



## COVID Vaccine – Grace Gathering Elder Statement

The Covid-19 pandemic that has afflicted all nations around the globe has forced people everywhere to make very unusual and difficult decisions about their own care and the care of others. Most recently, many are facing decisions related to taking the vaccine that is now becoming available. The Elders at Grace Gathering have been asked to review some of the issues that are being propagated in various media streams regarding this vaccine. This document is a response to that request.

None of the elders at Grace are medical professionals, nor are any of us trained in the scientific principles that make up a viral pandemic and the vaccine. Therefore, we will not comment on the medical and technical details of the vaccine. We will leave that to individuals to research for themselves. The CDC website and state and local health boards have helpful website postings addressing some of these issues.

What we will address in this document are some of the issues that have spiritual connections. We will start by addressing a few of conspiracy theories and then provide some biblical principles that may apply to questions about a vaccine. Lastly, we have included our recommendations regarding the vaccine.

### Conspiracy Theories

There are a number of conspiracy theories floating around social media and other media outlets. A couple of these have gained more notoriety recently because of public comments made a popular entertainer. One such conspiracy is the vaccine will inject a microchip for tracing the recipient. A second theory is the vaccine is from Satan or is the “mark of the beast” mentioned in the book of Revelation (Rev 13:15-18). Thirdly, some Christians are concerned about the use of fetal tissues in the vaccine.

#### Micro Chips

The vaccine does not contain microchips. There are no tracer chips (either RFID or GPS) that are small enough to pass through the needle of a vaccine syringe. Although RFID chips have been implanted in human researchers, these chips are typically about 12mm x 2mm in size. This is too large for a needle. GPS trackers are even larger and require a battery to operate.

This conspiracy may have its roots in the development of a special syringe that has been considered for the delivery of the vaccine. This syringe was developed with an RFID marker chip in the syringe itself. This is used to track data elements such as the syringe identity, vaccine lot numbers and expiration date. This RFID chip is physically located on the syringe, it is not injected with the vaccine. This particular syringe is not being used with the vaccines that are currently approved for use.

#### Vaccine is from Satan (Mark of the Beast)

Vaccines have been in common use for many decades and have been a huge benefit to human society. These other vaccines have not been associated with Satan or the mark of the beast from

Revelation. Only now is that theory circulating. Part of this theory is derived from the micro chip discussed above by assuming that this chip will be used somehow as a means of identifying individuals to “receive a mark on their right hands or their foreheads, so that they could not buy or sell things...” (Rev 13:16-17). This imagery does not line up with a vaccine injection, and the impossibility of injecting a micro chip has been discussed above.

This conspiracy may have arisen because of a misunderstanding of a chemical used in the laboratory testing of the virus and cell samples called “Luciferous”. Luciferous is the chemical in fireflies that make them glow. Scientists use this same chemical in their laboratory samples to help illuminate their samples to understand how the Covid virus infects cells. This chemical was named by a scientist over 120 years ago based on the Latin root word meaning light. Unfortunately, Lucifer is also a common name for Satan or the devil based on the same Latin word. This could be a cause of confusion and misunderstanding.

### **Fetal Tissue**

It is true that some cells that were derived from fetal tissues obtained multiple decades ago were used in testing and validating some of the vaccines. However, there are no human cells or fetal tissues in the vaccine itself. Some Covid vaccines were developed and tested without the use of any of these fetal tissue cell lines.

The head of the U.S. National Institutes of Health (NIH) is an outspoken Christian. He addressed some of the moral issues concerning the Covid Vaccine in a recent Washington Post article. Regarding the moral issue of fetal tissues he says, “I point to the Catholic Church, which has had a very thoughtful deliberation about this going further back, where they have said it’s ethical for pro-life people to utilize these vaccines, if there are no other alternatives.”

## **Biblical Principles**

Vaccines were not in use or available at the time that Jesus lived or at any time that biblical authors wrote their accounts. Therefore, there is no direct biblical statements promoting or condemning the use of vaccines. Taking a vaccine or not taking one is not in itself a sin issue. This is left as a matter of principle for Christians to determine for themselves. However, there are a couple of biblical principles that can provide some guidance or encouragement for Christians on the use of vaccines.

### **Medicine and Prayer (miracles)**

A large component of Jesus’ ministry was physical healing. Jesus made it clear that this healing is a matter of faith. God desires us to trust in him to take care of us and trust him for all aspects of our lives including our physical health.

However, trusting in God does not exclude the use of medicine. Modern medicine is something that God uses to care for us and provide health. Use of medicine is not in itself an indication of a lack of faith or trust in God. What does matter are the heart issues surrounding these decisions. Modern medicine was not available in Jesus’ day, so it is only natural that miraculous healings were a large component of his ministry.

In I Timothy 5:23, Paul directs Timothy to “Stop drinking only water, and use a little wine because of your stomach and your frequent illnesses.” In this instruction, Paul is recommending wine as a sort of medicine. In James 5:14 it says “Is anyone among you sick? Let them call the elders of the church to pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord.” Some commentators have suggested that the oil in this passage may refer to medicine. Many medicines, especially those in the ancient world, are delivered through an oil. If this is true, then this passage indicates that we should be relying on both faith through prayer and the use of medicine for our personal health.

A vaccine is a form of medicine. The Covid-19 vaccine is no different. God does not reject the use of such medicine for our health and well-being.

### **Concern for Others**

Another concept that is clear in the scriptures is that Christians are to be people who love others and put the needs of others above themselves. There are numerous New Testament passages that make this clear such as Philippians 2:3-4.

Covid-19 is an infectious disease. It not only affects those who are ill, but it can be easily transmitted and affect others as well. The vaccine was developed not just to provide for the well-being of us as individuals, but it is intended to stop the spread of the vaccine for the well-being of others as well. Therefore, determining whether or not to take the vaccine is not just an individual personal issue. It has consequences that can affect others. Electing to take a vaccine can be a form of love and concern for our neighbor as we attempt to limit our own bodies from being agents of disease transmission to others.

### **Grace Gathering Elder Recommendations**

The elders at Grace make the following recommendations regarding the decision whether or not to take the vaccine.

1. First, we recognize that the taking the vaccine is an individual choice. There are no clear biblical mandates on the subject of vaccines, so individuals are free to make the choice according to the prompting and convictions that God places on your heart.
2. Second, we remind you that we are not medical experts. Any medicine should only be taken under the guidance of medical experts. You need to consult your medical doctor when deciding to take a vaccine. Some people do experience allergic reactions or other side effects to medications, so these factors need to be evaluated by medical experts.
3. Third, we do value the vaccine and encourage those who can to take it. This recommendation is made out of our concern for you and your own personal well-being. We also believe taking the vaccine is an act of love toward your neighbor, and aids our community and those around us. As such, it is in line with how Christ demonstrates love for others.
4. Fourth, the elders fully believe that no one who receives the Covid-19 vaccine will be marked with the sign of the beast and no one receiving the vaccine will be guilty of worshipping Satan. There is no cause for spiritual shame or sin in receiving the vaccine.

## References

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