



# METRO PRAISE INTERNATIONAL

**November 16, 2021**

As Christians in the Protestant tradition, we believe that no one should be made to have anything done to their body against their will or in violation of their conscience. Bodily autonomy and freedom of conscience are enshrined in the Scriptures and in our historic faith. The Lord Jesus Christ said “give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar, and give to God what belongs to God” (Matthew 12:17). As Christians, we are to offer our bodies to God in service and worship (Romans 12:1). We are also to love God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength (Matthew 22:28-32). In short, our bodies and consciences belong to God—not to the state, an employer or any other entity.

For this reason alone, it is evil and tyrannical to leverage one’s livelihood against them as a form of coercion to receive the covid-19 vaccine. Further, the long-term effects of such a novel mRNA treatment are not known. Tens of millions of Americans have legitimate concerns about its potential adverse side-effects, which can take years to materialize. (Hence, why vaccines normally require five or more years of testing before being released to the public.) And early returns—heart issues, fertility issues and deaths linked to the vaccine—should be enough to halt its distribution entirely and render its manufacturers liable for significant damages. But instead, hundreds of millions of people are being pressured to essentially *be* the experimental control group for the vaccine.

We could go further to voice our moral objections to the vaccine’s origination in fetal stem cell research via abortion. This is another matter Christians are deeply convicted about. But the point of this letter is not to exhaustively list all possible objections to the vaccine. It is to declare from a biblical perspective that people should be able to do their own research, have access to the free flow of information, follow the dictates of their conscience, to live free of the fear of coercion, and not to receive unwanted medical treatments—all of which have been threatened in light of the advent of the covid-19 vaccine.

To be clear, we are “for” medical science and consider it a blessing. We respect the decision of those who have chosen freely to receive the covid-19 vaccine based on sound reasoning. But there are enough questions concerning its safety and ethical status that the decision of those who choose to refrain should be likewise honored.

**To Whom It May Concern:**

The elders of Metro Praise International write on the behalf of \_\_\_\_\_ to confirm that his/her sincerely held religious beliefs prevent him from receiving a mandatory COVID-19 vaccination. Our church, for ourselves and our congregants, affirms the right to take religious exemption against mandatory vaccination by governmental authorities and/or employer. Our congregation has also issued a statement confirming this right according to our doctrinal standards and Scripture.

\_\_\_\_\_ application for religious exemption is, therefore, not merely a matter of personal opinion or preference, but of bona fide religious conviction with the support of his/her church. We appreciate your understanding in this matter.

Sincerely,