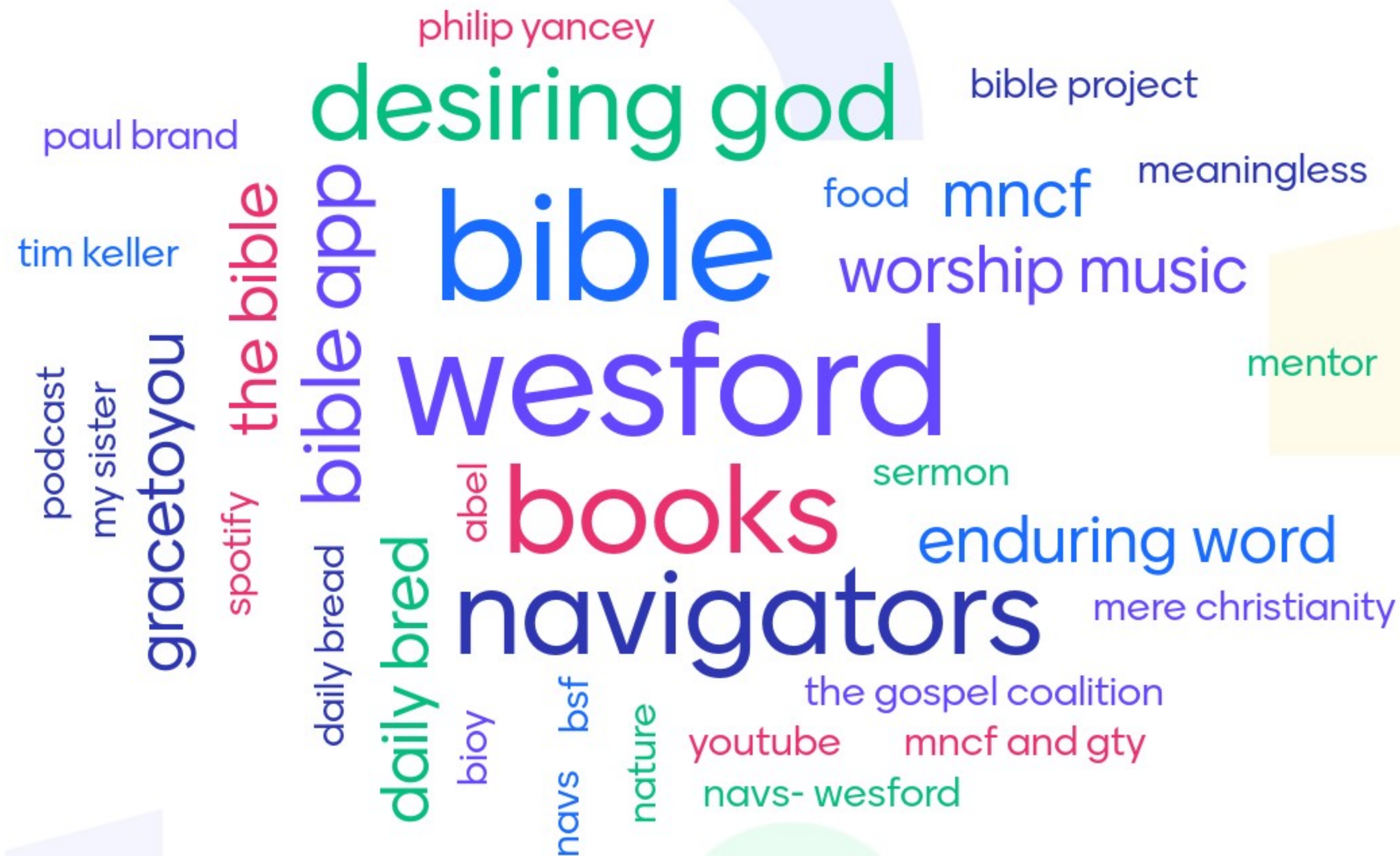
Do you have a regular cell group (other than MINCF)?



Are you first generation or second (or more) generation Christian?



What are your regular sources of spiritual food other than your church? (Podcasts/ websites to recommend)



Let's get serious.

Futility of Medicine

What comes to your mind when you hear the phrase "Medicine is Futile"?

oof

:(

death

sad

Everyone will eventually die

bopes

150k bond broken

Why heal when we're going to die anyway

Ecclesiastes

What comes to your mind when you hear the phrase "Medicine is Futile"?

It is temporary

Take me home

The sovereignty of God

mortality

Dang

Broken healthcare system

Is it really

seded

DNR maxward

What comes to your mind when you hear the phrase "Medicine is Futile"?

