



# 9 Protests Against COVID Vaccine Mandates

Helping Our Church Think, Discern, and Act  
In Times of Government Overreach

August 2021

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*It behooves every man who values liberty of conscience for himself, to resist invasions of it in the case of others: or their case may, by change of circumstances, become his own.*

**Thomas Jefferson**

*First they came for the socialists, and I did not speak out—  
because I was not a socialist.  
Then they came for the trade unionists, and I did not speak out—  
because I was not a trade unionist.  
Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out—  
because I was not a Jew.  
Then they came for me—  
and there was no one left to speak for me.*

**Martin Niemöller**

*Many bureaucracies have petty authoritarians within them, generating unnecessary rules and procedures simply to express and cement power. Such people produce powerful undercurrents of resentment around them which, if expressed, would limit their expression of pathological power. It is in this manner that the willingness of the individual to stand up for him or herself protects everyone from the corruption of society.*

**Jordan Peterson**

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# Preamble

*Why we've written this document*

**On February 29, 2020, Governor Jay Inslee declared a state of emergency for all counties throughout Washington State.**

This act gave him sole authority to issue proclamations, as if they were law, without the involvement of our elected, legislative representatives. He stated then that it would only be for a short time. That was 18 months ago. He continues to assert that our state remains in a perpetual state of emergency. He has overridden the lawful authority of locally-elected government, including health districts, school boards, county commissioners, mayors, city councils, and law enforcement agencies.

**On August 9, 2021, the governor issued another proclamation mandating COVID-19 vaccination for state employees and healthcare workers.**

He did so as a continued, unchecked use of his "emergency powers," even with the number of daily deaths attributed to COVID well below those of previous waves.

**On August 18, 2021, the governor extended his brazen foray into personal sovereignty and freedom of choice by extending his vaccination mandate to include all employees in public, private, and charter school settings.**

This new mandate grabbed national attention as an unparalleled overreach of executive powers by an American state governor. Overnight, the governor's vaccine mandates became the strictest in the nation. His words to hundreds of thousands of faithful, important, hard-working employees of hospitals, law enforcement agencies, and schools: Get the vaccine or get a new job.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "This is a serious issue. This is not some suggestion or whimsical idea we're floating. It is a job requirement," Inslee said. Excerpt from: Clark, Nell. "Teachers In Washington State Must Get Fully Vaccinated – Or They Could Be Fired." *NPR*, 19 August 2021, <https://www.npr.org/sections/back-to-school-live-updates/2021/08/19/1029282381/teachers-in-washington-state-must-get-vaccinated-or-they-could-be-fired>. Accessed 19 August 2021.

**The governor has issued more than 430 COVID-related proclamations since taking control of the state 18 months ago, and we do not think it will stop.** These latest mandates appear to be part of a broader plan to eventually require even more citizens in Washington State to be vaccinated (or face government mandated repercussions).

**We are not politicians; we are pastors.** Our charge is to minister to the flock God has placed in our care. We do not make a habit, nor do we have a desire, to offer social commentary on every crazy event that happens in the world. So why, you may wonder, have we devoted dozens of pages to something like vaccine mandates?

**The simple answer is that these mandates are directly impacting hundreds of people we love in our church family.** We're writing this in order to help them think as carefully and wisely as possible. We want to equip them to make the best decision for themselves and their families in the very short window of time the governor's mandates have allowed them.<sup>2</sup>

**The religious accommodations included in these mandates have brought many questions our way from people in and outside of our church family.** It is our heart and intention to help shepherd as many as we can who are feeling frustrated, saddened, betrayed, anxious, angry, stuck, confused, uncertain, and stressed.

The sheer volume of requests has made it impossible to respond to each individual, so we decided to speak to as many questions as we could in one place.

We've talked personally with many who will face the loss of their job if they do not comply with the governor's mandates. We've talked personally with state employees who, in meetings with state and CDC doctors, were given three choices: (1) get vaccinated; (2) quit your job; or (3) be arrested and charged with a gross misdemeanor. This is unacceptable.

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<sup>2</sup> This document will serve all of us in thinking through vaccine mandates. These dangerous government overreaches are issues that should concern all American citizens, whether or not you've chosen to receive the vaccination (see the Thomas Jefferson quote on page 2).

The narrow window of time to consider a decision of this magnitude is only adding to the stress of the situation. Hardworking, conscientious Americans are being forced into the terrible position of choosing between their livelihood and their conscience, their career and their convictions, their home and their personal principles.<sup>3</sup>

The governor's position is clear: **citizens' medical privacy and medical freedom no longer exist.** This violation of personal sovereignty is a terrifying step for a government to take and should be viewed as an attack on every individual who values freedom in our state. Perhaps these particular mandates do not offend your sensibilities, raise a personal medical concern, or violate your personal health philosophy or conscience. *But who's to say the next mandate won't?*

This is a moment for all freedom-loving Americans to stand against an unacceptable breach of human dignity and unalienable rights.

We write this with a heart to help those currently staring down the barrel of these mandates with the clock ticking. And because we believe these mandates open up a Pandora's box, we write with the hope that it lives beyond this critical window of time to help all of us think clearly and live courageously in an age of rank government malfeasance.

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<sup>3</sup> This doesn't take into consideration the growing number of employers making the religious accommodation process increasingly complicated in what many employees are feeling is an attempt to undermine their legal rights.

# Our Cards on the Table

We know that not everyone will have the time to read through all we've written, so we want to put our cards on the table as clearly and succinctly as we can.

## **Our Conviction**

We contend that these vaccine mandates are medically unethical, socially divisive, fundamentally immoral, and legally frightening. They are a clear violation of medical privacy and freedom of choice.<sup>4</sup>

## **Our Call**

Such acts should be opposed with whatever means afforded freedom-loving Americans, to include both legal action and peaceful, principled acts of civil disobedience, if necessary.

## **Our Encouragement**

In order to do that, we must have clarity of thought, conviction of principle, and courage of heart. It is our hope that this document will serve to strengthen all three.

## **Our Heart**

As the spiritual leaders of this house, our heart is to lead and care for the people who call Grace City Church home. These proclamations are far-reaching, impact many people in our church family, and contain threats of severe punishment. We wish we could meet face-to-face with each person, but sheer volume of requests along with the time crunch of the mandates' deadlines have made that impossible.

Therefore, we find it necessary—for the sake of shepherding those God has put in our charge—to make our position as elders clear on mandates of this kind. We do so in the hope this helps our church family think biblically and wisely about how to stand with integrity and grace in these complicated times.

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<sup>4</sup> We are also concerned these mandates are pretext for continued attacks undermining parental consent. Parents' rights to make informed decisions for their children's education and health is foundational to our nation's experiment in freedom. The body count is high of people who died to secure these rights, the same rights that are now being systematically assaulted in the state of Washington under the governor's leadership.

# A Brief History

This is not the first time we've addressed this issue. In response to the governor's actions in 2020, we wrote *9 Critical Lenses to Help See COVID More Clearly*. We wrote that document to explain to our church family the elders' decision to reopen our weekly worship gatherings, in spite of the governor's standing orders that made gathering and singing as a church "illegal."

In that document, we demonstrated that the governor's sole aim to reduce COVID-positive cases, no matter the cost, was a fool's errand. We detailed the ways in which inhibiting personal freedoms, shutting down schools, forcing businesses to close, weaponizing bureaucratic offices for regulatory and punitive purposes against law-abiding citizens, and decimating nearly every sector of society was grossly irresponsible and categorically unwise. In short, it was a failure in leadership of catastrophic proportions.

We argued that the overreaction and overreach in 2020 would cause significant collateral damage and set dangerous precedents. We have seen the collateral damage. It is everywhere we look.<sup>5</sup> Now, another dangerous precedent is being set wherein one man exercising unchecked power can make irreversible health decisions for citizens against their will.

Once politicians taste power, they rarely lose their appetite for it. Our form of government acknowledges there is great danger in concentrating power in the office of one man. Executive emergency powers, as allowed by state law, were designed for

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<sup>5</sup> While we will note a few here for illustration, that is not the focus of this work. However, this topic is worthy of serious, focused attention at some point. Every action by the government comes with tradeoffs. The COVID tradeoff being that in an effort to save a few, many more have been sacrificed. Take this one example, for instance; less than 1/10th of 1% (or 0.075%) of people in our two-county area of more than 120,000 people have died with COVID. Meanwhile, 100% of K-12 students in our two-county area with nearly 21,000 K-12 students were forced to stay home from school for months and months. The pain and devastation caused from these petty mandates and proclamations will be generational and will include suffering and premature death. The pathologies created by COVID, and the resultant death, will far exceed those who have died with COVID.



short periods of extreme and acute danger. They were never intended to apply for an undetermined season of time for a respiratory virus that cannot be eradicated and is of very small risk to the vast majority of people.<sup>6</sup>

And so the question still remains, “When will this state of emergency end?”

The governor has never answered that question. Instead, he uses slivers of truth (e.g., “people have died from the virus”) to justify his continued misconduct. While tragic, people dying from disease<sup>7</sup> is something that happens in our state every day. This is not enough reason to wield emergency powers forever.

His continued actions to mediate that “emergency,” for reasons we will explain, are now creating an actual emergency. Rather than allow parents, adults, and businesses to make responsible decisions for themselves, his continued micromanaging of free citizens will cause more widespread disruption and further exacerbate the situation.

We have seen this concentrated power abused time and again over the past 18 months. Now it has come to a head in the form of a threat to freedom-loving Americans: **“Submit to medical interventions or else lose your jobs, careers, and livelihoods.”**

This threat must be addressed.

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<sup>6</sup> Refer to *Protest #1* where we demonstrate this statistically.

<sup>7</sup> In 2019, over 37,400 Washingtonians died from disease, such as heart disease, cancer, Alzheimer’s, chronic liver disease, and diabetes. Heart disease and cancer are regularly the top two causes of death in the state and in the nation. Yet, in an effort to combat these terrible diseases, we don’t see the governor declaring a state of emergency and mandating 20 minutes of physical activity every day, or fast food restaurants to be closed, or cigarettes to be outlawed, or alcohol and soda pop to be dumped down the drain.

# A Word on Biblical Wisdom

As pastors, when we want to bring biblical wisdom to a situation, we always start with *principles* before we move to *practice*. We stand on the principles of God so we can then practice them in daily life.

This is an important process to understand—principles, then practice—because there is not always a specific Bible chapter-and-verse for every life situation. For instance, if you were looking for biblical wisdom on which job offer you should accept, you would not find a Bible verse giving you the specific answer, “Take the job in Philadelphia.” That verse simply doesn't exist. So, in seeking *biblical wisdom*, you would start by working with a general set of *biblical principles* and then move to *specific application*.

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*When facing life's many decisions, God's principles give us our starting point, without which we'd be left to our own untested opinions.*

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We call this the *bridge of wisdom*. It takes us from *right principle* to *right practice* that results in *right living*. When we consider a specific question in light of God's clear principles, the answer often becomes more obvious. Sometimes the answer is a clear *no* (should I cheat on my spouse?) or a clear *yes* (I wonder if I should pray more?). Sometimes it's *uncertain* (should I quit my job?). And sometimes it could be *either/or* (Ford or Chevy?). Regardless of the answer, the process is always the same—principles, then practice—all serving the construction of a *bridge of wisdom* to walk over the chasm of “what should I do in this particular situation?” In other words, wisdom is *knowledge rightly applied*.<sup>8</sup>

That is our goal here. While we intend to bring biblical wisdom to this crazy and complex situation, there isn't a chapter-and-verse answer for this particular challenge. What we mean is that,

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<sup>8</sup> For instance, there is a passage in Proverbs, The Book of Wisdom, wherein the author says, “Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest you be like him yourself.” So it seems very clear that if approached by a fool, you shouldn't answer him and his foolish questions. And then the next verse says, “Answer a fool in his folly, lest he be wise in his own eyes.” Now this verse is telling us to answer a fool in his folly. So which is it? That is why the *bridge of wisdom* is needed. Sometimes it might be wise to answer a fool, and sometimes it might not. It takes wisdom to know the difference.

as elders, we have carefully and collectively—in counsel together—applied our minds to the situation at hand. Drawing from biblical principles, we have attempted to articulate what we believe to be a synthesized worldview and response. In this way, we have attempted to build a *bridge of wisdom* to cross this specific and very difficult challenge.<sup>9</sup>

What follows is that bridge. We are not saying it's perfect, complete, or comprehensive. Certainly, it could be better stated. And certainly, some Christians may disagree. We do not claim to see everything perfectly. This is simply our attempt to be faithful to our shepherding charge. With this writing, our conscience is clear before God. It is to Him that we will give an account,<sup>10</sup> and it is before Him that we humbly, and with all seriousness, carry out our responsibility as shepherds.<sup>11</sup>

As the elders of Grace City Church, we have spent a lifetime studying the Bible and working to faithfully apply it to our own lives and the world we live in. This isn't us responding emotionally in a social media rant. This is thoughtful, biblical eldering. This comes from deep places of studied conviction built on years of reflection. It is our hope we can work it out in a way that is helpful to you now.

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<sup>9</sup> For a sampling of biblical principles we are working from as a worldview or rubric, I (Josh) wrote, *We Do Not Consent*. In that essay I identify nine Bible passages that speak directly or indirectly to a Christian in how they should relate to their government. Of course, there are many more texts we're working from, but that is a start.

<sup>10</sup> "Have confidence in your leaders and submit to their authority, because they keep watch over you as those who must give an account" (Hebrew 13:17).

<sup>11</sup> "Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, watching over them—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be..." (1 Peter 5:2).

# Pastoral Grid

*\*\*The following is a brief overview of a video message Pastor Josh recorded for Grace City Church immediately following the Governor's initial vaccine mandate.\*\**

➔ **This vaccine mandate is a big deal.**

- Fact: This will negatively impact many in our church, community, and state by forcing them to choose between their conscience and their livelihoods.<sup>12</sup>
- Response: We will have compassion & empathy for brothers and sisters facing the potential loss of their careers & livelihoods.

➔ **This constitutes serious and unacceptable government overreach.**

- Clarity: In principle, our concern is not with vaccines but with government actors forcing people to violate their conscience when it comes to medical treatment. We believe this action to be divisive, unethical, and immoral.
- Exhortation: We need discernment & historical awareness for what kind of road this puts us on.

