



## THE VACCINATION WARS: A Biblical Response

*"Therefore I shall ask God mercifully to protect us. Then I shall fumigate, help purify the air, administer medicine, and take it. I shall avoid places and persons where my presence is not needed in order not to become contaminated and thus perchance infect and pollute others, and so cause their death as a result of my negligence."*

—Martin Luther During the Bubonic Plague of 1527

### A QUESTION TO PONDER:

Vaccination, or the lack thereof, may be the Grinch that steals Christmas in 2021. According to a new Harris Poll, 50% of vaccinated people are either "extremely" or "considerably" reluctant to allow unvaccinated friends or relatives to spend the holidays with them. What do you think? Are they being fair or unfair to their loved ones?

### INTRODUCTION

Vaccination and masks mandated during this COVID season of our lives are another of the hot button issues that divide Americans along the usual fault lines. According to a 2021 Harris Poll, women are 50% more likely to wear masks and get shots than are men. Urban dwellers are four times more likely to go along with CDC guidelines than are rural folks. Senior citizens are twice as likely to get shots and wear masks than those under age 40.

But, here's the shocker: according to a 2021 survey by the Public Religious Research Institute, the largest group opposed to taking shots or mask mandates is white evangelical Republicans. Only 53% of white

evangelicals plan to get vaccinated or regularly wear masks inside buildings. Is this an issue of politics, medical science, or religion? Let's see what the Bible has to say about this subject.

### **BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES**

The Bible was written 3,400-2,000 years ago, before vaccinations or mask mandates. But, as in every other hot button issue, it has principles that are as relevant as tomorrow's headlines. Here are seven that are profitable to apply to the Vaccine Wars:

#### **1. We are not Autonomous**

- We belong to our Triune God. [1 Corinthians 6:19&20]
- We are our Neighbor's Keepers. [Matthew 22:37-40; Genesis 4:9; John 3:16; John 15:13; 1 John 4:19-21]
- Examples from the Antonine Plague of 166 A.D. and the Bubonic Plague of 1527.

#### **2. Governing Authorities do Have the Responsibility and Right to Institute Protocols that Protect the Public Good.**

- The U.S. Constitution says so, according to framer, James Madison.

"...the powers reserved for the several States will extend to all the objects which, in the ordinary course of affairs concern the life, liberties, and properties of the people, and the internal order, improvement, and prosperity of the State. These reserved powers, are those required for public safety, health, and welfare..."

—James Madison

- Governing Authorities are ordained by God for our good, so we must obey them as long as they don't call us to disobey God. [Romans 13:1-4; Hebrews 13:17]
- In the only government ever designed directly by God, the Mosaic Law, is far more restrictive when it comes to communicable diseases than are any instituted by officials during our current pandemic.

- If we feel the mandates are wrong, or don't come from the right motives, our U.S. form of government gives us an opportunity to change things. But disobedience now is not one of them.

**3. We don't have the option of saying, "Jesus will take care of me, so I don't have to follow medical or safety protocols."**

- God's protection and healing are not mutually exclusive from doctors and medicine. [Old Testament laws; Acts 28:8&9]
- We should not tempt God. [Matthew 4:7]
- Martin Luther's words during the 1527 Bubonic Plague.

**4. Judging the decisions of others is God's business, not ours.**

The Meat-offered-to-idols wars of the First Century. [Romans 14:1 on "disputable matters"]

- 1) **Don't hold others in Contempt.** [Romans 14:4]
- 2) **Don't Judge Others.** [Romans 14:3,4&13]
- 3) **Don't let your decisions become an obstacle for others.** [Romans 14:13]

**5. Christians must be Truth-Tellers.**

- It takes hard work to confirm truth. [I Timothy 2:15]
- Test the Spirits. [I John 4:1]
- A three-fold test before texting, emailing, posting or passing on information: Is it true, is it helpful, and is it necessary?

**6. Decisions have consequences. Once they are made, live with them, don't whine about them.** [Galatians 6:7]

**7. Do not give way to fear.** [John 14:27; Philippians 4:7]

**COVID-19, THE OPPORTUNITY OF AN ETERNAL LIFETIME.**