



**Personal & Group Study Guide:** April 24, 2022

**Message Series:** True or False: Fact-Checking Controversial Christian Claims

**Message Title:** SOCIAL MEDIA IS EVIL

**Series Intro:** Today we're starting a new series called - **True or False: Fact-Checking Controversial Christian Claims**. We're going to dig into some pretty serious topics ranging from social media and climate change to drinking alcohol and God's preferred pronouns. Every week, you'll have the opportunity to tell us where you land on each "Christian claim" by answering *true, mostly true, mostly false, or false* and we'll share the results at the start of every message.

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Before hearing this message, what was your general opinion of social media and its effects? What experiences - whether positive or negative - led you to that conclusion?

What are some of the most "evil" aspects of social media as we know it today? And what are some of its more positive contributions to our lives?

### **Biblical Wisdom about Social Media**

**1. Social Media is like a \_\_\_\_\_.**

How have you (or other people you've witnessed) used social media to build up rather than tear down, and to add to people's lives instead of diminishing their value?

Read Ephesians 4:29. Whether we're talking about social media or everyday life in the real world, what changes would you have to make in order to obey this passage?

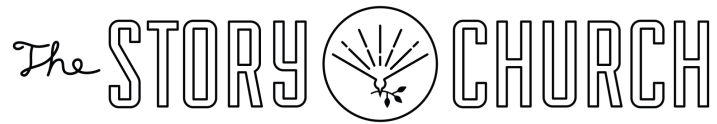
**2. Social Media is like \_\_\_\_\_.**

Read Eph. 5:15-16. Given what we know about other harmful addictions (alcohol, etc.) and what we know about how addictive social media can be, why do you think so many people (esp. parents) tend to be complacent about the effects of social media on young people?

**3. Social Media is like a \_\_\_\_\_.**

Read Colossians 3:1-2. How does social media serve to show us who we really are?

Of the suggestions offered at the end of this message, which will be the most helpful to you, and which will be the most difficult to implement? As you transform your social media habits, what people, groups, spiritual disciplines (Bible Study, prayer, etc) will you look to for support and accountability?



**Personal & Group Study Guide:** May 1, 2022

**Message Series:** True or False: Fact-Checking Controversial Christian Claims

**Message Title:** YOU CAN LOVE JESUS AND HATE CHURCH

**Series Intro:** True or False: Fact-Checking Controversial Christian Claims. In this series we are digging into some pretty serious topics ranging from social media and climate change to drinking alcohol and God's preferred pronouns. Every week, you'll have the opportunity to tell us where you land on each "Christian claim" by answering *true, mostly true, mostly false, or false* and we'll share the results to start every message.

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Before hearing this message, how would you define church?

What are the most common critiques Christians have concerning the church?

**What is The Church?**

What is the definition of the Greek word *Ekklesia*?

Read Ephesians 5:29-32

What images does Paul use to describe the relationship between The Church and Jesus?

The Church is the \_\_\_\_\_ of Christ

The Church is the \_\_\_\_\_ of Christ

If the Church is the Bride of Christ, how does that make it impossible to hate the Church?

How does your relationship with the church affect your relationship with Jesus? What areas of the Church do you feel called to support, encourage, or correct?

With your small group, or sometime this week read Revelation 21:1-14. How does passage change your perception of the Christ and Christ's love for it?



Personal & Group Study Guide: May 8, 2022

Message Series: True or False: Fact-Checking Controversial Christian Claims

Message Title: GOD'S PREFERRED PRONOUNS ARE HE/HIM/HIS

**Series Intro:** True or False: Fact-Checking Controversial Christian Claims. In this series we are digging into some pretty serious topics ranging from social media and climate change to drinking alcohol and God's preferred pronouns. Every week, you'll have the opportunity to tell us where you land on each "Christian claim" by answering *true, mostly true, mostly false, or false* and we'll share the results to start every message.

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What is your general reaction or response to the various scandals related to gender and preferred pronouns in our culture, and why?

“In today’s climate, gender has been branded as an ephemeral, intangible thing, something that can’t be described or explained beyond one’s personal experiences and self-identification...But denying biology will not help us live more productive, meaningful lives. Instead, hiding biological facts only sends us back to the Dark Ages to stumble around, rediscovering what we already know. Scientifically speaking, sex and gender can only be understood as binary.” - Dr. Debra Soh, The End of Gender

Based on the excerpt above, why do you think many biologists and other scientists struggle with common, modern assumptions such as “Gender is fluid,” and “There are more than two genders”?

Read Genesis 1:26-27. What does the Bible say about God’s view of gender?

Read 1 Corinthians 9:19-23. How would you summarize Paul’s approach to reaching the lost?

As Christians living in these modern times, we can:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ without \_\_\_\_\_.  
Notes and Bible Passages:
  
2. \_\_\_\_\_ without \_\_\_\_\_.  
Notes and Bible Passages:
  
3. \_\_\_\_\_ without \_\_\_\_\_.  
Notes and Bible Passages:

What is the biblical view of today’s controversial claim, and why?