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<sup>12</sup> People in our church impacted by this vaccine mandate and currently facing job loss include: *law enforcement officers, firefighters, corrections officers, juvenile rehab counselors, dentists and their employees, chiropractors and their employees, certified nursing assistants, technicians, doctors, nurses, EMTs, janitors, accountants, secretaries, business administrators, human resources professionals, network engineers, elevator inspectors, receptionists, mechanics, truck drivers, cooks, administrative employees, adult living facility staff, private healthcare providers, nursing homes, residential treatment facilities, vendors, contractors, educators, coaches, bus drivers, early learning providers, volunteers, and over 400,000 people in the private sector of health care. In other words, the mandate reaches far beyond "state workers."*

➔ **We are not scofflaws.**

- Posture: We respect and honor rule of law, righteous authority, and government when it stays in its lane.
- Warning: If you are anti-authority & anti-government, you will not find a home at Grace City. We are pro-righteous authority and pro-God's institution of government and will fight for them to function as He intended.

➔ **We are not slaves.**

- Conviction: We value medical freedom and the rights of people to make their own choice as it relates to this vaccine and other personal health decisions.
- Resolve: We are free men and women and we will not act otherwise.<sup>13</sup> This concession of freedom will eventually hurt everyone.

➔ **We will remain united as a church family.**

- Attitude: We will exercise humility, charity, & grace towards all. We will not tolerate judgmental attitudes or shaming someone for following their conscience to get the vaccine or not. We happily support an individual's right to do either. That is their choice to make and we will graciously stand for each person's freedom to make the decision that is best for themselves.
- Declaration: Our unity is bigger than a vaccine because our unity is in Jesus, not a political position or social issue.

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<sup>13</sup> 1 Peter 2:16 - In the context of Christians relating to government and submitting to government's authority, Peter exhorts Christians to "live as free people...."

➔ **You are responsible for your own safety.**

- Policy: Our continued encouragement for all church gatherings is *individual & personal choice* for whatever makes you most comfortable. We reject the burden of trying to enforce the governor's ever-growing list of mandates. The adults of our house will be treated as such. They know what is best for themselves and their families.

➔ **We will keep the main thing the main thing.**

- Focus: We will continue calling people to look to *the King* and *His Kingdom*...it is coming and the harvest is ripe. These are good days to be on Team Jesus.
- Our Call: The elders will lead everyone who calls Grace City Church home in a season of heightened prayer, spiritual vigilance, loving compassion, and courageous action.

# Regarding Freedom of Conscience

Thrust to the forefront of these vaccine mandates is the issue of the Christian's conscience. For some, their conscience does not allow them to submit to the governor's vaccine mandates. But why is a Christian's conscience a big deal? Why can't some Christians just get over their conscience and move on? Why is the conscience so important to the Christian life?

This topic deserves its own book, but we want to speak briefly to it here. In many ways, it is at the heart of this matter of religious exemptions from the governor's vaccine mandates.

The *call* of the Christian life is to *follow Jesus*: His life and example are what we live towards.

The *power* of the Christian is the *Holy Spirit*: His leading and guiding enable us to live a supernaturally empowered life.

The *Holy Spirit* resides most powerfully in *our conscience*: God has given us our conscience as a means to help us faithfully follow Jesus.

Some have aptly said, "The Holy Spirit lives in your gut." This is a simple way of explaining the theological truth that when we are born again we are now filled with the Holy Spirit. He changes us at the deepest levels of our humanity...new desires, new dreams, new thoughts, new attitudes. Christianity is not a religion of trying harder to be better; Christianity is a relationship with God that transforms us from the inside out.

And this is exactly why the conscience is so important to the Christian life. Our conscience is where the Holy Spirit lives. Our conscience is what keeps us living like we're saved. Our conscience is what helps us fight temptation and say no to sin. In

a very real way, to violate one's conscience is to sin against God.<sup>14</sup>

Perhaps more seriously, for the Christian, to violate our conscience is to dull the very voice of God in our life. With every violation of conscience, we grieve the Holy Spirit and the dimmer switch to the light of God in our life gets turned down another notch. The result is an ever-decreasing sensitivity to the voice of God in our life. We call this a *seared conscience*. Quite literally, violating our conscience is a way of relationally distancing ourselves from God: the more we do it, the further away we drift.

### 3 Realities of the Christian's Conscience

**Matters of conscience *remind* us where God's moral law is clear.** For instance, God's Word is clear that I should not steal. If I do steal, God has designed my conscience to hound me with guilt until I confess that sin to God and to the person from whom I stole. That is the work of the Holy Spirit convicting me of sin. But if I practice violating my conscience, over time, my conscience grows weaker and my flesh grows stronger. I am less likely to listen, heed, and respond to God's leading. In this way, I am hindering the active power of God in my life.

**Matters of conscience *guide* us where God's moral law is silent.** Take the issue of alcohol. Is it wrong to drink? The Bible says, very clearly, "do not get drunk with wine."<sup>15</sup> It does not say *do not drink wine*. This means I am free to exercise wisdom in the consumption and enjoyment of alcohol, as long as it does not lead to a place of being controlled by the alcohol (spirits) rather than being under the control of Christ and my right mind (the Holy Spirit). Some people, because of family context or personal struggles and addictions, may choose not to partake of any alcohol. This is not a standard they hold others to; it is a personal matter of conscience. For them, in their obedience to Christ, what might be permissible for others would actually push

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<sup>14</sup> See Romans 14:13-23.

<sup>15</sup> Ephesians 5:18



against the Spirit of God working in their own lives. For them to violate that inner conviction would be to sin against God.

**Matters of conscience move us toward righteous living before God.** In all areas of life and godliness, whether it be God's stated moral law or issues not specifically addressed by God's moral law, matters of conscience are sacred territory of personal conviction that guide the Christian's behavior. Where God's moral law is silent, personal matters of conscience should not be judged by others.

The human conscience is right at the heart of the Christian life. It is that place where God's truth and God's Spirit come together in the minds and hearts of believers and inform the way they live. While our consciences will never be perfect, they should always be a work in progress.

Some Christians' consciences are weak and need to be strengthened. Others' are seared and need to regain sensitivity. Others' are overly sensitive and need to mature. Still others' are underdeveloped and need to be reinforced with truth. But for all followers of Jesus, this issue of personal conscience is sacred territory.

For the state to force Christians to choose between their conscience and livelihood, could, for some, create a situation in which they feel they must choose between obedience to God and obedience to the state.

This is what the United States Constitution has protected for nearly 250 years: the right for people to practice their conscience in matters of religion, *uninhibited*. This is what hundreds of thousands of soldiers have bled and died to preserve. And this is what must be vigorously fought for and defended today.

## Open-Handed, Close-Handed

To be clear, not all Christians have a conscientious objection to a vaccine, and that is perfectly fine. But there are some who do, and this is what we would call an "open-handed issue."

As Christians, we find unity in closed-handed, primary issues upon which we will not compromise.<sup>16</sup> We also enjoy diversity in the open-handed, secondary issues where we extend grace to others who have different convictions.<sup>17</sup>

Getting or not getting the vaccine falls into the open-handed category. Each Christian is encouraged to come to a position of studied conviction and live consistently with that, while extending grace to others and their personal convictions.

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<sup>16</sup> Examples would be the Trinity, inspiration of Scripture, the divinity of Jesus, and salvation by grace through faith alone in Jesus, etc.

<sup>17</sup> Examples would be different modes of baptism, worship styles, gifts of the Spirit, and methods of schooling, etc.

# Regarding Religious Accommodations

Some have said the allowance for a religious accommodation or medical exemption make the governor's vaccine mandates moral and ethical.

*What's the big deal? If you don't want the vaccine, you don't have to get it. Relax!*

We find this line of reasoning shortsighted, insensible, and inaccurate.

First, the inclusion of a religious accommodation does not make the governor's vaccine mandates morally or ethically acceptable. The very fact that any American citizen would need to apply to a government actor for permission to forgo a forced medical intervention, or else lose their job, sounds more like Communist China than the Constitutionally-protected United States of America.

Second, there are no guarantees that a religious accommodation will be accepted. Federal law provides employers, including state and local governments, the opportunity to reject such accommodations based on any situation they would consider an "undue hardship" to themselves as the employer.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> We have already seen this happening in our home town. We know people who have had their religious accommodation denied. We know people who have had their religious accommodation "slow-rolled" and told they could not get an answer back in time for the deadline. We've heard personal stories of employers handing religious accommodation requests to third-parties to approve or reject. We've also seen HR forms asking questions of employees they have no business asking. Instead of simply asking, "do you have a religious objection? Yes or no?" these religious accommodation forms create a field of landmines an employee can only hope to successfully navigate. Who can judge a person's religious convictions? The state? Employers? All of this is completely unacceptable in a free society.

Third, the religious accommodation provided by the employer, in some cases, is proving to be unreasonable in its restrictions. Such limiting accommodations, as a term of continued employment, make it all but impossible for an employee to effectively do their job.<sup>19</sup>

The unabashed social-shaming that accompanies religious accommodations can be ostracizing and overwhelming. It is appalling when coworkers repeatedly violate another coworker's private medical history by making their vaccination status public. What would have been a fireable offense a few months ago is now common in some workplaces.

All of this puts an incredible amount of undue pressure on the employee to conform. Therefore, while the presence of a religious accommodation may provide PR cover for the governor to appear generous and reasonable, the reality is that many state agencies, hospitals, and schools are creating hostile and discriminatory work environments for those employees who want a religious accommodation.<sup>20</sup>

And finally, there are no protections for citizens who have no sincerely held religious beliefs and do not want to get the shot. What of those who have personal or philosophical objections? What of those who have serious medical concerns, but do not have a state-qualifying medical event (such as pregnant women or women who would like to start a family)?

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<sup>19</sup> In many cases, people have told us the nature of these accommodations feels intentionally punitive.

<sup>20</sup> This includes: (1) hospital leadership changing sick-leave policies so that anyone choosing to exercise medical autonomy will not be able to access their paid sick leave; (2) lost benefits; (3) the Attorney General's office working with the Washington State Hospital Association to change unemployment policies, so that if you are "let go" for not conforming to the state's vaccine mandate, you are disqualified from receiving state unemployment benefits. So, though the employee has been taxed on every paycheck their entire career to fund the unemployment benefit program, they are now disqualified from collecting on those unemployment benefits because they exercised their conscience and were fired from their job.

This mandate discriminates against the atheist with no religious convictions, the individual with a certain health philosophy, and the young woman with legitimate questions about a vaccine with no long-term safety record. We think they, along with everyone else, should have the freedom to exercise their conscience without fear of government reprisal in the form of severe economic harm.

# Key Categories & Handles

*\*\*These are general principles that help provide a context for wisdom in thinking through this issue with our church family.\*\**

## MEDICAL

**We are not anti-vaccination; we are pro medical freedom.**

Our concern is NOT with the efficacy or non-efficacy of a vaccine.<sup>21</sup> We are, however, concerned to see one man ruling by fiat that people must submit to a medical intervention in their bodies that they do not want.

It is NOT an insignificant thing for a governor to say he has the authority to violate individual sovereignty and coerce people to go against their conscience. When individual rights are breached, the result is never a net-gain. It always affects everyone negatively in the long term.

## PERSONAL

**We believe getting the vaccine or not getting the vaccine is a matter of personal conscience and freedom.** Without a clear-cut moral, biblical principle regarding vaccines, there can be no hard position for the Christian. Christians are encouraged to do their due diligence, consider their personal health, and come to their own studied conviction as to whether or not getting vaccinated is the right decision for them.<sup>22</sup>

The travesty of this mandate is that the governor is violating personal freedom by forcing those with deep, religious convictions, well-studied medical opinions, and/or personal health reasons to either violate their conscience or forfeit their livelihood. We don't think someone needs to defend their

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<sup>21</sup> We are not saying it is not an important topic for discussion. However, it is not the focus of this paper and will not be the determining factor of our unity as a church family.

<sup>22</sup> We know brothers and sisters in Christ who are level-headed, reasonable, and well-read on both sides of the "vaccine fence." We know people who have received the vaccine and are not self-righteous about it, and we know people who have chosen not to get the vaccine who are not "science deniers." This is a decision for each individual to make.

personal reasons or present an articulate and studied position to say no to a vaccine they don't want. No means no.

## **SOCIAL**

**We deplore the rampant moral browbeating surrounding vaccination.** Our governor recently said, "The reason we're in this pickle today is because 30 percent of our eligible citizens, so far, have chose not to get to the vaccine."<sup>23</sup> The "pickle" refers to the recent increase in reported COVID cases in the state. This is categorically false. It does not take into consideration that: (a) the average daily death rate experienced during this Delta wave is well below any previous wave;<sup>24</sup> and (b) vaccinated people are a growing transmission source of the Delta virus.<sup>25</sup>

So, scientifically and medically, his statement is uninformed and ill-stated. We can only assume rank ignorance or malicious intent. Either way, it is poor leadership in its demoralizing and divisive effect. The governor has proven he is not able to lead through influence, so he is choosing the cheap route of browbeating and force. These are bully tactics, quite the opposite of competent leadership. Those who are unvaccinated are not the scourge of society, and those who are vaccinated are not society's saviors.

## **MORAL**

**We do not accept moral mandates or take our moral cues from the immoral.** Those individuals who perpetuate and propagate gross injustices lose credibility when speaking to matters of morality. Those who support abortion, decriminalize illicit drug use, encourage attacks on law enforcement, sexualize

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<sup>23</sup> Hassan, Adeel. "Washington State sets vaccine mandate for government and health care workers." *New York Times*, 9 August 2021, <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/09/us/washington-state-workers-vaccine-mandate.html>. Accessed 14 August 2021.

<sup>24</sup> The 7-day moving average deaths peaked at: 2,308 in April 2020; 1,209 in July 2020; 3,639 in January 2021. Currently it is at 544. "Daily Trends in Number of COVID-19 Deaths in the United States Reported to CDC." [https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#trends\\_dailytrendsdeaths](https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#trends_dailytrendsdeaths). Accessed 15 August 2021.

<sup>25</sup> Crist, Carolyn. "Latest Data Shows Increase in Breakthrough COVID-19 Cases." *WebMD*, <https://www.webmd.com/vaccines/covid-19-vaccine/news/20210818/latest-data-shows-increase-breakthrough-covid-cases>. Accessed 18 August 2021.

children through public instruction, promote destructive ideologies to the young, and advocate child gender transition procedures have forfeited their right to speak from a place of moral authority.

