

Following Jesus In A Pandemic

To Follow or Not To Follow
Government Agents

Following Jesus

- Issues around Covid-19 have raised all kinds of questions.
- One of the big debates in the States right now is about a churches right to hold services.
- US has a constitutional amendment guaranteeing freedom of religion - “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof ...”
- But, “... while they cannot interfere with religious beliefs and opinions, they may with practices.” eg. Human sacrifices

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- The *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* guarantees the rights and freedoms set out in it subject only to such reasonable limits prescribed by law as can be demonstrably justified in a free and democratic society.
- (a) freedom of conscience and religion;
- Those “reasonable limits” are now to limit group size to various amounts across the country
- What is our response to be? Should always do what the government tells us to do? Is there a place and time for us to say, “Enough! We must follow God!”

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1. God is the ultimate authority in the Universe, we must always obey Him. Rev.4:8-11
2. God is the one who establishes an earthly authority Ro.13:1
3. In putting them in place, He is also the one granting them authority –John 19:5-11
4. With authority also comes accountability. Da.4:25,32,35; 5:22-28; 7:8-11; Ps.82
5. We will be held accountable for our submission the divinely given authority of an earthly ruler. Rom.13:1-2
6. We are to obey earthly rulers until they tell us to disobey God – see pt.1; Acts 5:27-29

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- How does this apply us in our current situation? Some restrictions are guidelines, some WorkSafe BC, some are enforced through public shaming and some now have fines.
- To this point we have not been told we cannot meet, but God does command us to meet. Heb.10:19-25
- I agree with others who feel there is something much bigger afoot than a virus and have concerns that we are on a slippery slope.
- Standards change as politically expedient – masks, 2mt space
- Social virus tracking app ⇨ the mark of the beast? Chip in hand for proof of vaccine

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- Eph.6:10- 13 Our battle is not political or social, it is spiritual.
- When was the last time you saw all the nations of the world unified in their response to something?
- Fear is a far more effective motivator than money or politics!
- Is this Jesus leading us back to where the church began, with home groups? But, Could those be considered “parties” and leaders be fined for hosting or initiating these “events”?
- Where else do you find governments encouraging their people to “report” their neighbours for “socially irresponsible” behaviour?

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- Covid has also blinded the news networks to other significant news items.
- There have been 2 Ebola virus outbreaks in Congo this year. 1st started in January ended in June with 3500 cases and 2200 deaths (63%). Second started in August, with 100 cases and 33 deaths as of Aug.10. (covid has mortality rate 3.4% of confirmed cases in BC)
- Iran has a new missile that can reach Jerusalem. Iranian govt is becoming more erratic as their people grow more disillusioned with the “revolution”
- Sheep Among Wolves video on Youtube

Following Jesus In These Times

- Given that God is the ultimate authority in the universe and that He wants us to obey our earthly leaders until they tell us to disobey God. If we only follow our God, He will lead us in obedience of our leaders until want to lead us away from God. He is our Shepherd! He will lead the way! Through good or evil earthly leaders, we will follow Jesus ONLY!
- Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. Heb.12:1,2