


STATEMENT ON RELIGIOUS EXEMPTION

Fairview Bible Church
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tanding in the ancient Christian tradition, and committed to the doctrinal standards and supremacy of the Holy Scriptures, Fairview Bible Church affirms our religion's principles of liberty of conscience, honoring and preserving human life from fertilization to natural death, as well as the sovereignty of individuals and families in medical and healthcare decision-making.

Therefore, we state our unequivocal support for the right of refusal of mandatory medical procedures, in the event that an individual sincerely believes his or her life, health, wellbeing, or morality is potentially threatened by such procedures or products, or in the event that a parent has the same concern for his or her child.

Furthermore, we affirm that a Christian's conscience can properly and validly submit to medical procedures, such as in the taking of tested and proven medications and vaccines, giving thanks to God whose ordering of His creation has allowed such wondrous advancements. At the same time, we affirm that many sound bases may exist for a Christian to refuse similar treatments, and we affirm that our Christian religion protects the liberty of individuals and families to refuse any medical procedure or product on the basis of sincerely held concerns for known or unknown side effects, experimental or emergency uses, potential involvement in fetal cell lines whether in development or testing, or medical and/or political corruption or coercion. We additionally affirm that parents, and parents alone, have the right and responsibility to make such decisions for their children as well, without external interference.

Most foundationally, it is the historic teaching of the Christian church and the holy Scriptures that it is sinful for a Christian to violate his conscience (Romans 14:23). To violate one's conscience is sin, and to attempt to coerce another to go against conscience is also sin.

By the very nature of a religious objection, it is not expected that an employer or civil magistrate who does not share the religious or conscientious views of the individual objecting will be able to understand and thus to properly evaluate, pass judgement on, approve or disapprove of one's sincerely held religious beliefs. Rather, the principle of liberty of conscience being enunciated and protected in the U.S. and state constitutions, it is the responsibility of said employer or civil magistrate to make proper accommodations for the religious objections of the individual. However, in the spirit of transparency and collegiality, we offer the following, non-exhaustive, summary explanation of the primary concerns a Christian may variously hold concerning this matter.

First, all human beings having been created in the image of God, and, as Christians, our bodies being temples of God the Holy Spirit, we are taught by our Lord not to knowingly, irresponsibly, and recklessly do something (to ourselves, our children, or others) we believe will inflict serious harm or degrade the body—particularly when it seems the risks far outweigh any potential marginal benefit. This certainly applies when one is persuaded that a procedure could threaten the life, future health, future fertility, and/or wellbeing of themselves, their children, or others.

Second, Christians are forbade by our Lord from participating in idolatrous activity. Many Christians believe the issues, practices, and responses surrounding the COVID-19 crisis have become matters of public idolatry—of worshiping false gods. The state has positioned itself as the ultimate entity demanding our supreme and absolute allegiance—an allegiance a Christian can only rightly render unto God. The response of the general populace has also betrayed a worship not only of the state, but of self—of physical comfort, health, and safety—and a concurrent reliance on and trust in the state to provide for, justify, and sanctify. Moreover,

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Christians are urged by the Scriptures to resist such idolatry and statism as fundamentally wicked and demonic (Revelation 13:4-18). Therefore, a Christian's conscience may reasonably prevent them from partaking of an activity or procedure they believe to be indistinguishably linked to, or a result of, idolatry.

Third, the plain connection these vaccinations have to fetal cell lines derived from aborted human children is undeniable and wicked. It is well-known that Christians have ancient and profound religious objections to the practice of abortion, and are deeply concerned about any potential complicity in such evil. We condemn as a blatant act of rebellion and murder the destruction of the lives of unique pre-born humans in the womb (Exodus 21:22-23; Luke 1:41-44). Therefore, a Christian may reasonably hold a conscientious objection to receiving a vaccination which resulted from, or in any way benefited from, the fetal cell lines derived from abortions. We furthermore recognize a legitimate distinction between common medicines that have variously been tested with fetal cell lines, but which did not depend upon the abortion industry for their discovery, development, or production, and vaccines which are dependent upon the immoral use of fetal cell lines for their development, approval, or ongoing production.

Moreover, as Christians, we are not scofflaws. We worship a king, Jesus Christ, who not only saved us from our sin by His grace, but also instructs us to obey His rule and command. We furthermore believe that civil government is not simply a necessary evil, but is rather a good and God-given institution. We believe the civil magistrate is a minister of God to punish the wrongdoer and praise the good. We are, therefore, eager to obey the lawful orders of our civil rulers, and to honor them, as the apostle Peter urges us (1 Peter 2:13-17).

Consequently, however, when the requirements of man are in conflict with the law of God, Christians have the right and duty to obey God rather than man (Acts 5:29). To do otherwise is flagrant idolatry. Furthermore, it has been the historic teaching of Christianity that when a civil official seeks to exercise authority which has not been lawfully delegated to his office, he wrongly reaches beyond the scope of his jurisdiction and acts as a private individual, without the authority of office, and thus may be disregarded in that instance (2 Kings 11). Christians, therefore, must not obey rulers when they command that which Scripture forbids, or forbid that which Scripture requires, and moreover are free to use prudence and wisdom when magistrates otherwise seek to reach beyond their lawful jurisdiction (Acts 9:23-25; 1 Peter 2:14).

To reiterate, however, the foundational issue is that it is sinful for a Christian to violate his conscience. If a Christian believes that partaking in any activity would cause him to sin or to be complicit in sin, then he must abstain from such activity (1 Corinthians 8:7; 1 Corinthians 10:14-33). Moreover, it is forbidden to coerce or otherwise pressure another to violate his conscience (Romans 14:14 ff.), whether or not their particular reasons are understood or agreed upon. As Martin Luther put it, until the Christian is otherwise convinced "by Scripture and plain reason," "to go against conscience is neither right nor safe." In short, a person who is conscientiously opposed to receiving a vaccine is bound by God not to do so. To violate one's conscience is sin; and to attempt to coerce an individual to go against conscience is also sin.

Therefore, we affirm that Christians have the right and the responsibility to research fully the issues relevant to all such medical matters; that free flow of information must be guaranteed and protected; and that we have the right to make responsible medical decisions for ourselves and our children, including refusing experimental and/or mandatory procedures, vaccination, or gene therapies upon sound religious grounds. We likewise call upon all governmental agencies, businesses, schools, and employers to respect these deeply held religious convictions, and to honor our religious liberty and freedom of conscience by granting religious exemptions as requested.