We will not accept nor tolerate being lectured like children about the “value of life” from politicians and leaders whose policies make violent war on the image of God in humanity. To disagree with the governor about COVID does not mean we have a reckless disregard for human life (as he has stated many times). This accusation is absurd and smacks of arrogant disregard for those whose consistent effort has been one of valuing life at all stages and pleading for the governor and his political party to do the same.

We will not allow hypocritical and baseless accusations to go unchallenged. We are grateful if the governor is finally caring about the value of human life. However, his selective application of which lives are more valuable than others is abhorrent. It is precisely because of our high view of life, and our consistent worldview of all lives regardless of age or race, that we are taking this stand.

The governor’s leadership and the narrative he perpetuates around his mandates (unless you obey his every word, you don’t value life) continues to be an assault on the goodwill of the citizens of our state. We will not stand idly by.

## LEGAL

**We are not scofflaws.** Quite the opposite, we believe these wanton proclamations continue to make a mockery of our state’s and nation’s rule of law. The governor’s abuses are eroding people’s respect for law as they learn to ignore or live around each petty and impossible edict passed down from his office. To paraphrase the Apostle Paul: *the children are being exasperated*.<sup>26</sup>

The Christian must clearly understand not every man-made law is righteous, not every politician acts with pure motives, and not all rulers act with benevolence in their heart. This is why we have checks and balances, separation of powers in our system of government.

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<sup>26</sup> Ephesians 6:4



The separation of governmental powers (legislative, judicial, executive) protects citizens from abuse. It also highlights the essential value of local government. When government is local, it is carried out by people known and accessible by the people they govern. They are not ruling from a distance, but instead, are leading in the very communities their policies affect.

This careful division of power has been dismantled and destroyed by the manner in which our governor has chosen to isolate and consolidate all powers in his office. It is arrogant, foolish, and an insult to the competent people in elected positions whom he has effectively side-lined.<sup>27</sup> Therefore, we will continue to fight for:

- ▶ the *rule of law* as opposed to anarchy, which seeks to subvert order through fomenting chaos;
- ▶ for *local enforcement of law and order* as opposed to defunding the police;
- ▶ for *righteous authority* as opposed to coercion and corruption; and
- ▶ for *government staying in its God-assigned lane*<sup>28</sup> as opposed to abusive tyranny swerving into the jurisdictional lanes of the Church, the family, and the individual.

## CIVIL

**We are not slaves.** This is our simplest objection. The ongoing and ever-increasing government intrusion into the personal lives of citizens through the curtailing of basic human and individual freedoms is unacceptable. We are happily, gratefully, and stubbornly, if necessary, a free people—as citizens of Heaven and

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<sup>27</sup> If the people in locally elected positions don't want to do their job or feel its demands are currently too much, the solution is to resign and let someone else take their position who can do the job. To simply abdicate their responsibilities to the governor's office is a gross dereliction of duty. To simply throw one's hands up and say, "I can't do anything; it's in the governor's hands," has become a convenient excuse for cowardice or laziness. Either way, it is unacceptable. The governor still has these powers because locally elected officials have given them up, by-and-large, without a fight. We call on these leaders to stand for their right to do their job, and to do whatever it takes to get their local authority reinstated. You don't need permission from the governor to do the jobs you were elected to do. Stand, and we will stand with you.

<sup>28</sup> God's purpose for Government, said broadly, is to reward the righteous and punish the evildoer (Romans 13).

as citizens of the United States. We love being free and will not be forced to live as though we are not.

We do not believe anything good has ever come from forcing large populations within a society to do something they don't want to do, especially when it involves possible medical risks or violations of conscience in order to conform.

This is also why we do not think the presence of a religious accommodation clause makes the governor's proclamations right. No one should have to cite a religious reason for not getting a medical intervention they do not want. Said another way, we stand for the rights of Jesus-hating, Church-despising individuals to say "yes" or "no" to COVID vaccines. This is not because of religious convictions they may or may not have, but because they are citizens of our country and should have the inherent right to freely make choices regarding a medical intervention in their bodies.

### **INDIVIDUAL**

**We believe people are capable of making intelligent, informed decisions.** Contrary to popular opinion, at least among certain politicians and media outlets, we do not believe that the millions of Americans who have chosen not to get vaccinated are stupid, misinformed, stubborn, or uncaring.<sup>29</sup> We believe many to be careful, critical-thinking, science-affirming, common-sense people who are exercising their right to turn down a vaccine they do not want.

People should be extended the dignity of making these decisions for themselves. People are capable of thinking through complex issues, discerning what is best for them, and acting accordingly. Free, moral, conscientious, thoughtful, law-abiding citizens should not be treated as naughty 1st graders in need of a spanking.

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<sup>29</sup> As of this writing, approximately 130 million (or 39% of) Americans have either chosen to not get vaccinated or are not eligible since they are under the age of 12.

## CONSTITUTIONAL

### **We believe it is never good for one man to hold unchecked**

**power.** According to the governor's interpretation of Washington State law, he has the unilateral power to mandate COVID vaccines since we continue to be in an 18-months-and-counting state of emergency. Who put us into a state of emergency? The governor. Who decides when we leave the state of emergency? The governor. Who gets to decide the extent of our freedoms while we're in a state of emergency? The governor. Emergencies don't last 18 months. This is the very definition of dictatorial control.

If the 20th century taught us anything, it is that man is capable of great evil when given such control. Gulags, holocausts, and genocides were the common result of one man or a select few promising to cure the ills of society...if only they were given the power to do so.

Why would we be so presumptuous as to think that the 21st century would be any better? Man is incapable of wielding unchecked authority over other humans without abusing such authority. This is why our concern is about more than a vaccine; rather, it is about the principle of governance being violated that now establishes dangerous possibilities for even more abuse in the future.

# **PROTEST #1**

## **COVID-19 continues to pose a very small threat to the vast majority of people.**

The presence of COVID-19 is not a danger to everyone. In fact, it's not a serious danger to the vast majority of people. What continues to be proclaimed is that the mere presence of COVID somehow poses an existential threat to everyone. Continuing to suggest or support a narrative that COVID is a death threat to everyone is misleading and dangerous. Continuing to assert that the risk of dying from COVID is equally distributed in the population is medically false.

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*There is no greater tyranny than that which is perpetrated under the shield of the law and in the name of justice.*

*- Montesquieu*

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The severity of the virus has not changed over time. It is very hard for the virus to hurt the young *or* the healthy but presents a more serious threat to the old *and* the unhealthy. Yet, the governor and many public health officials continue to push a doomsday narrative that media outlets are only too happy to repeat.

In March 2021, Dr. Rochelle Walensky, director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), said in a nationally televised address:

"I'm going to pause here, I'm going to lose the script and I'm going to reflect on the recurring feeling I have of impending doom. We have so much to look forward to. So much promise and potential of where we are and so much reason for hope. But right now I'm scared."<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Quinn, Melissa. "CDC director Rochelle Walensky warns of 'impending doom' amid COVID-19 spikes." *CBS News*, 30 March 2021, <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/rochelle-walensky-cdc-chief-covid-concern/>. Accessed 17 August 2021.

Has she looked at her agency's data?

According to the CDC's analysis of actual data from February 2020 through May 2021, the survival rates for those who contracted COVID were:

- 0 - 17 years = 99.999%
- 18 - 49 years = 99.943%
- 50 - 64 years = 99.429%
- 65+ years = 94.993%
- All ages = 99.363%<sup>31</sup>

What's particularly striking about these figures is that there has been an incredible lack of early home-care treatment for COVID throughout this crisis. Meaning, these survival rates are astronomically high even with a large-scale failure among the medical community to actually treat COVID *before* patients complained of not being able to breathe.

Age is by far the most important factor in assessing an individual's risk of dying from COVID. The CDC reports that those individuals 85 years-old and over are 600x more likely to die from COVID than someone who is 18 to 29 years-old, whereas someone who is 50 to 64 years-old is 35x more likely to die from COVID than someone who is 18 to 29 years-old.<sup>32</sup>

In the US, 80% of all COVID-related deaths have occurred in people 65 years-old and over, even though this age group makes up only 13% of all COVID infections.<sup>33</sup> In an effort to

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*Less than 1/10th of 1% of citizens of Chelan and Douglas Counties have died with COVID over the last 18 months. By comparison, in just 12 months, nearly 2.5x as many citizens died from heart disease.*

*Source: WA State Department of Health*

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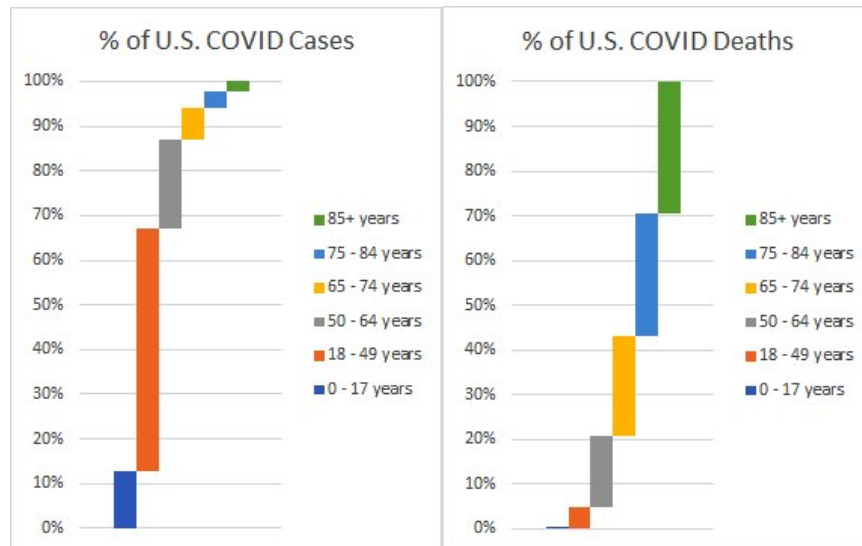
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<sup>31</sup> "Estimated rates of COVID-19 disease outcomes per 100,000, by age group – United States, February 2020-May 2021." CDC, 27 July 2021, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-updates/burden.html>. Accessed 17 August 2021.

<sup>32</sup> "Risk for COVID-19 Infection, Hospitalization, and Death by Age Group." CDC, 19 July 2021, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/covid-data/investigations-discovery/hospitalization-death-by-age.html>. Accessed 23 August 2021.

<sup>33</sup> "Preliminary estimated COVID-19 cumulative incidence, by age group – United States, February 2020-May 2021." CDC, 27 July 2021, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-updates/burden.html>." Accessed 17 August 2021.

further demonstrate the significance of age in determining an individual's COVID risk, CDC data is stratified as follows:<sup>34</sup>



Those US residents 18 to 49 years-old make up 54% of all COVID infections yet account for only 5% of COVID-related deaths. Conversely, those 85 years-old and over make up only 2% of all COVID infections, yet account for 31% of all COVID-related deaths.<sup>35</sup>

Not only does the risk of death from COVID strongly depend on age, an individual's health (or lack thereof) also plays a significant role. According to the CDC, 95% of all COVID-related deaths involve, on average, four chronic comorbidities,<sup>36</sup> such as cardiovascular disease, hypertension, diabetes, and pulmonary

<sup>34</sup> "Preliminary estimated COVID-19 cumulative incidence, by age group – United States, February 2020-May 2021." CDC, 27 July 2021, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/cases-updates/burden.html>." Accessed 17 August 2021.

<sup>35</sup> "Demographic Trends of COVID-19 cases and deaths in the US reported to CDC." CDC, 17 August 2021, <https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#demographics>. Accessed 17 August 2021.

<sup>36</sup> Comorbidities are the presence of two or more diseases in the same person. These are often chronic, long-term medical conditions. Comorbidities are associated with worse health outcomes and more complex clinical management.

disease.<sup>37</sup> Additionally, multiple studies have determined a dramatic correlation between COVID-related death rates and obesity.<sup>38</sup>

What about the Delta variant? Is it changing the risk profile of this crisis?

To answer that, we turn our attention to England where the Delta variant has been present for several months.

Public Health England, which is an executive agency of the Department of Health and Social Care in England, just issued a technical briefing reporting that 90% of the deaths associated with the Delta variant occurred in people 50 years old and over. In addition, their findings suggest that, as measured over the same time frame, the Delta variant has been 3.5x times less lethal than the Alpha variant, which first turned up in the United Kingdom in September 2020.<sup>39</sup>

It's important to keep actual data in mind given certain public officials' and the media's appetite for hyperbole and sensationalism through the use of fear-inducing headlines and soundbites.

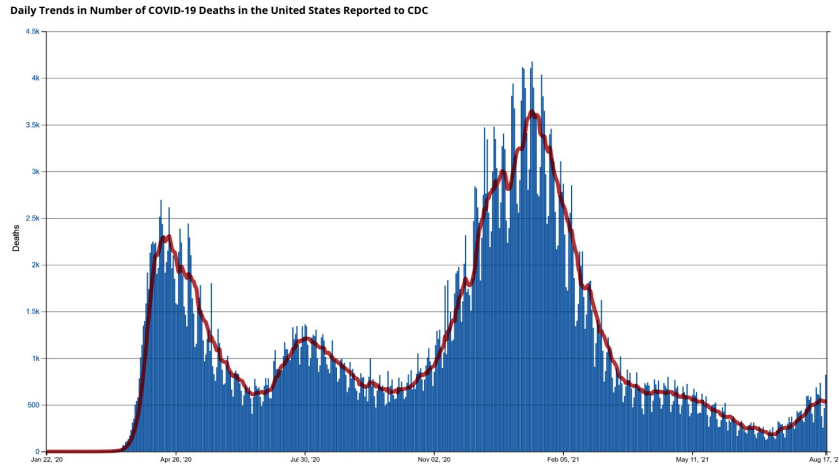
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<sup>37</sup> "COVID-19 Mortality Overview." *CDC*, 14 August 2021, <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/covid19/mortality-overview.htm>. Accessed 14 August 2021.

<sup>38</sup> "Obesity a driving factor in COVID-19 deaths, global report finds." *Reuters*, 4 March 2021. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-obesity/obesity-a-driving-factor-in-covid-19-deaths-global-report-finds-idUSKBN2AW1X0>. Accessed 23 August 2021.

<sup>39</sup> "SARS-CoV-2 variants of concern and variants under investigation in England." *Public Health England*, 23 July 2021, [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1005517/Technical\\_Briefing\\_19.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1005517/Technical_Briefing_19.pdf). Accessed 15 August 2021.