Only Caring for earthly bodies

shag

Ya sia

Hopefully untrue

Why did i sacrifice so much for a futile cause

Job, lamentations, suffering

We don't ultimately know if what we do is most beneficial

Even if you heal them now they may not be saved in the end

All is vanity

What comes to your mind when you hear the phrase "Medicine is Futile"?

Ecc 3:18

"Medicine is a gift from God" - true or false?



0
False

7
Hmm. Not sure

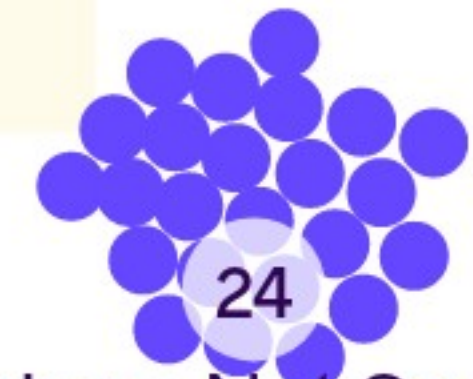
"Medicine is futile" - true or false?



True



False



Hmm. Not Sure

Can both statements be true at the same time?



Hmm not sure.

Important Clarification

Truths do not cancel out one another.



Share your thoughts anytime.

8 questions
3 upvotes

Observations

- "Medicine is a Gift" appears to be more accepted
- Culture today - similar
- Remember - gospel is "counter-cultural"



Format

- Not here to give you my opinion
- We seek God's wisdom through the plain reading of scripture.
- Scripture is the interpreter our experiences, not the other way round
- We must accept what is revealed to be true
- We are all seeking Him and no one greater than the other



Rom 8:20-23

Futility's Hope

Observations/ Meaning

1. Reality of Futility
2. Hope of Futility
3. Product of Futility

20 For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope **21** that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. **22** For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. **23** And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.



Book of Romans

- Author - Paul
- Written to the church in Rome; capital of Roman Empire
- Purpose was to teach the gospel to believers who never received apostolic instructions
- "If the bible were a ring, Romans would be the diamond and chapter 8 would be the sparkle"
- [Romans 1-2] Man's Condemnation
- [Romans 3-5] Justification
- [Romans 6-8] Sanctification





Paul

- Paul (Saul is the Hebrew Name)
- Resume in Phi 3:5-6, trained under Gamaliel (Acts 22:3)
- Persecuter to Proclaimer; converted along Damascus Road (Acts 9)
- Physically unimpressive (2Cor 10:10)
- Received doctrine directly from God in Arabia (Gal 1:17-18)



Reality of Futility

Part 1



Rom 8:20-23

Futility's Hope

Observations/ Meaning

1. Reality of Futility
 - a. Reality
 - b. Not willingly
 - c. God subjected it
2. Hope of Futility
3. Product of Futility

20 For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope **21** that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. **22** For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. **23** And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

"Subjected" - Greek hypotassō

- Hebrews 2:7-8
- You made him for a little while lower than the angels; you have crowned him with glory and honor, putting everything in **subjection** under his feet." Now in putting everything in **subjection** to him, he left **nothing outside his control**.
- **Subjection** = within his control



Open ended reflection. What are your thoughts on the reality of futility in medicine?

shag bro

v deep nvr thought abt it

upsetting

:/

It's true, just like all other endeavours in life

The way we practice futility can create hope for eternity :3

We can try, but ultimately He is in control

I guess its scary at first but actually liberating when i think about it

Liberating, sets us free to find true fulfillment in Christ

Open ended reflection. What are your thoughts on the reality of futility in medicine?

convinced - life on earth is temporary

Futile things are mere glimpses of eternity

while medicine cannot allow us to escape death, it still has the potential to alleviate pain and suffering — is this still deemed futility?

I don't think it is helpful to dwell on it too much on it

We're only here for a short while, eternity without futility is something to look forward to

It is quite nice that we have accepted such a reality yet still strive to provide the best care possible

makes me look forward more to eternity

wonder if there are exceptions to this futility

Medicine shouldn't be my top priority in life

Open ended reflection. What are your thoughts on the reality of futility in medicine?

discouraging initially, but also realising how small we are compared to God and how things on each are temporary

Is the meaning to medicine not the conserve life as much as possible

We can only try, to have hope, for the best outcome

Secular in nature.

makes me recognise where humans are weak, He is strong

but i guess we also can't slack off bc God has called us here?

medicine is given to us by God's grace

Does the reality of futility in medicine mean that we will all eventually die

but is it always

Open ended reflection. What are your thoughts on the reality of futility in medicine?

to live is Christ

We want to solve all problems

People are afraid to admit they are powerless

It's very humbling to admit that we cannot save ourselves by our efforts

the artificial sense/ belief that we are in control

It feels a bit unprofessional to admit that 'I don't know', because everyone loves to know the answers, but sometimes we rly don't know.

