

College Student Request for Religious Exemption to COVID-19 Vaccine

Dear university representative:

I am writing to formally request a religious exemption to receiving a COVID-19 vaccination. As a devout Christian, I am guided in everything I do by my faith in God and the Bible, which I believe to be God's revealed and inspired Word (2 Timothy 3:16-17). In 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, the Apostle Paul exhorts Christians about the importance of their bodies: "Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. Therefore, glorify God in your body." Likewise, Romans 12:1 exhorts Christians: "I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship."

These Scriptures are just a few of many that have informed my religious convictions regarding my physical and spiritual health that I live by, including my sincere religious objection to receiving any of the COVID-19 vaccines. I must honor God with my spirit, mind, and body, and therefore I must guard what I put into my body. That includes avoiding, whenever possible, knowingly receiving foreign toxins with harmful or unknown effects, while also maximizing nutrition and cultivating a healthy natural immune system in accordance with God's design. I firmly believe that the COVID-19 vaccine ingredients are contaminants that are harmful to my body, and that in addition to the known health risks, there are many unknown risks due to the lack of standard testing and long-term study of these substances.

The COVID-19 vaccines are unique in that they do not contain the typical viral ingredients, but rather they have components and designs such as synthetic mRNA and lipid nanoparticles that have never been used before in this way in humans. Very little is scientifically known about these substances in humans including their short term or long term effects on the body. In taking this vaccine, I would be effectively taking part in a medical experiment. Not only do I consider this unsafe, but most importantly to me, it would be dishonoring to God with my body because I would not be "glorifying God in my body" as Christians are called to do, or taking care of the body God gave me, which "is the temple of the Holy Spirit of God." Especially when there are other known, safe, and effective alternatives both to treat and prevent COVID-19, including well known substances and holistic methods to nurture and boost our God-given immunity, I cannot justify being injected with the COVID-19 vaccines and still be consistent with my sincere Christian faith.

It is also my sincere religious conviction that human life begins at conception, that the sanctity of life is precious to God, and that it is morally wrong to destroy innocent human life. (See, e.g. Psalm 139:13-16, Jeremiah 1:5, Psalm 127:3, Exodus 20:13) The COVID-19 injections manufactured by Moderna and Pfizer both used aborted fetal tissue in the testing process, and those manufactured by AstraZeneca and Johnson & Johnson used aborted fetal tissue in every

step of the process – development, production and lab testing. It violates my Christian faith to be injected with substances that were the product of such an unethical and morally objectionable process that included the destruction and use of innocent human life.

The issues of honoring God with my body and preserving the sanctity of human life are further compounded by the fact that I am a person of child-bearing age who may likely have children in the near future. Because of my Christian convictions in the capacity of a (current or future) spouse and parent, especially as it relates to my convictions about the sanctity of human life, I cannot receive a COVID-19 injection because of the risk of harm that could result to myself and my future children. According to my Christian faith, there is an important moral difference between intentionally injecting my *healthy* body with a drug that can harm me – whether that’s cocaine or a COVID-19 vaccine – verses unintentionally coming into bodily contact with a harmful virus or substance in the natural world outside of my complete control. While I must ultimately trust God in those things I cannot fully control, I am fully accountable to God for those things over which I have complete control – like what drugs are intentionally injected into my body. For me, I know that I would be dishonoring and disobeying God were I to allow myself to be injected with one of the COVID-19 vaccines.

It should also be of no small consequence to the university that, because of my age and good health, if I were to test positive for COVID-19, statistically I have a better than 99.9% likelihood of full recovery, thereby significantly mitigating any potential risks of not being vaccinated. Given that it seems most, if not all, other students around me and a majority of adults in Virginia have received one of the COVID-19 vaccines, in theory I should not pose any real risk to them, assuming I was to somehow contract the virus.

While the foregoing are not the only bases for my sincere religious objections to receiving a COVID vaccination, I trust they have conveyed the sincerity and conscientiousness with which I have approached and diligently considered this matter. Thank you in advance for receiving this letter as a most sincere expression of my religious objections to receiving a COVID-19 vaccination. I am humbled and honored to be able to attend this institution and look forward to this request being granted. Thank you.

Sincerely,

[Name]

[Date]

[Signature]