Toward that end, below is the daily trends in the number of COVID-related deaths in the US, as reported to the CDC, throughout this crisis:



The average daily number of COVID-related deaths over this summer is less than half of what it was last summer.<sup>40</sup>

Nothing has changed with who this virus (or any of its mutations) really impacts, yet public health officials continue to behave as though the sky is falling for everyone instead of focusing their advice and efforts on those who are at most risk.

The governor has a completely distorted perception of COVID risk. Not everyone is 85, and not everyone is very unhealthy. The governor should stop behaving as though that is the case.

**The Problem: The governor is treating everyone like they're 85 years old with preexisting conditions.**

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<sup>40</sup> "Trends in Number of COVID-19 Cases and Deaths in the US Reported to CDC, by State/Territory." CDC, 17 August 2021, [https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#trends\\_dailytrendsdeaths](https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#trends_dailytrendsdeaths). Accessed 18 August 2021.



# **PROTEST #2**

## **Those who want the vaccine can easily get it.**

If you want the COVID vaccine, you can get it. There are virtually no hurdles. The vaccine is free and widely available. Those who are unvaccinated aren't living in a cave or buried underneath a rock, as many would have us believe.

We live in an age of instant information; the airwaves, television stations, and internet have been loaded with COVID news for the last 18 months. There have been nearly 130,000 COVID-related publications produced by over half a million scientists since this crisis began.<sup>41</sup> That's nearly ten times the number of scientific authors who wrote about HIV/AIDs over the same time frame. Everyone knows about COVID and everyone knows about the vaccine.

As of this moment, more than 168 million Americans have been fully vaccinated, including 81% of those 65 years and older.<sup>42</sup> Every state has hundreds of thousands, if not millions, of fully vaccinated people. In Washington State, 79% of residents 65 and older are fully vaccinated.<sup>43</sup> People have been given the opportunity to be vaccinated. Their reasons for choosing not to do so are their own.

We shouldn't rush to judge or condemn those who have decided to not be vaccinated or are unsure about being

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<sup>41</sup> Ioannidis, John et al. "The rapid, massive growth of COVID-19 authors in the scientific literature." *bioRxiv*, 9 March 2021, <https://www.biorxiv.org/content/10.1101/2020.12.15.422900v2.full>. Accessed 19 August 2021.

<sup>42</sup> "COVID-19 Vaccinations in the United States." CDC, 14 August 2021, [https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#vaccinations\\_vacc-total-admin-rate-total](https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#vaccinations_vacc-total-admin-rate-total). Accessed 14 August 2021.

<sup>43</sup> "COVID-19 Data Dashboard." *Washington State Department of Health*, 14 August 2021, <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Emergencies/COVID19/DataDashboard>. Accessed 14 August 2021.

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*The framers hated the tyranny of King George, but they were also afraid of the mob. That's why they put so many checks and balances into our system, to guard against the excesses of a government that might be inflamed by public passion or perverted by a dictator's whim.*

*- David Ignatius*

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vaccinated. There are a host of legitimate, perfectly acceptable reasons for individuals to make these choices.

Everyone should be given the opportunity to make their own risk assessment based on their own personal health situation. For instance, many who have not been vaccinated have legitimate questions and concerns about the potential long-term adverse side effects of the vaccines. Their decision or hesitancy should not be labeled as “misinformation.”

In April 2021, the FDA and CDC resumed the Johnson & Johnson vaccine after pausing the program in order to review reports of blood clotting in individuals (mostly women under the age of 50) after receiving the vaccines.<sup>44</sup> In addition, there have been more than 1,300 cases of heart inflammation, like myocarditis and pericarditis, among people 30 years old and younger who have received the vaccines. These cases are most prevalent in male adolescents and young adults.<sup>45</sup> And there are thousands of other health incidents, including anaphylaxis, Guillain-Barre Syndrome (GBS),<sup>46</sup> and death, that have been reported after receiving the vaccines.<sup>47</sup>

It is important to note that pregnant women were excluded from the original COVID vaccine trials. In February 2021, Pfizer announced they were launching clinical trials to study “...the

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<sup>44</sup> “FDA and CDC Lift Recommended Pause on Johnson & Johnson (Janssen) COVID-19 Vaccine Use Following Thorough Safety Review.” *US Food & Drug Administration*, 23 April 2021, <https://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/fda-and-cdc-lift-recommended-pause-johnson-johnson-janssen-covid-19-vaccine-use-following-thorough>. Accessed 17 August 2021.

<sup>45</sup> “Selected Adverse Events Reported after COVID-19 Vaccination.” *CDC*, 17 August 2021, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/safety/adverse-events.html>. Accessed 19 August 2021.

<sup>46</sup> Guillain-Barre Syndrome is a rare disorder in which the body’s immune system damages nerve cells, causing muscle weakness and, in some cases, paralysis.

<sup>47</sup> “Selected Adverse Events Reported after COVID-19 Vaccination.” *CDC*, 17 August 2021, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/safety/adverse-events.html>. Accessed 17 August 2021.

safety and effectiveness of its coronavirus vaccine on pregnant women.”<sup>48</sup> The study is expected to conclude in January 2023.<sup>49</sup>

We contend that adults are perfectly capable of sifting through pertinent information, including that which addresses potential adverse side effects, and performing their own risk/benefit analysis to decide what is in their best health interest. We don’t believe that just because you have questions or concerns about the vaccines you should then be labeled a “vaccine skeptic” worthy of the president’s “Top 12 Hit List”<sup>50</sup> for “COVID misinformation agents.”

It is perfectly reasonable for younger, healthier people, who are at such low risk of severe disease from COVID, to consider their own health *circumstances* before making personal health *decisions*.

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<sup>48</sup> Ellis, Ralph. “Vaccine Trials In Pregnant Women.” *WebMD*, <https://www.webmd.com/vaccines/covid-19-vaccine/news/20210222/pfizer-starts-covid-accine-trials-in-pregnant-women>. Accessed 18 August 2021.

<sup>49</sup> At this point in time, neither the governor nor his office have clearly said whether pregnancy would be eligible for a medical exemption from vaccination. The clearest language we can find on this matter comes from the Washington State Nurses Association (WSNA), which is the union representing nurses in the state. The “WSNA will negotiate with employers over the procedure to determine what constitutes a valid medical or religious exemption, but not every medical or religious objection to being vaccinated will qualify as a legitimate exemption.” “WSNA FAQ on Governor Inslee’s COVID-19 Vaccination Requirement.” 10 August 2021, [https://cdn.wsna.org/assets/entry-assets/WA-vax-mandate-FAQ\\_FINAL.pdf?utm\\_source=WSNA&utm\\_campaign=c4a6a3bd86-WSNA+all+-+How+does+the+governor’s+COVID-19+vacci&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_4cf078651f-c4a6a3bd86-](https://cdn.wsna.org/assets/entry-assets/WA-vax-mandate-FAQ_FINAL.pdf?utm_source=WSNA&utm_campaign=c4a6a3bd86-WSNA+all+-+How+does+the+governor’s+COVID-19+vacci&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_4cf078651f-c4a6a3bd86-). Accessed 25 August 2021.

<sup>50</sup> Viser, Matt et al. “‘They’re killing people’: Biden aims blistering attack at tech companies over vaccine falsehoods.” *The Washington Post*, 16 July 2021, [https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/biden-vaccine-social-media/2021/07/16/fbc434bc-e666-11eb-8aa5-5662858b696e\\_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/biden-vaccine-social-media/2021/07/16/fbc434bc-e666-11eb-8aa5-5662858b696e_story.html). Accessed 19 August 2021.

For instance:

- ▶ a teenager is far more likely to die in a *bicycle accident* than from COVID;
- ▶ a 30-something woman is more likely to die from *drowning* than from COVID; and
- ▶ a healthy 40-year-old man is statistically more likely to die from *choking on his food* than from COVID.<sup>51 52</sup>

No one should be surprised that individuals want to make personal health decisions for themselves and their families. It is completely unreasonable and immoral to require individuals to make irreversible health decisions because a perfect stranger they've never met tells them they should.

Anywhere else in society, when someone stronger is forcing themselves onto someone weaker against their will, it is considered a crime and prosecuted as such. Threatening the livelihoods of those who are not comfortable accepting the vaccine amounts to medical assault.

**The Problem: The governor is treating everyone as though they are incapable of making intelligent and informed personal health decisions, and then forcing a vaccine on those who simply aren't at risk.**

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<sup>51</sup> "COVID-19 Mortality Risk Calculation." *Johns Hopkins & University of Maryland Research Team*, <https://covid19risktools.com:8443/riskcalculator>. Accessed 18 August 2021.

<sup>52</sup> "Odds of Dying." *National Safety Council*, <https://injuryfacts.nsc.org/all-injuries/preventable-death-overview/odds-of-dying/>. Accessed 18 August 2021.

# **PROTEST #3**

## **Vaccines should not be mandated when alternative treatments are available.**

Dr. Peter McCullough is the most-published academic physician in his areas of practice—cardiology and internal medicine. You would think his credentials and experience would lend him some credibility regarding COVID-19 treatments. No such luck. After producing a video in which he described some of the successes he found in early treatment of COVID, YouTube promptly pulled his video for violating its “Community Guidelines.”<sup>53</sup>

As might be expected, Dr. McCullough has been labeled a “vaccine skeptic” and a “science denier” by many. But he has never denied the efforts or efficacy of the COVID vaccines, nor has he ever denied or minimized the virus. “It’s a rough illness and I can see why older adults are worried,” he said after enduring his own bout with COVID.<sup>54</sup>

What he has voiced is an alarming concern as to the standard of care (or lack thereof) provided by physicians who have patients

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<sup>53</sup> One would be warranted in asking, “Why does a video-sharing website feel it responsible to censor the most published cardiologist in the world, who is speaking authoritatively on his medical research in which he is qualified to perform?” Actions like this feed people’s suspicions that there is an intentional narrative being propagated that is not driven by honest science, but a particular agenda. Science and medicine have a long history of inviting more voices into the discovery of truth, not less. This new practice of silencing qualified and reputable doctors and scientists unless they align with an establishment’s or institution’s position is frightening. Such censorship as this constitutes an attack on freedom of speech and medical discovery.

<sup>54</sup> Robert, Kim. “North Texas Doctor Recovers from COVID-19 Using Hydroxychloroquine.” *The Texan*, 3 November 2020, <https://thetexan.news/north-texas-doctor-recovers-from-covid-19-using-hydroxychloroquine/>. Accessed 14 August 2021.

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*Those who would give up essential liberty to purchase a little temporary safety deserve neither liberty nor safety.*

*- Benjamin Franklin*

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with COVID. Specifically, he has been shocked at the suppression of those physicians who were curious or interested in early treatment options of COVID. "I never thought I'd see the day where doctors are censored, and patients are kept from care," McCullough said.<sup>55</sup>

The general medical treatment across the nation for patients ill from COVID-19 has been to confirm they have COVID (either with a test or a doctor's diagnosis) then promptly send them home to quarantine for two weeks. "Only come back if you're having trouble breathing," or a similar refrain, is used. When has a patient suffering from an illness ever been sent home with no prescribed treatment? When has this ever happened on such a mass scale?

In August, 2020, Dr. McCullough, along with 20-or-so colleagues, published a peer-reviewed research paper studying the impacts of early treatment of COVID-19. Such early treatment involved supplements like Vitamin C, Vitamin D, and Zinc, as well as a cocktail of drugs like hydroxychloroquine, ivermectin, dexamethasone, and blood thinners.

Their findings concluded that "...some, if not a majority, of [COVID] hospitalizations could be avoided with a treat-at-home-first approach with appropriate telemedicine monitoring and access to oxygen and therapeutics."<sup>56</sup> The doctors estimated that up to 85% of COVID deaths could have been prevented if health officials, politicians, and physicians would have focused on *early treatment* and not just the vaccine.

"What frustrated me, was in the media cycle, all we heard about was reducing spread, and then later on vaccination. We never

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<sup>55</sup> Robert, Kim. "North Texas Doctor Recovers from COVID-19 Using Hydroxychloroquine." *The Texan*, 3 November 2020, <https://thetexan.news/north-texas-doctor-recovers-from-covid-19-using-hydroxychloroquine/>. Accessed 14 August 2021.

<sup>56</sup> McCullough, Pater et al. "Pathophysiological Basis and Rationale for Early Outpatient Treatment of SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) Infection." *The American Journal of Medicine*, 6 August 2020, [https://www.amjmed.com/article/S0002-9343\(20\)30673-2/fulltext](https://www.amjmed.com/article/S0002-9343(20)30673-2/fulltext). Accessed 14 August 2021.

actually heard about treating sick patients,” said Dr. McCullough.<sup>57</sup>

Dr. McCullough and his colleagues are not alone in their research. One study from March-June, 2020, which included 191,000 patients in the US, found that a Vitamin D deficiency increased the risk of acquiring COVID-19 by nearly 55%.<sup>58</sup>

A report out of Harvard Medical School states that Vitamin D helps “...boost our bodies’ natural defense against viruses and bacteria [while helping] prevent an exaggerated inflammatory response, which has been shown to contribute to severe [COVID] illness.”<sup>59</sup>

Unfortunately, the conversation about early treatment of COVID-19 has been nearly nonexistent. Instead, suggestions of early treatment by medical providers has led to certain reprisal by politicians, public health officials, and media. Even support for over-the-counter supplements, like Zinc, has been relegated to “misinformation” because of a “lack of clinical data.”

We are 18 months into COVID and there is still no broad-based, accepted treatment for the disease other than the shouts (and now threats) to “get vaccinated.” Apparently, researchers are just now “...beginning to get a handle on how the coronavirus makes people sick and what to do about it.”<sup>60</sup>

It is difficult to understand how there could be such clarity about the virus when it involves the vaccine and yet so much confusion

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<sup>57</sup> “Where is the Conversation about COVID Treatments?” *Children’s Health Defense*, 20 May 2021, <https://childrenshealthdefense.org/defender/tucker-carlson-interviews-dr-peter-mccullough-covid-treatments/>. Accessed 14 August 2021.

<sup>58</sup> Wtzler, Heidi. “We should be questioning the global suppression of early treatment options for COVID-19.” *Clark County Today*, 27 May 2021, <https://www.clarkcountytoday.com/opinion/opinion-we-should-be-questioning-the-global-suppression-of-early-treatment-options-for-covid-19/>. Accessed 14 August 2021.

<sup>59</sup> “Treatments for COVID-19.” *Harvard Health Publishing*, 12 July 2021, <https://www.health.harvard.edu/diseases-and-conditions/treatments-for-covid-19>. Accessed 18 August 2021.