*scratch head

Things which perish

Why do you think culture resist in proclaiming that medicine is futile?

they need hope in their lives

not all believe in life after death

Fall of man makes us cling onto earthly things

Because it's really discouraging to think about death.

denial of our insufficiency

people fear the unknown - death

"these doctors get paid so much, cfm they can help me"

because everyone wants to think that hope can be found in humans and their abilities to cure them

they don't see the bigger picture that God works through all things...it's a very individualistic kind of perspective where we place our pride in achievements in medicine

Why do you think culture resist in proclaiming that medicine is futile?

comfort oneself for relief of temporary suffering

we want to solve all problems

if not things people do are pointless & people don't want to do pointless things

Some doctors make medicine their personality

You need hope to keep on pushing through life

For profit and worldly meaning

There is a fear of admitting that there are some things we cannot control

pride — and an Indignance towards recognising the limits of our ability

Want to believe that they have control

Why do you think culture resist in proclaiming that medicine is futile?

Knowing the root meaning of subject does bring some comfort - that He is in control

How do you feel about the fact that it is God Himself who subjected medicine to futility?

Like why

He must have a plan in doing so

It is what it is, as He punishes sin and He is just, so it cannot be helped

i think that it is God's plan! to remind us that ultimately it is through Him that all things can work!

I never really thought about this

He must have had his reasons

is like woah

He can do whatever He wants cos He's God

It shows His sovereignty

How do you feel about the fact that it is God Himself who subjected medicine to futility?

bewildered

circle of life on earth

If medicine can solve all problems then medicine will be God

The entire world is subject to futility, to help us to hope for what is to come

I feel comforted knowing that I am not pressurised to always be successful in treating patients as a doctor

r we hyped up to do something that will never succeed

hard to understand initially, but reminds us of who's sovereign

subject myself to Him

It's God's plan for us to turn to Him so that we won't have to go into eternal punishment which is the true futility

How do you feel about the fact that it is God Himself who subjected medicine to futility?

Since He works in all things for the good of those whom He loves, His subjection must be made in Sovereign wisdom in bringing joy and hope

i dont think he subjected medicine specifically to futility - but instead death being an inevitable fact, which then makes medicine futile

scratch head

Good choice, imagine if we don't die... means need to study forever, no thanks

How does God want us to approach life if it is futile?

True purpose found in him

Grateful. Through futility of secular life we find true meaning in God

I feel humbled that no matter how "good of a doctor" that i become, God is still sovereign

Share your thoughts anytime.

8 questions
3 upvotes

Hope of Futility

Part 2



Rom 8:20-23

Futility's Hope

Observations/ Meaning

1. Reality of Futility
2. Hope of Futility
 - a. Will be set free
 - b. Will obtain Glory
 - c. Will be redeemed
3. Product of Futility

20 For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope **21** that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. **22** For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. **23** And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

"Set Free" in Romans/ Mercy and Grace

- **Romans 6:7** For one who has died has been *set free* from sin... alive to God in Christ Jesus
- **Romans 6:18** and, having been *set free* from sin, have become slaves of righteousness.
- **Roman 6:22** But now that you have been *set free* from sin and have become slaves of God,
- **Romans 8:2** For the law of the Spirit of life has *set you free* in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death... Spirit of God dwells in you.
- **Romans 8:21** that the creation itself will be *set free* from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God.





Redemption

→ Romans 3:24-25

- and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the **redemption** that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation **by his blood**

→ Ephesians 1:7

- In him we have **redemption** through his **blood**, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace,



Open ended reflection. What are your thoughts on the hope given to us amidst futility?

Yay there is a solution, not all hope is lost

:D

comforted

Encouraged that despite Medicine's futility, hope in God still remains

Gives purpose

Wondering whether we have been putting our hope in the wrong place all along

how does that change what we do right now as we await the future

I should be more concerned about my spiritual condition than my next exam

Then why do we hope? And why do some get their hopes realised and others don't?

Open ended reflection. What are your thoughts on the hope given to us amidst futility?

Medicine should be used to guide and direct our patients to the real truth and hope

Medicine might save us from a worldly death, but Jesus saves us from the depths of hell. Look to Jesus.

i think it sets us free from striving in our own efforts

I think its a relief to know that all these things including our own efforts and ability are futile, instead being in the absolute control of a God who loves us

I am a mere human. I strive forward based on "hope". There is no time to think of failure.

their own strength

It's God's way of turning us to Him

Our hope in God is realised in futility of the world and human actions. This hope enables us to carry on living in this secular world as a believer of Christ

God provides us a hope in futility - Christ Himself.

