

NOBLESVILLE BAPTIST CHURCH • ELDER'S STATEMENT

On Religious Exemption • September 29, 2021

We believe that the Triune God who revealed Himself in His Holy Scriptures, in the coming of the Son of God, Jesus Christ, and today in the ministry of the Holy Spirit in His church throughout the world, made mankind in His image, and gave humans dominion over the world as God's stewards and representatives. In opposition to the assertions of secularism, we assert that man's life has transcendent value because of this act of special creation on the part of God. God's Word – the 66 books of the Bible – is therefore the highest standard by which man, God's creature, is called to live and make ethical decisions.

In coming to earth to live a perfect life, lay down that life as a sacrifice for sinful humans, and rise from the dead, proclaiming victory over sin, death, and hell, Jesus Christ then proclaimed that all authority in heaven and on earth is His (Matthew 28:18). Christ now commands all humans – from every nation, tribe, and tongue – to repent and believe in the good news of salvation by His grace alone.

God's Word and gospel provide for personal freedom from the power of sin, and for liberty of conscience under any type of worldly government. Moreover, these realities are to be exercised by mankind in light of God's revealed will that man is called to live for God's glory. Christ's gospel removes our dread of death, gives us deep purpose in life, and grants us the incredible hope of eternal salvation.

Christians therefore proclaim Christ's Lordship over all realms of human existence. Christians approach questions of vaccination and religious exemption in light of the fact that Jesus Christ is King of kings, Lord of lords, and Lord of life. We believe and assert that a Christian's conscience can properly and validly submit to medical procedures, such as the taking of tested and proven medications and vaccines, giving thanks to God whose ordering of His creation has allowed for such wonderful advancements.

We also believe and assert that men and women have the right to refuse mandatory medical procedures, actions, medications, or injections, whether these actions are ordered by the highest government authorities, or by lesser authorities, such as an employer or local magistrate. They may do so for a variety of reasons – for example, when they are convinced that these medical procedures could threaten their life, their future health, their fertility, their wellbeing, their conscience, or their witness to Jesus Christ. Furthermore, parents have the right and responsibility to make such decisions for their children, without external interference from governmental authorities.

Moreover, we believe and assert that many sound bases may exist for a Christian to refuse medical treatments, such as when the treatments lack long-term safety information, have deleterious side effects, have possible unknown impacts upon preexisting medical conditions, and originate from or were tested on replicated aborted fetal cells (that is, fetal stem cell lines taken from elective abortions). Likewise, one may be convinced that the demanded procedure arises not from a public health concern, but from political machinations and activities that are opposed to God's truth and ways, and hence are to be resisted. We assert that the human conscience should not and cannot be coerced, and that all such attempts to do so are in opposition to the will and Word of God.

Therefore, we assert – in the name and authority of our Lord Jesus Christ – that we and our members have the right and the responsibility to research fully the issues relevant to all such medical matters; that free flow of information must be guaranteed and protected; and that we have the right to refuse such mandatory procedures as described above, including vaccination, upon absolutely sound religious grounds. We likewise call upon all governmental agencies, businesses, schools, and employers of all types to respect these deeply held religious conclusions and convictions, and to honor our religious liberty and freedom by granting religious exemptions as requested.

To Whom it May Concern:

The leadership of Noblesville Baptist Church, Noblesville, IN is writing on behalf of

_____, to confirm that his/her sincerely held religious beliefs prevent him/her from receiving a mandatory COVID-19 vaccination. Our church affirms the right of each of its members, according to their personal conscience, to make informed decisions, and if need be, to take religious exemption against mandatory vaccination by governmental authorities and/or private employers. The above statement confirms this right according to Christian doctrinal standards and God's Holy Word.

_____ 's application for religious exemption is, therefore, not merely a matter of personal opinion or preference, but is a bona fide religious conviction, with the full support of his/her church leadership, under the authority of Jesus Christ. We appreciate your understanding in this matter.

Sincerely,

Seth Leeman
Senior Pastor, Noblesville Baptist Church
Noblesville, IN

NOBLESVILLE BAPTIST CHURCH • ELDER'S STATEMENT

On The Role of Women in the Gathered Assembly • August 28, 2022

The elders of Noblesville Baptist Church affirm the equality of men and women as image bearers of our Triune God (Gen. 1:26-27). Moreover, we rejoice in God's complementary design of both sexes (Gen. 2:18-25). God commissioned and equipped Adam and Eve to be fruitful, multiply, fill, subdue, and exercise dominion over the earth (Gen. 1:28). While men and women have many distinguishing qualities, they share a unified purpose.

As we study the New Testament, we see how God saves, gifts, and employs both men and women into his service (Mt 28:18-20). Both Christian men and women have a responsibility to use their spiritual gifts in the life of the local church within the boundaries provided in the Word of God (1 Pet 4:10-11). We support the women of Noblesville Baptist Church exercising their gifts for the edification of the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:7).

In Scripture we find women engaged in various works such as making coats for widows in Joppa (Acts 9:36-39), discipling others alongside their husbands in Ephesus (Acts 18:26), mentoring younger women within the church at Crete (Tit. 2:3-6), and praying and prophesying in Corinth (I Cor. 11:5). Women comprise a significant portion of the membership of the local church (Acts 5:14) and are expected to exercise their gifts as members of the one body of Christ (Eph. 4:1-16).

Additionally, we recognize that Scripture promotes the spiritual leadership of men within the gathered assembly. This is seen through God's call for male leadership within church homes (Eph. 5:22-6:4) as well as within the assembly of church families (1 Tim. 3:2; 1 Tim. 3:12; 1 Tim. 2:8; 1 Tim. 2:11-15). Scripture restricts women from teaching and exercising authority over men in the gathered assembly (I Tim. 2:11-12). As women exercise their gifts in the gathered assembly, care is required to not give the appearance of exercising authority over the men (I Cor. 11:5; 1 Cor. 14:29-35). As we seek to carry on the activities of a local church in submission to Scripture, we affirm that the office of elder is reserved for men who meet the qualifications found in I Tim. 3 and Titus 1. Additionally, instruction from the Word of God in the mixed assembly is to be carried out by such men.

When the church is gathered for congregational worship on Sunday mornings, at members' meetings, and other special whole-church assemblies, we view the liturgical prayers as leading the congregation in a representative fashion in prayer to the Lord. Therefore, to avoid confusion and to protect our women from any appearance of exercising authority over men, we prefer that those prayers be led by men selected by the elders. Moreover, children will not be tasked with leading in corporate prayers.

The elders praise God for many godly women that serve at Noblesville Baptist Church in diverse ways and for their careful attention to scriptural principles as they do. It is our desire to encourage and support our women as they serve the Lord alongside the men and children of our church. We are blessed as a church for their ministry. We acknowledge, appreciate, and encourage their continued service to God at NBC.