<sup>60</sup> Hesman-Saey, Tina. “Why it’s still so hard to find treatments for early COVID-19.” *ScienceNews*, 27 July 2021, <https://www.sciencenews.org/article/coronavirus-covid-19-why-early-treatment-drugs>. Accessed 18 August 2021.

about the virus when it comes to early treatments using drugs and supplements that have been around for decades. It begs the question, “why?”

Pfizer, Inc., began its story in 1849 in Brooklyn, NY. Originally founded by two cousins, Pfizer has since become the third largest pharmaceutical company in the world with over 78,000 employees and nearly \$42 billion in total revenue in 2020.<sup>61</sup>

In November 2020, Pfizer entered into a contract with the US government to produce 100 million doses of its COVID vaccine in return for \$2 billion. Since then, Pfizer, whose COVID vaccine was just formally approved by the Food & Drug Administration (FDA), has reached additional agreements with the US government, as well as a host of other governments around the globe, to produce more COVID vaccines. The company is on schedule to produce 3 billion COVID vaccines in 2021 and 4 billion vaccines in 2022.<sup>62</sup>

By the end of 2021, Pfizer projects total sales of its COVID vaccine to reach \$33.5 billion.<sup>63</sup> Further, the company expects to profit nearly 30% on its COVID vaccines. Meaning, Pfizer is expecting to “pocket,” after expenses, nearly \$10 billion in 2021 from the sale of its COVID vaccine alone.<sup>64</sup> This is a massive boon for the company—much of which is funded by the American taxpayer—as evidenced by a brief review of its revenue history.

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<sup>61</sup>“Form 10-K.” [https://s21.q4cdn.com/317678438/files/doc\\_financials/2020/ar/PFE-2020-Form-10K-FINAL.pdf](https://s21.q4cdn.com/317678438/files/doc_financials/2020/ar/PFE-2020-Form-10K-FINAL.pdf). Accessed 23 August 2021.

<sup>62</sup>Hopkins, Jared. “Pfizer Lifts Covid-19 Vaccine Production Targets for 2021, 2022.” *Wall Street Journal*, 7 May 2021, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/pfizer-lifts-covid-19-vaccine-production-targets-for-2021-2022-11620425904>. Accessed 24 August 2021.

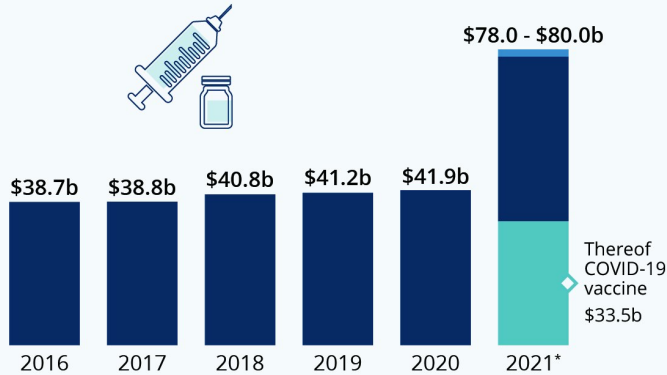
<sup>63</sup> Mishra, Manas. “Pfizer says 2021 COVID-19 vaccine sales to top \$33.5 bln, sees need for boosters.” *Reuters*, 28 July 2021, <https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/pfizer-raises-estimates-2021-sales-covid-19-vaccine-335-bln-2021-07-28/>. Accessed 24 August 2021.

<sup>64</sup> Isidore, Chris. “Here’s what Covid vaccines are worth to Big Pharma.” *CNN*, 15 March 2021, <https://www.cnn.com/2021/03/13/business/business-of-covid-vaccine/index.html>. Accessed 24 August 2021.



## Pfizer Gets a Booster Shot From Its COVID-19 Vaccine

Pfizer's annual revenue since 2016



\* official guidance as reported on July 28, 2021

Source: Pfizer



statista

Accompanied by other COVID vaccine producers, such as Moderna, Johnson & Johnson, AstraZeneca, and Novavax, the COVID vaccine industry is forecasted to be a multi-billion dollar global market for the foreseeable future.<sup>65</sup> And with the decreasing effectiveness of the vaccines now requiring increasing numbers of boosters, this does not appear to be a boon that will go away anytime soon. This looks to be a newly discovered and steadily growing revenue stream.

Most alarmingly, many Big Pharma executives, including some from Pfizer, worked in an advisory capacity with Operation Warp Speed (OWS), the US program to fund and develop a COVID vaccine. Normally, this would be a very clear conflict of interest that would require these executives, under federal regulation, to forfeit any financial gain they might personally experience from any financial arrangement between their companies and the government. But, thanks to a special exemption, these industry

<sup>65</sup> "Global Vaccine Market Report Survey 2021-2027 With Top Countries Data to Showing Impressive Growth by Industry Trends, Share, Size, Top Key Players Analysis and Forecast Research." *Marketwatch*, 18 June 2021, <https://www.marketwatch.com/press-release/global-vaccine-market-report-survey-2021-2027-with-top-countries-data-to-showing-impressive-growth-by-industry-trends-share-size-top-key-players-analysis-and-forecast-research-2021-06-18>. Accessed 19 August 2021.

executives were allowed to keep their personal investments in their own companies, while still continuing to advise on the vaccine's development and safety.

On November 9, 2020, Pfizer's CEO sold 62% of his personal investments in the company, just shortly after Pfizer announced the efficacy results of its vaccine to be more than 90%. Many other Big Pharma executives sold shares in their respective companies precisely when clinical trial results were released to the public. Moderna executives, for example, "...made \$287 million from timed stock sales in 2020..." alone.<sup>66</sup>

We are not opposed to businesses making a lot of money. We are not opposed to people making a lot of money. We are opposed to using taxpayer money to fund a coordinated scheme in which certain companies and individuals are exempted from clear conflicts of interest, allowing them to line their pockets, while there is an obvious lack of interest, at best, or intentional suppression, at worst, of alternative treatments for COVID using established, well-known drugs and supplements with promising results.

It is incredibly disturbing that such clear misconduct, both professionally and medically, would be tolerated by government and public health officials, while they simultaneously dangle the vaccine in front of an exasperated citizenry starving for a return to normalcy.

God says "...the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil."<sup>67</sup> History and experience pay witness to this truth, as demonstrated by crushing examples of corruption in government, business, and education. Even the World Health Organization (WHO) recently accused Pfizer and others of greed

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<sup>66</sup> Burleigh, Nina et al. "How The Covid-19 Vaccine Injected Billions Into Big Pharma—And Made Its Executives Very Rich." *Forbes*, 14 May 2021, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbesdigitalcovers/2021/05/14/virus-book-excerpt-nina-burleigh-how-the-covid-19-vaccine-injected-billions-into-big-pharma-albert-bourla-moncef-slaoui/?sh=65e4ec107d80>. Accessed 24 August 2021.

<sup>67</sup> 1 Timothy 6:10

in their handling of vaccine distribution.<sup>68</sup> It would be ignorant and foolish to assume that billions and billions of dollars, and the promise of more, wouldn't have some nefarious impact on the prioritization of vaccines as a treatment over alternative early treatments that would have helped many survive COVID.

**The Problem: The governor is acting as though the vaccine is the only way to fight COVID; it is not.**

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<sup>68</sup> "Pfizer pushes for US booster shots as WHO says greed is driving vaccine disparities." *The Guardian*, 12 July 2021, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/jul/12/coronavirus-pfizer-booster-vaccine-who-disparities>. Accessed 24 August 2021.

# **PROTEST #4**

## **The governor's vaccine mandates ignore one of the most effective COVID-19 protections: natural immunity.**

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*Unlimited power is apt to corrupt the minds of those who possess it; and...where law ends, tyranny begins.*

*- William Pitt*

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Researchers have been arguing about the durability and effectiveness of natural immunity gained by COVID infection since COVID arrived. Many scientists have warned that they do not yet know how long natural immunity from COVID will last. The same can be said for the immunity provided by the vaccines. In fact, the CDC has said they do not know how long COVID-19 vaccines provide immunity protection.<sup>69</sup> The Biden administration is expected to announce a plan for booster shots for those who received a vaccine more than eight months ago. It turns out that the immunity provided by vaccines weakens over time.<sup>70</sup>

Natural immunity provides a benefit unlike the immunity provided by vaccination because with natural infection "...the body develops antibodies to the entire surface of the virus, not just a spike protein constructed from a vaccine."<sup>71</sup> Those who contract and recover from a virus have robust, complete, and durable immunity. Unfortunately, the governor is giving no

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<sup>69</sup> "Key Things to Know About COVID-19 Vaccines." *CDC*, 16 August 2021, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/keythingstoknow.html>. Accessed 18 August 2021.

<sup>70</sup> Flaherty, Anna. "5 things to know about Biden's plan to roll out COVID boosters this fall." *ABC News*, 17 August 2021, <https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/things-bidens-plan-roll-covid-boosters-fall/story?id=79502123>. Accessed 17 August 2021.

<sup>71</sup> Makary, Marty. "Why COVID-19 Vaccines Should Not Be Required for All Americans." *USNews*, 5 August 2021, <https://www.usnews.com/news/national-news/why-covid-19-vaccines-should-not-be-required-for-all-americans>. Accessed 14 August 2021.

consideration to an individual's natural immunity in his carte blanche vaccine mandates.

According to one Israeli study, patients who were naturally infected from COVID were far less likely to become infected with the Delta variant than those vaccinated against COVID-19.<sup>72</sup> The Israeli Health Ministry reported, "...Israelis who were vaccinated were 6.72 times more likely to get infected after the shot than after natural infection...."<sup>73</sup>

A team from Washington University in St Louis reported that "... 11 months after a mild [COVID] infection immune cells were still capable of producing protective antibodies."<sup>74</sup>

The National Institutes of Health, where Anthony Fauci works, reported in January 2021 that "...the immune systems of more than 95% of people who recovered from COVID-19 had durable memories of the virus...[providing] hope that people receiving SARS-CoV-2 vaccines will develop similar lasting immune memories after vaccination."<sup>75</sup>

Other research provided evidence that "...immunity triggered by SARS-CoV-2 infection will be extraordinarily long-lasting..." and that "...people who recover from mild COVID-19 have bone-marrow cells that can churn out antibodies for decades...."<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> Rosenberg, David. "Natural Infection vs Vaccination: Which Gives More Protection?" *Israel National News*, 13 July 2021, <https://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/309762>. Accessed 14 August 2021.

<sup>73</sup> Rosenberg, David. "Natural Infection vs Vaccination: Which Gives More Protection?" *Israel National News*, 13 July 2021, <https://www.israelnationalnews.com/News/News.aspx/309762>. Accessed 14 August 2021.

<sup>74</sup> Makary, Marty. "The Power of Natural Immunity." *Wall Street Journal*, 8 June 2021, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/the-power-of-natural-immunity-11623171303>. Accessed 14 August 2021.

<sup>75</sup> "Lasting immunity found after recovery from COVID-19." *National Institutes of Health*, 26 January 2021, <https://www.nih.gov/news-events/nih-research-matters/lasting-immunity-found-after-recovery-covid-19>. Accessed 18 August 2021.

<sup>76</sup> Callaway, Ewen. "Had COVID? You'll probably make antibodies for a lifetime." *Nature*, 26 May 2021, <https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-021-01442-9>. Accessed 18 August 2021.

Vaccinating people who have already been infected with COVID also lacks scientific backing. A Cleveland Clinic study found that vaccinating people with natural immunity did not add to their level of protection.<sup>77</sup> The study concluded that “[i]ndividuals who have had SARS-CoV-2 infection are unlikely to benefit from COVID-19 vaccination, and vaccines can be safely prioritized to those who have not been infected before.”<sup>78</sup> In addition, “...clinical evidence has suggested that COVID survivors suffer more-frequent and more-serious side effects from vaccination than those who have never been infected.”<sup>79</sup>

Regarding the prevalence of natural infection, one study conducted in California found that about 1 in 3 Americans who are unvaccinated already have natural immunity.<sup>80</sup> This study’s findings were affirmed by a report by the National Institutes of Health that “...determined that each diagnosed case of COVID-19 correspond[ed] to an estimated 4.8 undiagnosed cases of the disease...”<sup>81</sup> As of May 2021, the CDC estimated there were 120.2 million COVID infections in the United States. This means 36% of the entire US population possessed some level of natural immunity from COVID.

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<sup>77</sup> Shrestha, Nabin et al. “Necessity of COVID-19 vaccination in previously infected individuals.” *medRxiv*, 1 June 2021, <https://www.medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2021.06.01.21258176v2>. Accessed 14 August 2021.

<sup>78</sup> Shrestha, Nabin et al. “Necessity of COVID-19 vaccination in previously infected individuals.” *medRxiv*, 1 June 2021, <https://www.medrxiv.org/content/10.1101/2021.06.01.21258176v2>. Accessed 14 August 2021.

<sup>79</sup> Zywicki, Todd. “Why I’m Suing Over My Employer’s Vaccine Mandate.” *Wall Street Journal*, 6 August 2021, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/vaccine-mandate-natural-immunity-lawsuit-covid-19-coronavirus-11628281507>. Accessed 18 August 2021.

<sup>80</sup> Ho, Catherine. “Bay Area immunity rates among lowest in California, according to analysis of antibodies.” *San Francisco Chronicle*, 10 March 2021, <https://www.sfchronicle.com/health/article/More-than-a-third-of-Californians-recently-tested-16015721.php>. Accessed 14 August 2021.

<sup>81</sup> “NIH study suggests COVID-19 prevalence far exceeded early pandemic cases.” *National Institutes of Health*, 22 June 2021, <https://www.nih.gov/news-events/news-releases/nih-study-suggests-covid-19-prevalence-far-exceeded-early-pandemic-cases>. Accessed 15 August 2021.

If the governor was really interested in science, he wouldn't be "...talking about the vaccinated and unvaccinated, [he would] be talking about the immune and the non-immune."<sup>82</sup>

This vaccine mandate gives zero consideration for those who already have natural immunity. The level of natural infection, whether symptomatic or asymptomatic, should have incredible implications for any vaccination efforts. Instead, the governor is allocating state resources to directly threaten citizens, while disregarding strong scientific research, in his shotgun approach to forcing mass vaccination. There is no scientific justification for pressuring those with natural antibodies to be vaccinated.

**The Problem: The governor's vaccine mandates are scientifically dubious and lack common sense.**

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<sup>82</sup> Makary, Marty. "Why COVID-19 Vaccines Should Not Be Required for All Americans." *USNews*, 5 August 2021, <https://www.usnews.com/news/national-news/why-covid-19-vaccines-should-not-be-required-for-all-americans>. Accessed 14 August 2021.