Where do you see the world finding their hope in?

Human ability

Money, fame and fortune

Human leadership

Success

better days ahead

Achievements, recognition by man

Fame, youth, beauty

Their partner

distractions in wordly things - money, career, family

God provides us a hope in futility - Christ Himself.

Where do you see the world finding their hope in?

Tangible things like money

MRI scanner

relationships

stability, security in job, relationships, family, wealth

Achurvements

Focusing on tangible things

passing mbbs

earthly things

Things which perish

God provides us a hope in futility - Christ Himself.

Where do you see the world finding their hope in?

3Gs - girls, glory, gold

Wesford

1 John 2:16 "For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world."

Wesford

Corticosteroids

Where do *you* often find hope in the midst of futility? What is so tempting about them?

that God has a plan

Purpose beyond things of this earth

own ability and solutions

validation from others:"

Myself - because I believe i can
change things

Sometimes in my friends and their
advice ashamedly

family - seems like its not wrong to do
so unlike money career etc.

Physical Pleasure - it is within the
control of my flesh, whereas joy from
God is a gift (Rom 5:5)

knowledge

Where do *you* often find hope in the midst of futility? What is so tempting about them?

Grades

Loved ones

Word of God

Run away from the issue

Wesford

Online shopping LOL. I'm very
susceptible to ads

Validation and approval

Words of affirmation and recognition
from others

The instant gratification of peoples
approval, whether our doctors/tutors
or friends

Where do *you* often find hope in the midst of futility?

What is so tempting about them?

Feeling in control or trying to control things on my own

Rationalisation that time will pass and eventually it will all be okay

Relationships

Share your thoughts anytime.

8 questions
3 upvotes

Product of Futility

Part 3



Rom 8:20-23

Futility's Hope

Observations/ Meaning

1. Reality of Futility
2. Hope of Futility
3. Product of Futility
 - a. Groaning inwardly
 - b. Waiting eagerly

20 For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope **21** that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. **22** For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. **23** And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

2 Different Groanings

- Inward Groaning (God directed)
 - 2Cor 5:2 - in this tent we groan, longing to put on our heavenly dwelling
- Outwards (Self focused)
 - Heb 13:17 - let them do this with joy and not with groaning (servants and master)
 - James 5:9 - do not grumble against one another



Waiting Eagerly

→ Philippians 3:20

- But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we **await** a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.

→ Galatians 5:5

- For through the Spirit, by faith, we ourselves **eagerly wait** for the hope of righteousness.

Open ended reflection. What are your thoughts on the desired emotions in response to the hope of futility?

no wonder i sigh everyday in the hospital

difficult to not groan outwardly

Come Lord Jesus :)

I like the differentiation of groaning inwardly vs outwardly

i think it is difficult to do so when its difficult to not find pleasure in wordly things i.e when life is smooth and going well

I need to rely on God

It helps me to redirect my frustration to a place of hope

Sigh with frustration at the futility of medicine but sigh with contentment at being fully satisfied by the hope that Jesus provides

How often do you find yourself "groaning inwardly" and "waiting eagerly" for Christ?



At least once a day



At least once a week



At least once a month



Hardly

Why that frequency?

Life is pain

distracted by the things of the earth, and especially when things are going well it's easy to forget God

Because they are still temptations of futile things, masked as "achievements"

I am too distracted by futile things like studies and social life

sometimes the return of Christ seems too far away

busy and distracted

Easy to get caught up in life

too caught up with worldly things so end up forgetting about God

It's emotionally taxing to think about

Why that frequency?

Easy to forget or not think about it

damn busy bro

tend to groan without waiting eagerly

i often groan outwardly first before remembering to look to God

How may we tend to lead our lives when we reject/
forget the reality of futility? (Other than not inwardly
groaning/ waiting eagerly)



How should we live our lives (in medicine/ nursing) in light of the reality and hope in futility? (Other than inwardly groaning and eagerly waiting)

Do our best with what we are given

to do our best in wherever God has placed us, but continue to hold on to the hope that Christ has given us

being salt and light in our profession

"but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect," 1 Peter 3:15

To not become overly attached to the results, but to do what we know and leave the rest to Him and be assured that it is in His plan

live with expectation that Jesus is coming back

Whatever we end up doing in the end, seek God first before all else because it's pointless to seek other things.

