

Be true to yourself - discard religion if you don't believe in it

Be true to yourself - do not pretend to believe in religion when you don't, admit it when you are not a member in the sense of being a believing member.

Never pretend.

Sometimes the person who has renounced membership of the Christian faith in their hearts will still behave outwardly as a believer to placate relatives and friends who believe that ex-Christians are damned to Hell forever. That is a mistake. First of all, you have the right to ask your relatives and friends to respect your sincerity as a virtue not as a vice that you will be punished for. If their doctrine is about love they must be asked to respect their own doctrine by loving you. If anybody wants to claim that they have the right to have their beliefs respected, then we have the right to expect them and ask them to be consistent with these beliefs. Secondly, you have a right to be you. It is your life. Thirdly, just because they think you are a Christian does not mean that what they think is helping them. They might still be worried sick that you may go to Hell. They might be better helped to leave the faith. And you can't be an inspiration to them unless you yourself leave and show an example of good and happy living that impresses them. Doing that is helping them to think about quitting.

If you are forced to keep up religious observance then keep looking for an opportunity to escape. At least get your name removed from the membership records if this can be done discreetly.