# **PROTEST #5**

## **The governor's vaccine mandates will create more division.**

Families, friends, neighbors, colleagues, employers, and employees are being forced to take a public stance on private convictions. An individual's vaccination status has become a primary issue resulting in hostile relational environments as people are compelled to pick a side. This is causing unnecessary division and pain as real people are pitted against real people. This is a lose-lose situation.

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*When governments fear the people, there is liberty. When the people fear the government, there is tyranny.*

*- Thomas Jefferson*

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Blanket statements and mandates concerning individual health care are ineffective and erode trust in medical and governmental institutions. Threatening citizens' livelihoods will only create more mistrust. There is already very strong resistance to mask mandates across the state and across the nation. Attempting to shortcut vaccine acceptance by mandating compulsory vaccination will only breed stronger resistance and greater division. It will not ultimately address vaccine concerns.

Dr. Marty Makary, Professor of Surgery at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine and editor-in-chief of MedPage Today, argues that mandating vaccines for "every living, walking American" is not well-supported by science. As a practicing physician, Dr. Makary believes "...you win more bees with honey than fire."<sup>83</sup> And this from someone whose personal position is that people who choose not to get vaccinated are making a poor health decision. But he supports them making it at their own risk. For those who are already immune, he says the unvaccinated pose little risk to public health. And yet, as a doctor at one of the most respected medical schools in the nation, his medical opinion seems to matter very little.

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<sup>83</sup> Makary, Marty. "Why COVID-19 Vaccines Should Not Be Required for All Americans." *USNews*, 5 August 2021, <https://www.usnews.com/news/national-news/why-covid-19-vaccines-should-not-be-required-for-all-americans>. Accessed 14 August 2021.



Frontline workers—those hailed as heroes last year—are now criticized for being selfish if they don't "toe the line."<sup>84</sup> In a recent email to employees, Peter Rutherford, CEO of our largest local healthcare system, Confluence Health, specifically thanked *vaccinated* employees for "...contributing toward the fight to end this pandemic..." What was glaringly missing was any praise or thanks to the nearly 1,230 or so unvaccinated employees who have also been working tirelessly, under strained working conditions, to serve our community.

The message is clear: if you are vaccinated, you are hailed a hero; if you are unvaccinated, you are considered a part of the problem. Furthermore, if you are an unvaccinated medical worker making an informed decision for your own health, or standing for the medical freedom of others as you were trained, it appears your effort is no longer appreciated or recognized at Confluence Health.

Imagine the emotional whiplash of an employee at Confluence Health. For the last 18 months, they have been saluted, cheered, and thanked as our local heroes, including from hospital leaders and the governor. Then, on a random Monday afternoon, they're handed a pink slip—no longer welcome to do their jobs.

These mandates are banking efficacy on the successful use of coercion to hold people's livelihoods in the balance...a terrible act. And it will result in a further exasperated, understaffed, and overworked healthcare workforce being put in an even more vulnerable position. This hurts our entire community.

Local bed counts aren't threatened due to too many sick people but due to *not enough workers* to care for those who are sick. When local health leaders speak of overrunning bed capacity, it would be more accurate to speak of overrunning *current staffing abilities*. This new mandate will only exacerbate the problem. And this new threat of an "overrun" hospital then gets passed on to the rest of society. This problem isn't the result of COVID, it is

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<sup>84</sup> Donovan, Lionel. "'I don't consent': State, health care workers protest new vaccine mandate." *King 5 News*, 13 August 2021, <https://www.king5.com/article/news/health/coronavirus/vaccine/washington-health-care-employees-protest-gov-jay-inslee-covid-19-vaccine-mandate/281-977b22f9-38fd-48ac-b456-151d02925592>. Accessed 14 August 2021.

the result of poor leadership. This “solution” is creating a potential crisis where there currently isn’t one.

This isn’t leadership; this is tyranny. The powers that be are not happy with the pace of vaccinations and believe this warrants threatening others with retaliation, as they hide behind their sweeping, faux moral imperatives. They say “...the health and safety of US workers, families, communities and the nation depends on [you being vaccinated].”<sup>85</sup> It’s immoral for a society to lay all of the problems of a worldwide respiratory virus with 30 different mutations and a vaccine with waning immunity at the feet of their fellow citizens

**The Problem: The governor is creating a class of people who will be discriminated against solely because they chose to follow their personal conviction, or their conscience.**

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<sup>85</sup> Diamond, Dan. “‘A tipping point’: Government officials, health groups move to require coronavirus vaccines for workers.” *The Washington Post*, 26 July 2021, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/health/2021/07/26/mandatory-vaccinations-urged-health-workers/>. Accessed 18 August 2021.

# **PROTEST #6**

## **The governor's vaccine mandates will come with a great societal cost.**

Throughout COVID, government officials and public health experts have used draconian measures, arbitrary rules, and cruel controls in their efforts to “save lives.” Lockdowns, “Zoom school,” business closures, church shutdowns, mask mandates, and social distancing have been the menu of choice for many leaders.

We have long asserted that this kind of “prescription” or “cure” would prove far more costly and painful than the actual virus. As Thomas Sowell, a senior fellow at Stanford University's Hoover Institution, once said, “[when it comes to government action] there are no solutions - only trade offs.” In an effort to save the lives of a few, the governor has ruined the lives of many. Instead of governing to do the most good for the most people, he has ruled so as to impose his will on others.

Due to lockdowns, cancer treatments have been postponed, elective health procedures have been cancelled, health insurance has been dropped, jobs have been lost, and mental health has been devastated.

### **Mental Health & Life Expectancy**

In 2020, the US experienced a 376% increase in anxiety disorders and a 356% increase in depression.<sup>86</sup> That is astounding. All of these disastrous consequences—from sweeping government action—will lead to premature death. It may take months, it may take three years, it may take fifteen years, but the actions of the government—and our governor,

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*All tyranny needs to gain a foothold is for people of good conscience to remain silent.*

*- Edmund Burke*

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<sup>86</sup> “Presentation by Professor John Ioannidis.” 28 June 2021, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e4grP1718Ps>. Accessed 17 August 2021.

specifically—have led to new pathologies and exacerbated old ones, which will bring death...excess death. Why? You cannot wreak such massive disruption to so many lives and have it result in more life.

### **Education & Life Expectancy**

There is an established sociological and economical understanding of the association between education and life expectancy. Meaning, the less educated you are, the less money you will make and the lower your life expectancy. This is one of the reasons why the life expectancy in first world countries is always longer than in third world countries. More education leads to better paying jobs, which leads to a higher standard of living and a higher quality of life.

One study analyzing the impact of US school closures in 2020 found that 24.2 million children 5 to 11 years-old attended public schools that were closed due to COVID. Researchers concluded that a total of 13.8 million years of life were lost as a result of their loss of education. By comparison, the CDC estimated that 1.5 million years of life were lost due to COVID-related deaths over that same timeframe.<sup>87</sup>

You may be thinking, “Yeah, but had they not shut down schools and kept kids home, a lot more people would have died from COVID because a lot more people would have caught COVID.” Had schools remained open, the scientists estimated 4.4 millions years of life would have been lost due to COVID, which is still far short of the years of life lost by the kids.

If we’re talking about lives and saving lives, shutting schools down was the wrong choice. As a result, some of the most vulnerable among us lost. The kids lost.

### **The Poor & The Vulnerable**

The governor’s vaccine mandates, like his lockdowns, will ultimately afflict the poor and vulnerable the most. For instance, if a nurse at Confluence Health chooses not to get vaccinated,

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<sup>87</sup> Christakis, Dimitri et al. “Estimation of US Children’s Educational Attainment and Years of Life Lost Associated With Primary School Closures During the Coronavirus Disease 2019 Pandemic.” *The Journal of the American Medical Association*, 12 November 2020, <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamanetworkopen/fullarticle/2772834>. Accessed 17 August 2021.

he or she will be terminated. That means one less competent nurse at a hospital already desperate for nurses. As a result, patient care will suffer. Lest you think patient care is unimportant, a Johns Hopkins study estimated that more than 250,000 people in the US die every year due to medical errors.<sup>88</sup>

For instance, sepsis, which is a life-threatening infection, is the most common cause of deaths in hospitals.<sup>89</sup> This is, in part, because many people in a hospital environment are already at a higher risk of infection due to chronic illness and age. But hospital settings also present unique risks to patients because of their environments, which include concentrated exposure to germs from other sick patients and medically-invasive interventions, such as IVs, catheters, and surgeries.

Hospitals reduce the risk of these kinds of hospital-acquired infections through practicing good environmental hygiene, such as proper cleaning of rooms, sterilization of medical equipment, and close monitoring of patients.

Less qualified and experienced hospital staff means less time to do these things. Or, if the hospital's strict infection protocols are followed, other patient-related matters will suffer, like reviewing labs, taking health assessments, administering medications, and adequately monitoring patients. There simply are not enough hours in the day for an understaffed, overworked hospital to adequately, carefully, and diligently ensure patient care.

Or how about the teacher who chooses not to get vaccinated? He or she will be terminated, which means one less competent teacher in a valley already desperate for good teachers. Lest you think quality education is unimportant, the benefits of education are many, including a reduction in poverty, poor health, crime, and violence.

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<sup>88</sup> Sipherd, Ray. "The third-leading cause of death in US most doctors don't want you to know about." *CNBC*, 22 February 2018, <https://www.cnn.com/2018/02/22/medical-errors-third-leading-cause-of-death-in-america.html>. Accessed 18 August 2021.

<sup>89</sup> "Sepsis Accounts for 1 in 5 Deaths, Leading Cause of Death in Hospitals." *The National Law Review*, 17 January 2020, <https://www.natlawreview.com/article/sepsis-accounts-1-5-deaths-leading-cause-death-hospitals>. Accessed 18 August 2021.

It won't be the stable families or the wealthy who will suffer the most from the vaccine mandates. They at least have some options to combat the failing of the local hospital or the crumbling of their child's school. It will be the single-parent families and the poor who will have no other choice but to live with the tragic failures of the governor's latest "social experiment." Good people will leave our hospitals and schools, and the vulnerable among us will be impacted the most.

Politics aside, the governor's actions are perpetuating problems, not solving them.

**The Problem: The most vulnerable among us will bear the brunt of the fallout and collateral damage from the governor's heavy-handed vaccine mandates.**

# **PROTEST #7**

## **The governor has not shown how these vaccine mandates will conclude the state of emergency.**

The pursuit to eradicate COVID-19 is a disastrous fantasy. We've heard time and again from politicians that if we just *wear a mask*, if we just *social distance*, if we just *get vaccinated*, we'll save lives and beat this virus.

If these last 18 months have proven anything, it is that these claims are nothing more than siren songs. It is impossible to eradicate the virus because it is a respiratory virus. Currently, there are thirty COVID variants that have been identified. And the virus can spread from people to animals and from animals to people.<sup>90</sup> The virus isn't going away. That's not what respiratory viruses do.

Professor Sir Andrew Pollard, head of the Oxford Vaccine Group, told an All-Party Parliamentary Group on Coronavirus that "... herd immunity [is] 'mythical' due to the Delta variant and the likelihood of even faster-spreading new variants."<sup>91</sup> Professor Pollard continued, "We know very clearly with coronavirus that this current variant, the Delta variant, will still infect people who

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*Of all tyrannies a tyranny sincerely exercised for the good of its victims may be the most oppressive.*

*- C.S. Lewis*

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<sup>90</sup> "Animals and COVID-19." CDC, 5 August 2021, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/animals.html>. Accessed 14 August 2021.

<sup>91</sup> Lydall, Ross. "'Covid will soar annually like flu – and we won't need lockdowns', says government adviser." *Evening Standard*, 11 August 2021, <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/uk/covid-flu-no-lockdowns-seasonal-diseases-endemic-professor-andrew-hayward-b950155.html>. Accessed 14 August 2021.

have been vaccinated and that does mean that anyone who's still unvaccinated, at some point, will meet the virus."<sup>92</sup>

The professor warned UK officials that building a vaccine program around the idea of herd immunity was unachievable as the current vaccines are "less good" at preventing the spread of variants. Dr. Jay Bhattacharya, a professor of Medicine at Stanford University and a research associate at the National Bureau of Economics, affirmed Professor Pollard's point: "The vaccine, we're finding, is less good at controlling transmission."<sup>93</sup>

Even the CDC admits that vaccinated people can become infected with the Delta variant and spread the virus to others.<sup>94</sup> In addition, the variants of concern today may not be of concern tomorrow. Per the CDC, "...[V]ariants of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, are expected to continue to emerge. Some will emerge and disappear, and others will emerge and continue to spread and may replace previous variants. For example, the variant of the virus that caused the first U.S. COVID-19 cases in January 2020 is no longer detected among variants circulating in the country."<sup>95</sup>

We will always be behind the virus. It will mutate too quickly and spread too quickly to be completely eradicated. So, what exactly is this latest mandate meant to do? How does this mandate ensure that we will finally be delivered from this state of emergency?

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<sup>92</sup> Fo, Aine. "Herd immunity for Delta variant mythical and impossible, expert suggests." *Evening Standard*, 10 August 2021, <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/uk/delta-coronavirus-government-liberal-democrat-b950068.html>. Accessed August 14, 2021.

<sup>93</sup> Hill, Zoe. "Stanford Doc Jay Bhattacharya Calls Vaccine Mandates 'Unethical,' Says Patients Can Choose." *Newsweek*, 21 July 2021, <https://www.newsweek.com/stanford-doc-jay-bhattacharya-calls-vaccine-mandates-unethical-says-patients-can-choose-1611938>. Accessed 14 August 2021.

<sup>94</sup> "Delta Variant: What We Know About the Science." *CDC*, 6 August 2021, <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/variants/delta-variant.html>. Accessed 14 August 2021.

<sup>95</sup> "Variant Proportions." *CDC*, 14 August 2021, <https://covid.cdc.gov/covid-data-tracker/#variant-proportions>. Accessed 14 August 2021.



Throughout this entire crisis, the governor has not clearly demonstrated how his heavy-handed, wide-ranging actions would end the state of emergency. Instead, he has left citizens with his favored, rather aloof soundbite: "We're going to follow the science on this." What science?