Personal & Group Study Guide: May 15, 2022

Message Series: True or False: Fact-Checking Controversial Christian Claims

Message Title: DRINKING ALCOHOL IS A SIN

Series Intro: True or False: Fact-Checking Controversial Christian Claims. In this series we are digging into some pretty serious topics ranging from social media and climate change to drinking alcohol and God's preferred pronouns. Every week, you'll have the opportunity to tell us where you land on each "Christian claim" by answering *true, mostly true, mostly false, or false* and we'll share the results to start every message.

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Okay, first question: do you think there will be alcohol in Heaven? Why/why not? And what about Hell? Do you think Satan will be serving any adult beverages? Why/why not?

In The Story's community survey, well over 90% of people said the claim, "Drinking alcohol is a sin" is either totally or mostly FALSE - far and away the most overwhelming consensus we've had on any topic in this series. Why do you think that's the case?

Recent reports show that heavy drinking has been on the rise since March 2020 (the beginning of the pandemic). How has your (and/or your household's) alcohol consumption changed over the past couple of years? What factors have contributed to that change?

The Bible has a lot of good things to say about alcohol (and wine in particular). Take a moment to read Deuteronomy 11:13-14, Psalm 104:10-15, Isaiah 55:1, Matthew 11:18-19, and 1 Timothy 5:22-23. Summarize the Bible's view of wine in these passages.

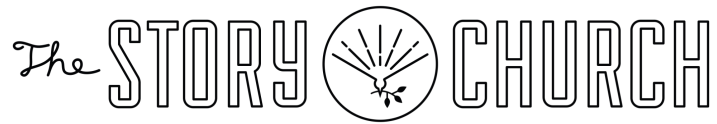
However, there is no shortage of warnings throughout the Bible about drinking alcohol. According to Scripture, drinking alcohol IS a SIN if YOU:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ it. (*Ephesians 5:6-14, Luke 8:17*)  
*Your Notes:*
2. \_\_\_\_\_ it. (*Ephesians 5:15-21, Proverbs 21:17, Matthew 6:21*)  
*Your Notes:*
3. \_\_\_\_\_ it. (*Proverbs 23:29-35, Galatians 5:19-21*)  
*Your Notes:*

\_\_\_\_\_ isn't always a sin, but in the Bible, \_\_\_\_\_ always is.

Although it is one of God's good gifts, alcohol has the potential to affect us all in negative ways. Even if you don't have a personal problem with drinking, you almost certainly love someone who does. With that in mind, name a few things that you, with God's help, can change about yourself to approach alcohol from a more biblical point of view:

*For more resources or to get help with an alcohol-related problem, visit [samhsa.gov](http://samhsa.gov) or email [pastors@thestory.church](mailto:pastors@thestory.church) today!*



Personal & Group Study Guide: May 22, 2022

Message Series: True or False: Fact-Checking Controversial Christian Claims

Message Title: CHRISTIANS SHOULD CARE ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE

**Series Intro:** True or False: Fact-Checking Controversial Christian Claims. In this series we are digging into some pretty serious topics ranging from social media and climate change to drinking alcohol and God's preferred pronouns. Every week, you'll have the opportunity to tell us where you land on each "Christian claim" by answering *true, mostly true, mostly false, or false* and we'll share the results to start every message.

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Were you surprised by the results of this week's community poll? Why or why not? Why do you think many people often assume that Christians don't care about climate change?

In this message, we'll offer four statements about which everyone - Christian and non-Christian alike - can agree. We'll call these our "WHAT" statements. Even though our "WHAT" is the same, our "WHY" can be very different. For each of these "WHAT" statements, we'll compare the "Christian" WHY with the "secular" WHY.

**WHAT** Statement #1 - THE EARTH IS \_\_\_\_\_

The Christian *WHY*: "...BECAUSE \_\_\_\_\_ AND \_\_\_\_\_"  
(Read: Genesis 1:1, Genesis 1:31, and Psalm 24:1) *Your notes:*

The Secular *WHY*: "...BECAUSE \_\_\_\_\_"  
*Your notes:*

**WHAT** Statement #2 - WE ARE \_\_\_\_\_

The Christian *WHY*: "...BECAUSE \_\_\_\_\_ AND \_\_\_\_\_"  
(Read: Genesis 1:28) *Your notes:*

The Secular *WHY*: "...BECAUSE \_\_\_\_\_"  
*Your notes:*

**WHAT** Statement #3 - THE EARTH IS \_\_\_\_\_

The Christian *WHY*: "...BECAUSE \_\_\_\_\_"  
(Read: Romans 8:19-24) *Your notes:*

The Secular *WHY*: "...BECAUSE \_\_\_\_\_"  
*Your notes:*

**WHAT** Statement #4 - THERE'S STILL \_\_\_\_\_

The Christian *WHY*: "...BECAUSE \_\_\_\_\_"  
Read: Colossians 1:15-20 *Your notes:*

The Secular *WHY*: "...BECAUSE \_\_\_\_\_"  
*Your notes:*

What are the tangible connections between loving God and neighbor, and caring for the Earth? What are you willing to do differently THIS WEEK to participate in God's redemption of ALL CREATION by loving God and your neighbors?