Do everything we do to God and not for the things of this world

to live is for Christ and to die in Gain

How should we live our lives (in medicine/ nursing) in light of the reality and hope in futility? (Other than inwardly groaning and eagerly waiting)

While we work to do well where God has placed us, we don't let these things turn into idols

Share your thoughts anytime.

8 questions
3 upvotes



How do / apply this truth at the work place?

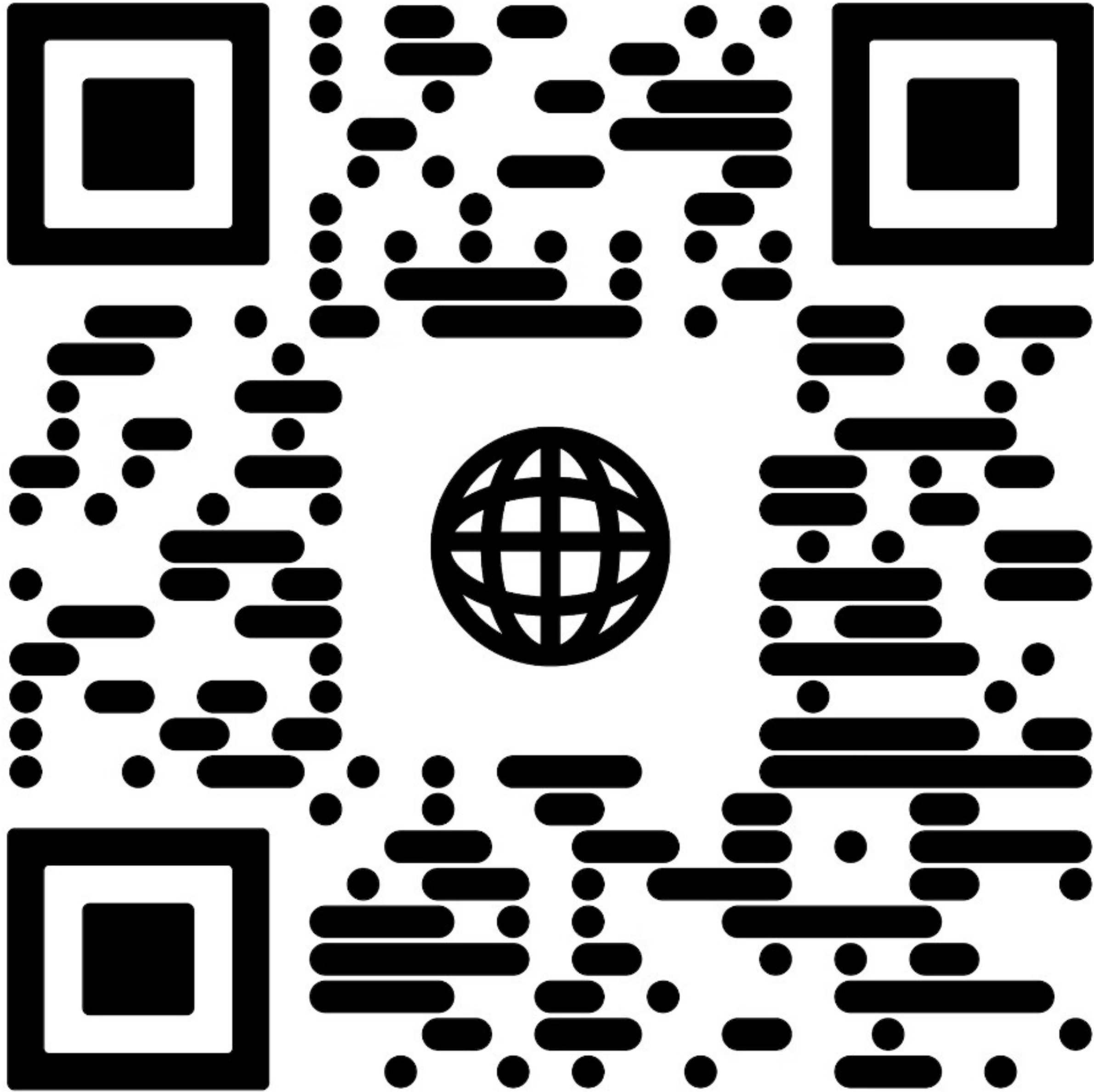
- My previous life
- The Temptation
- Remembering the truth
- Living out the truth (imperfectly)

Important Clarification (Again)

Truths do not cancel out one another.

Share your thoughts anytime.

8 questions
3 upvotes



My testimony

Testimony and Slides (uploaded later) on website.

Connect with me on instagram
@mokingren