Is he talking about the "science" that says you're "safe" without a mask as long as you're sitting down at a restaurant? Is he talking about the "science" that says you're "safe" when crammed into an airplane as long as you are socially-distanced when you deboard the airplane? Is he talking about the "science" that says CHAZ/CHOP won't be a superspreader but going to school or church will be? Is he talking about the "science" that says you need to wear a mask over your mouth unless, of course, you're in a marching band, then you can cut a whole in the mask so you can still play your instrument? Is he talking about the "science" that says you're "safe" as long as you're protesting "systemic racism" but "risking lives" if you protest lockdowns?

Who knew a virus could be so politically expedient?!?!

The governor has not qualitatively or quantitatively demonstrated how forcing vaccinations will end the state of emergency. Nor has he answered any meaningful scientific or societal questions. What is the point of forcing vaccinations? To reduce death? Hospitalizations? Cases? What's the target? No deaths? No hospitalizations? No cases? What about boosters? Will those be mandated too? How many? Will he guarantee health insurance benefits or payments for those who have adverse reactions to taking something he compelled them to take? The ancillary bureaucracy (mini-administrative state) created to regulate these mandates is stunning, not to mention a gargantuan waste of precious resources.

The only question the governor is intent on answering is what happens to good citizens who choose to disobey him: "Get the shot or get another job."

When it comes to exercising his emergency powers, he is too swift and too sure. When it comes to explaining his reasons for maintaining his emergency powers, he is too slow and too vague. People having their lives completely disrupted deserve more than slogans and shaming. They need solid, thoughtful, articulate leadership.

**The Problem: The governor is treating citizens as political pawns to be used, rather than free people to be respected and heard.**

# **PROTEST #8**

## **The governor's vaccine mandates continue his abuse of executive powers.**

Since his initial proclamation declaring a state of emergency, the governor has issued more than 430 COVID-specific proclamations. Nearly 360 of these proclamations are still active.<sup>96</sup>

This growing list includes:

- School closures
- Unemployment benefits
- Treatment facilities
- Paid leave
- Public records
- Agriculture
- Tribal refunds
- Collective bargaining
- Long-term care
- Community associations
- Garnishments
- Prison populations
- License renewals
- Criminal justice
- Workers' rights
- Health certificates
- Nursing homes
- Protection orders
- Healthcare facilities
- Financial reporting
- Visitation services

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*The nine most terrifying words in the English language are: I'm from the government, and I'm here to help.*

*- Ronald Reagan*

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<sup>96</sup> "Proclamations." <https://www.governor.wa.gov/office-governor/official-actions/proclamations>. Accessed 17 August 2021.

- Custody violations
- Background checks
- Job search requirements
- Hand sanitizer
- Retirement
- Pay procedures
- Traveling restrictions
- Tuition waivers
- Natural resources
- Public transportation
- Telemedicine
- Public records
- Liquor and cannabis
- Utilities
- Notaries
- Taxes
- Evictions
- Higher education
- Mask mandates
- Social gatherings
- Vaccination requirements.

All have caused massive economic, emotional, mental, and social disruption, and all have been proclamations by the governor under the guise of needing “emergency powers.” This is the very definition of bureaucratic overreach—making people’s lives hard by unnecessarily cluttering their lives with petty rules and regulations. This is especially damning when other states and countries, who did little in comparison to our governor, fared about the same in COVID case growth.<sup>97</sup>

Washington State law demands that any of the governor’s emergency powers be used to “preserve, and maintain life, health, property or the public peace.”<sup>98</sup> Meaning, the governor

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<sup>97</sup> Colarossi, Natalie. “COVID Lockdowns May Have No Clear Benefit vs Other Voluntary Measures, International Study Shows.” *Newsweek*, 14 January 2021, <https://www.newsweek.com/covid-lockdowns-have-no-clear-benefit-vs-other-voluntary-measures-international-study-shows-1561656>. Accessed 19 August 2021.

<sup>98</sup> “Proclamation by the Governor Amending Proclamation 20-05, et seq.” <https://www.governor.wa.gov/sites/default/files/proclamations/21-14%20-%20COVID-19%20Vax%20Washington%20%28tmp%29.pdf>. Accessed 18 August 2021.

cannot use his emergency powers to just do anything. He must act in such a way as to move towards concluding the state of emergency. And the worldwide presence of a respiratory virus no longer represents an acute emergency and is insufficient grounds to continue to hold us in a state of emergency.

The governor has made his policy clear. He's not following science. He's framing his politics as "science," so he can come up with fantastical rationalizations to ride roughshod over law-abiding, taxpaying citizens. We're not being treated as citizens. We're being treated as children confined to the backseat of a stuffy car with no knowledge of where we're going or how long it will take to get there.

Citizens: "Are we there yet?"

Governor: "Nope."

Citizens: "How about now?"

Governor: "Not quite."

Citizens: "Well, when will we be there?"

Governor: "Hard to say."

Citizens: "Can we at least stop to get something to eat? Or maybe go to the bathroom?"

Governor: "Sorry. It wouldn't be safe."

Citizens: "Why wouldn't it be safe?"

Governor: "You wouldn't understand."

Citizens: "You are going to tell us when it's safe, right?"

Governor: "Just trust me."

Citizens: "This sure is taking a lot longer than you said."

Governor: "Look, I'm doing this for your own good."

Citizens: "How is this for my own good again?"

Governor: "Stop asking questions."

Citizens: "Are we there yet?"

Governor: "..."

We believe it prudent to ask what kind of precedent is being set by submitting to these latest mandates. What's to keep the governor (or any other governor after him) from ordering more vaccines and for different viruses? How many boosters per year will be required for a citizen to keep their job?

Most importantly, if the governor can declare a state of emergency for a virus that has an overall 99.36% survival rate and still force vaccination onto law-abiding citizens without respect to age and health, what else could he do?

- More teens are killed in car wrecks than by COVID.<sup>99</sup> Could he declare a state of emergency and mandate that teens can't drive anymore in an effort to "preserve, and maintain life, health, property or the public peace?"
- Black children have, on average, lower reading levels than white children.<sup>100</sup> Could he declare a state of emergency and mandate that white kids not go to school until black kids catch up in an effort to "preserve, and maintain life, health, property or the public peace?"
- Men, on average, make more than women.<sup>101</sup> Could he declare a state of emergency and mandate that all men give up a portion of their pay for their female colleagues in an effort to "preserve, and maintain life, health, property or the public peace?"

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<sup>99</sup> "Teen Drivers: Get the Facts." CDC, [https://www.cdc.gov/transportationsafety/teen\\_drivers/teendrivers\\_factsheet.html](https://www.cdc.gov/transportationsafety/teen_drivers/teendrivers_factsheet.html). Accessed 18 August 2021.

<sup>100</sup> "Black-White Differences in Educational Achievement." *National Center for Education Statistics*, <https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2001/inequality/6.asp>. Accessed 18 August 2021.

<sup>101</sup> 5 Facts About the State of the Gender Pay Gap. <https://blog.dol.gov/2021/03/19/5-facts-about-the-state-of-the-gender-pay-gap>. Accessed 18 August 2021.

- Or how about climate change? Could he declare a state of emergency and mandate that no cars be driven until the carbon dioxide levels directly above the state are reduced to an “acceptable” level in an effort to “preserve, and maintain life, health, property or the public peace?”<sup>102</sup>

Aside from the myriad of sociological reasons for many of these differences, such as stupidity (teen drivers, especially young male drivers) or career and family choice (women), the governor is proving he’s willing to conflate an infinite number of individual decisions made by a free people down to one cause, one source. We are in this “pickle,” so he says, “because of the unvaccinated.” That’s it.

Never mind that he’s the one who has made unilateral decisions for 18 months impacting all 7.6 million citizens in Washington State.

Never mind that he’s the one who lifted most COVID restrictions on June 30, 2021 even though the state had yet to reach his vaccination goals.

Never mind his failed attempt to coerce people into getting vaccinated with a series of “vaccination lotteries” that cost \$2 million in taxpayer funds.

Never mind that the Delta variant was first discovered in India in December, 2020.<sup>103</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> In a YouTube interview with Senator Bernie Sanders, the governor admitted that his “state of emergency,” in which he has declared himself more a king than governor, has given him the opportunity to foist his political agenda on the state. Inslee said: “We have to recognize the necessity of this moment [with COVID]. This will allow us to rebuild our economy [to be more environmentally friendly]. We can’t use COVID as an excuse for inaction on climate change.” 13 May 2020, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FLvDYn2Y2j8>.

<sup>103</sup> Doheny, Kathleen. “Will the Delta Variant Peak and Then Burn Out?” *WebMD*, <https://www.webmd.com/lung/news/20210804/will-the-delta-variant-peak-and-then-burn-out>. Accessed 19 August 2021

Never mind that this is a global virus present in 220 countries and territories around the world.<sup>104</sup>

Never mind that other countries' attempts to lockdown and vaccinate their populations has still resulted in at least 30 mutations of the virus.

Never mind that the virus doesn't care about blue states or red states.

Never mind the hundreds of thousands—and rising—of breakthrough COVID cases amongst the vaccinated.<sup>105</sup>

Never mind that breakthrough infections can carry as much of a viral load as infections in the unvaccinated.<sup>106</sup>

Never mind that boosters are needed due to waning immunities in the vaccinated.

The governor's lone and continued assertion that we are in this "pickle" simply "because of the unvaccinated" is so divorced from context and fact as to be intellectually insulting.

Two years ago, no one would have thought the governor would shut down schools, businesses, churches, and private construction but keep pot shops, abortion clinics, and government construction open. Two years ago, no one would have thought that the governor would require teachers, nurses, and so many others to "get a jab" or lose their job.

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<sup>104</sup> "Countries where COVID-19 has spread." *Worldometer*, 19 August 2021, <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/countries-where-coronavirus-has-spread/>. Accessed 19 August 2021.

<sup>105</sup> Steenhuysen, Julie. "U.S. data show rising 'breakthrough' infections among fully vaccinated." *Reuters*, 25 August 2021, <https://www.reuters.com/business/healthcare-pharmaceuticals/us-data-show-rising-breakthrough-infections-among-fully-vaccinated-2021-08-24/>. Accessed 26 August 2021.

<sup>106</sup> Reals, Tucker. "Study: Fully vaccinated people with "breakthrough" COVID Delta infections carry as much virus as the unvaccinated." *CBS News*, 19 August 2021, <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/covid-vaccine-delta-variant-infections-carry-same-virus-load-unvaccinated/>. Accessed 19 August 2021.



The governor's actions are getting more severe as the virus' threat to the most vulnerable diminishes. This sets a dangerous precedent for what he'll do next and for the governors that follow him. There has never been an example in the history of the world where the administrative state grows and the general population's freedoms stay intact. It would be a failure of our duty as citizens to roll over and allow this to happen. It is our duty to stand up and say, "No."

**The Problem: The governor is acting like a  
despot who rules slaves, rather than a public  
servant elected by the people, for the people.**

# **PROTEST #9**

## **The governor's vaccine mandates are unconstitutional.**

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*But a constitution of government once changed from freedom, can never be restored. Liberty once lost is lost forever.*

*- John Adams*

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Some have pointed out that the governor's emergency powers are constitutional, that he is working within legislation that was passed into law the November before the pandemic broke. That is a point of much debate. Courts across the country have begun recognizing the legal theory pointed out in our personal lawsuit last year and have been systematically overturning other governors' excessive use of executive powers.<sup>107</sup>

The focus of our protest here is not his emergency powers, per se, although that is a worthwhile focus. The focus of our protest is the way he uses emergency powers to mandate vaccination of citizens.

There is a hierarchy of law beginning with the US Constitution, followed by constitutional Acts of Congress, then state constitutions, then state laws. The governor's proclamation, as a result, is restricted by other, higher laws. For example, the governor could not mandate anything that violates a citizen's 14th amendment rights as guaranteed by the US Constitution just because we're in a "state of emergency." In other words, even during a pandemic, the governor cannot temporarily waive or suspend citizens' constitutional rights.

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<sup>107</sup> For example, in September 2020, a federal judge found the Pennsylvania governor's pandemic restrictions to be unconstitutional. In October 2020, the Michigan Supreme Court struck down the Michigan governor's emergency powers. In November 2020, a Superior Court judge in California limited the California governor's executive orders because they were unconstitutional. In April 2021, the Wisconsin Supreme Court overturned the Wisconsin governor's emergency orders. In August 2021, the Kentucky Supreme Court ruled that the state legislature wields "policy-making authority" to limit the Kentucky governor's emergency powers. These are all judicial acts. State legislatures' efforts to limit governors' emergency powers has been robust and involves more than 300 bills filed across 47 states.

We do not believe the governor's vaccine mandates are constitutional. We expect government mandates of this kind (either from Washington State or another state) to go before the US Supreme Court, or a lower federal court, for legal review and ruling.<sup>108</sup>

In the interim, many have cited, and will continue to cite, a Supreme Court case from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century to defend the governor's authority to mandate these vaccines.

In the 1905 case of *Jacobson v. Massachusetts*, the US Supreme Court ruled that the state could, in fact, require a private citizen to be inoculated from the smallpox virus as permitted under state law. Many have used this case as some sort of super-precedent to suggest that states and their governors can use their police powers to mandate vaccines ad nauseam. This interpretation and application fall short for several reasons.

**1. COVID-19 is nothing like smallpox.** Smallpox is considered to be the worst disease ever known to man. It was an ancient disease that killed billions of people over millennia. Conservative estimates show smallpox killed at least 300 million people worldwide during the 20<sup>th</sup> century alone.<sup>109</sup> Further, smallpox killed, on average, 30% of the people it infected.<sup>110</sup> Those who survived were often left with horrific scarring on their bodies and, in many cases, blindness. Smallpox did not discriminate, as it took young and healthy and old and unhealthy.

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<sup>108</sup> Unfortunately, this will not help the many who will lose their income and livelihood between now and then.

<sup>109</sup> Piper, Kelsey. "Smallpox used to kill millions of people every year. Here's how humans beat it." *Vox*, 5 February 2021, <https://www.vox.com/future-perfect/21493812/smallpox-eradication-vaccines-infectious-disease-covid-19>. Accessed 14 August 2021.

<sup>110</sup> "History of Smallpox." *CDC*, <https://www.cdc.gov/smallpox/history/history.html>. Accessed 14 August 2021.

**2. The smallpox vaccine had been around for roughly 100 years by 1905.** Long-term adverse side effects were well understood by the medical community.

**3. Jacobson was fined a whopping \$150 (in today's dollars) for failing to comply with the state's statute.** That is a far cry from the governor's current threat of job loss, livelihood or criminal prosecution. Where else is a nurse or teacher supposed to turn after being terminated for failing to comply with the governor's forced vaccination? Their only option is to move to a different state in order to escape his mandates.

**4. The state's case was against one man.** Currently, 40,000 state employees; 400,000 healthcare workers; and 363,000 school employees fall under the governor's mandate.<sup>111 112</sup> At present, 71.5% of Washingtonians have received at least one dose of the COVID vaccine.<sup>113</sup> Using the state's average vaccination rates, that means approximately 229,000 state, healthcare, and school employees have not been vaccinated and will soon be fired unless vaccinated. There are tens of thousands of people these vaccine mandates materially impact. If COVID-19 possessed a 30% infection fatality rate, like smallpox, little convincing or compelling would be needed for the vast majority of citizens to be vaccinated.

**5. The case against Jacobson involved a law passed by the state legislature.** The governor's current mandate is exercised unilaterally and is NOT an enforcement of legislation as enacted through citizens' chosen representatives.

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<sup>111</sup> Mikkelsen, Drew. "COVID-19 vaccine mandate forcing Washington state employees to make a decision." *King 5 News*, 10 August 2021, <https://www.king5.com/article/news/health/coronavirus/vaccine/covid-19-vaccine-mandate-forcing-washington-state-employees-to-make-a-decision/281-653e6584-4b7e-42bd-abb7-d2d3c9763e51>. Accessed 14 August 2021.

<sup>112</sup> Demkovich, Laurel. "Inslee: Teachers and staff must receive COVID-19 vaccine by mid-October." *The Spokesman-Review*, 18 August 2021, <https://www.spokesman.com/stories/2021/aug/18/inslee-announces-indoor-mask-mandate-for-all-vacci/>. Accessed 19 August 2021.

<sup>113</sup> "COVID-19 Data Dashboard." Washington State Department of Health, 19 August 2021, <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Emergencies/COVID19/DataDashboard#dashboard>. Accessed 19 August 2021.

**6. The US Supreme Court ruled in the state’s favor precisely because it determined that the state was not being arbitrary, oppressive, or “plainly invading” Jacobson’s Constitutional rights (e.g., such as to work).** In an effort to clarify its ruling for the sake of guarding against future, legal abuse, the Court wrote:

*Before closing this opinion, we deem it appropriate, in order to prevent misapprehension as to our views, to observe – perhaps to repeat a thought already sufficiently expressed, namely – that the police power of a State, whether exercised by the legislature or by a local body acting under its authority, may be exerted in such circumstances or by regulations so arbitrary and oppressive in particular cases as to justify the interference of the courts to prevent wrong and oppression.*

*All laws, this court has said, should receive a sensible construction. General terms should be so limited in their application as not to lead to injustice, oppression or absurd consequence.<sup>114</sup>*

In this case, the Supreme Court made it clear that their ruling was not controlling law for all vaccination mandates for all time. This case had a unique set of facts and circumstances that the Court made clear to address in its closing opinion in an effort to limit future government abuses.

The *Jacobson* case wasn’t a departure from normal legal rules during a pandemic and provides, as stated earlier, no legal precedent for doing so now. In November 2020, current Supreme Court Justice Gorsuch addressed this very issue in the Supreme Court case *Roman Catholic Diocese v. Cuomo*:

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<sup>114</sup> “Jacobson v. Massachusetts.” *Supreme Court of the United States*, 20 February 1905, <https://tile.loc.gov/storage-services/service/ll/usrep/usrep197/usrep197011/usrep197011.pdf>. Accessed 19 August 2021.

*...Jacobson didn't seek to depart from normal legal rules during a pandemic, and it supplies no precedent for doing so. Instead, Jacobson applied what would become the traditional legal test associated with the right at issue— exactly what the Court does today . . . . Nothing in Jacobson purported to address, let alone approve, such serious and long-lasting intrusions into settled constitutional rights. In fact, Jacobson explained that the challenged law survived only because it did not “contravene the Constitution of the United States” or “infringe any right granted or secured by that instrument....”<sup>115</sup>*

In *Jacobson*, the defendant had three options: (1) get vaccinated; (2) identify a basis for exemption; or (3) pay a menial fine. “The imposition on Mr. Jacobson’s claimed right to bodily integrity...was avoidable and relatively modest,” said Justice Gorsuch.<sup>116</sup> The governor’s vaccine mandate is anything but relatively modest.

Under the governor’s vaccine mandate, employees have three options: (1) get vaccinated; (2) identify a basis for a religious or medical exemption that may be denied (based on the subjective ruling of the employer); or (3) lose your job, uproot your family, and move to another state.

Many employees cannot just simply transfer to another local employer within their same field of education, experience, and expertise because the governor’s mandate is statewide. Thus, they will be required to move out of state if they want to stay in the profession for which, in many cases, they’ve spent years and thousands of dollars preparing for.

There can be no question that the governor’s vaccine mandates cause irreparable harm. Further, the governor has been

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<sup>115</sup>“Roman Catholic Diocese of Brooklyn, New York v. Andrew m. Cuomo, Governor of New York.” *Supreme Court of the United States*, 25 November 2020, [https://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/20pdf/20a87\\_4g15.pdf](https://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/20pdf/20a87_4g15.pdf). Accessed 24 August 2021.

<sup>116</sup>“Roman Catholic Diocese of Brooklyn, New York v. Andrew m. Cuomo, Governor of New York.” *Supreme Court of the United States*, 25 November 2020, [https://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/20pdf/20a87\\_4g15.pdf](https://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/20pdf/20a87_4g15.pdf). Accessed 24 August 2021.

absolutely silent on how the vaccine mandates will end the state of emergency.

Even in a pandemic, citizens' constitutional rights cannot be forgotten nor easily tossed aside based solely on the governor's flimsy slogans. He is woefully short on legal justification for his incredibly intrusive and harmful actions.

**The Problem: The governor is making a mockery of the spirit of our nation and of the highest law in the land.**

# 4 Things to Remember Before You Act

*\*\*We offer the following for those facing the threat of job loss due to the governor's vaccine mandates. We know there are many extenuating circumstances that make everyone's situation unique. We hope these help as you endeavor to follow your conscience, whatever that may be.\*\**

**1. Realize this is an emotionally charged moment.** The nature of the governor's mandate, the steep consequences for disobeying it, and the swiftness in which it has been enacted have all coalesced into an emotionally charged moment. If there was time to discuss, process, and look for alternatives, it would still be hard, but those opportunities would relieve some of the immediate tension. The fact that people are facing the loss of their career and livelihood in a matter of weeks due to nothing that they have done, other than make a personal health decision, is nothing less than staggering.

**2. Realize why it is an emotionally charged moment.** The limited window of time that has been given to comply has, by intention and design, limited people's ability to organize and respond. On top of that, many in leadership at the impacted institutions who disagree with these mandates have been told to "toe the line or else." Others have been told not to talk about it or discuss it. This all adds to a sense of isolation, stress, fear, and ethical dilemma.

*Does anyone else think this is crazy? What is the right decision? If I lose my job, what will I do then? This isn't right, but what do I do?*

All of this is resulting in a sense of hopeless desperation experienced by thousands in our valley and hundreds of thousands in our state. And this is being brought on by the poor leadership of our governor. DO NOT allow the accusations to stick that say, "If only you would do this or that, then it would all be better." We are not in this situation because of your actions; we are in this situation because of the *governor's* actions.



**3. Take time to think and discern before you act.** It's easy in emotionally charged moments to lash out in anger or whatever particular emotion you have at the time. We are not saying emotion is bad. There is a lot on the line that you care about like your family, career, schooling, relationships, and home. We do not think you should take the emotion out of it; that's part of the power of this moment. We do, however, think you need to channel it. Raw unleashed emotion can just cause more damage; *focused* emotion can be a powerful catalyst. Take time to think, get good counsel, talk with others, pray, and process. And when you act, make sure your head and heart are clear. There is a time to be measured, and there is a time to leave it all on the line. Take the time to discern the moment you're in.

**4. This is an opportunity to live out your theology, so embrace it as a gift.** Oftentimes, we like to think we have things under control. Then moments come along when we realize things are totally out of control, and the only remaining alternative is to trust the Lord. This, in the end, is never a negative. Our life is always richer when we trust Jesus more. His presence becomes more tangible, his nearness sweeter, his promises truer. As Navy Seal teams often say, "Embrace the suck." Or as Charles Spurgeon said, "I have learned to kiss the wave that throws me upon the Rock of Ages." Sometimes the blessing of the storm is simply the presence of God as He meets us in the storm.

# 9 Guidelines for When You Act

**1. Don't lose the human element.** It's easy to send an angry email. It takes work to have a meaningful, personal conversation. When possible, go in and meet with your employer face-to-face. There may come a time for emails, letters, documentation, and clear articulation for both effect and accountability. But starting face-to-face is, in general, a good place to begin.

Certainly there are nefarious characters in this picture and behind these actions, but some are also in the terrible position of implementing orders they don't agree with. This puts them in the same boat as you. Who knows what a face-to-face conversation might result in? The worst case scenario is they treat you with disrespect and you have the opportunity to respond with a Christ-like attitude. Either way, meeting face-to-face is rarely a net-loss.

**2. Winning is secondary; giving witness to the character of Christ is primary.** Don't lose the forest for the trees. Yes, know your rights, be informed, build coalitions, network with like-minded coworkers, know your conscience, act appropriately, and push back hard, if necessary. And, in all you do and say, do it in the character of Christ—with humility, godliness, and charity. In other words, it's not only about *what* you do but *how* you do it.

**3. Live so as to minimize your regrets.** Don't just think about the next 7 days. Think about your life for the next 7 years, the reputation of Jesus for the next 70 years, and your eternity for the next 700 years. What will you have wished you did or said? What would you regret not doing, not saying? What would you regret doing or saying? It's easy to get lost in the emotion of the moment. This is not the time for rash decisions but clear minded, calculated action.

**4. Humility and respect are not the same as compliance and appeasement.** To be humble is not to roll over in the face of unrighteousness. Jesus was the most humble man to walk the planet, and his life was marked by anything but compliance and appeasement. He stood on principle. He spoke truth to tyranny and injustice. Respect for authority is not the same as compliance and compromise. You can be respectful and stand against immoral and unethical actions. And when standing against unrighteous authority, there is no need to be ungodly. One can be firm, principled, and walk in godly character all in the same moment.

**5. Courage is contagious.** The enemy works by dividing and conquering. They isolate so they can annihilate. But you are not alone. Unfortunately, many have been bullied into silence with threats of retaliation. It's true. We've talked with many of them. They are currently afraid to speak up. Your example could change that. It just might be that your courageous action is what puts courage into them. Fear is contagious, but so is courage. As a past president said: "One man [or woman] with courage makes a majority."<sup>117</sup>

**6. Remember, this isn't about a vaccine.** If you make the sole issue to be about a controversial vaccine, you'll get instantly lost in the weeds. We do not believe that is the wise battle to choose. This is about people having the right to choose whether or not they want certain medical interventions in their bodies. Nobody should be forced or coerced into taking something that they don't want or that violates their conscience.

**7. Do not quit.** We realize this point might tread beyond principle and into practice, so we tread here lightly. We know from talking to many of you that you have lost the desire to work for an organization that tramples on medical freedoms and medical privacy. We totally understand. And we do not disagree with anyone who would choose to quit or choose to get the vaccine if it did not violate their conscience.

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<sup>117</sup> President Andrew Jackson.

But for those of you whose conscience does not allow you to get the vaccine, it would be our encouragement to stay. Stick it out. Make a religious accommodation request. Make your voice heard. Build a coalition of like-minded people. Stand up for your rights and the rights of others. Petition your union reps. Do not go quietly into the night. Do not make their job easier by quitting. Make them fire you. This is a fight worth making.

**8. This may result in more personal suffering, not less.** The good guys don't always win in the short term. Standing for your principles or the rights of other people to exercise their consciences is the right thing to do. But there is no promise from God that it will come without persecution, pain, or consequence in this life. We live in a fallen world where evil exists and some people in leadership are unethical and immoral.

Count the cost. And if you do decide to stand, no matter the outcome, you will have the gift of a clear conscience. You did not violate your principles simply because you were threatened by someone who had leverage. Standing for your principles, and the gift of a clear conscience, are wonderful rewards in themselves.

**9. God is in control of those who are in control.** Lastly, do not let your heart be troubled. Remind yourself of the big picture so that your perspective isn't distorted and lost. Put these truths in your heart and stand on them as you walk into the storm.

*I keep my eyes always on the Lord. With him at my right hand, I will not be shaken (Psalm 16:8).*

*In you, Lord my God, I put my trust. I trust in you; do not let me be put to shame, nor let my enemies triumph over me. No one who hopes in you will ever be put to shame but shame will come on those who are treacherous without cause (Psalm 25:1-3).*

*I remain confident of this: I will see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. Wait for the Lord; be strong and take heart and wait for the Lord (Psalm 27:13-14).*

*God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore, I will not fear though the earth gives way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea (Psalm 46:1-2).*

*Cast your cares on the Lord and he will sustain you; he will never let the righteous be shaken (Psalm 55:22).*

*I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress, my God, in whom I trust (Psalm 91:2).*

*I lift up my eyes to the mountains—where does my help come from? My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth. He will not let your foot slip—he who watches over you will not slumber; indeed, he who watches over Israel will neither slumber nor sleep. The Lord watches over you—the Lord is your shade at your right hand; the sun will not harm you by day, nor the moon by night. The Lord will keep you from all harm—he will watch over your life; the Lord will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore (Psalm 121:1-8).*

*For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline (2 Timothy 1:7).*

*But we do not belong to those who shrink back and are destroyed, but to those who have faith and are saved (Hebrews 10:39).*

*In all this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials. These have come so that the proven genuineness of your faith—of greater worth than gold, which perishes even though refined by fire—may result in praise, glory and honor when Jesus Christ is revealed (1 Peter 1:6-7).*

# Epilogue

We love you, Grace City. We are proud of your tenacious grace and courageous faith. It's our prayer the Lord will use this work to equip you to walk through these complex times with clarity, conviction, and courage.

Clear eyes. Full hearts. All in for One Name.

*Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.*

*Ephesians 6:13*

*When living out one's Christian conscience becomes illegal,  
civil disobedience becomes obligatory.*

**Josh McPherson**

*It would serve the Christian well to understand the  
difference between a government and a bureaucracy.  
One is for the people, the other against the people.  
One is to be supported, the other resisted.*

**Kyle Strong**

