



Church of God by Faith, Inc.

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GREETINGS BY FAITH FAMILY,

Here we are in a new year, and 2021 has already brought a lot of new challenges to our country politically, economically, socially, and the ongoing threat of the Coronavirus.

COVID-19 has changed our world. It has disproportionately affected our communities and, unfortunately, claimed far too many lives.

Perhaps many of us feel like the Prophet Jeremiah who lamented, *"I weep for the hurt of my people; I stand amazed, silent, dumb with grief. ²² Is there no medicine in Gilead? Is there no physician there? Why doesn't God do something? Why doesn't He help?"* (Jer. 3:21-22 TLB)



Whenever a society has been plagued with disease, God has always provided an answer.

Coronavirus vaccines are nothing new; they have been in development for more than 10-years. After many years of progressive research, the pandemic's devastation has triggered a renewed and accelerated urgency to produce a vaccine with a targeted efficacy toward COVID-19. Over the years, Coronavirus vaccines have been, and remain, in use in countries around the world. Such vaccines have brought some light to a long and dark tunnel. However, vaccines are only helpful if people decide to take them.

Many of us have reservations about the current COVID-19 vaccines -- due in large to the history surrounding experimental vaccines and people of color. Of equal concern is the speed at which the approved vaccines were developed.

With that in mind, I wanted to share with you why I am now opened to receiving the vaccine and to offer some information you might consider as well.

1. The updated Facts about COVID-19 Vaccines from the CDC

Accurate vaccine information is critical, and the CDC has provided answers to four important questions for me:

**Question #1: Can a COVID-19 vaccine make me sick with COVID-19?**

ANSWER: No. None of the authorized and recommended [COVID-19 vaccines or COVID-19 vaccines currently in development in the United States](#) contain the live virus that causes COVID-19. This means that a COVID-19 vaccine **cannot** make you sick with COVID-19.

There are several different types of vaccines in development. All of them teach our immune systems how to recognize and fight the virus that causes COVID-19. Sometimes this process can cause symptoms, such as fever. These symptoms are normal and are a sign that the body is building protection against the virus that causes COVID-19. Learn more about [how COVID-19 vaccines work](#).

It typically takes a few weeks for the body to build immunity (protection against the virus that causes COVID-19) after vaccination. That means it is possible a person could be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19 just before or just after vaccination and still get sick. This is because the vaccine has not had enough time to provide protection.

Question #2: If someone has already had COVID-19 and recovered, do they still need to get vaccinated with a COVID-19 vaccine?

ANSWER: Yes. Due to the severe health risks associated with COVID-19 and the fact that re-infection with COVID-19 is possible, the vaccine should be offered to you even if you already had the COVID-19 infection. CDC is providing recommendations to federal, state, and local governments about [who should be vaccinated first](#).

At this time, experts do not know how long someone is protected from getting sick again after recovering from COVID-19. The immunity someone gains from having an infection, called natural immunity, varies from person-to-person. Some early evidence suggests natural immunity may not last very long.

We won't know how long immunity produced by a vaccination lasts until we have more data on how well the vaccines work. Both natural immunity and vaccine-induced immunity are important aspects of COVID-19 that experts are trying to learn more about during this time. The CDC will keep the public informed as new evidence becomes available.

Question #3: Will a COVID-19 vaccine alter my DNA?

ANSWER: No. COVID-19 mRNA vaccines do not change or interact with your DNA in any way. Messenger RNA vaccines—also called mRNA vaccines—are the first COVID-19 vaccines authorized for use in the United States. mRNA vaccines teach our cells how to make a protein that triggers an immune response. The mRNA from a COVID-19 vaccine never enters the nucleus of the cell, which is where our DNA is kept. This means the mRNA cannot affect or interact with our DNA in any way.



Instead, COVID-19 mRNA vaccines work with the body's natural defenses to safely develop immunity to disease. Learn more about [how COVID-19 mRNA vaccines work](#).

At the end of the process, our bodies will have learned how to protect against future infection. That immune response and making antibodies is what protects us from getting infected if the real virus enters our bodies.

Question #4: How do I know which sources of COVID-19 vaccine information are accurate?

Answer: It can be difficult to know which sources of information you can trust. Learn more about [finding credible vaccine information](#).

2. I reviewed several helpful videos from the Health Community addressing the safety of the vaccine, including one from the Mayo Clinic.

- <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/coronavirus/in-depth/coronavirus-vaccine/art-20484859>
- Early data shows that there was only an average of about 12 people **per-million** who had an adverse reaction to the vaccine. **The medical community agrees that the benefits far outweigh the risk!**

3. Prayerfully, I have listened, and continue to listen, to the voices of trusted health professional within our own faith-community.

- I have a level of trust for our governmental officials and the science community; nevertheless, I believe it is in order to also listen to and consult with trained medical professionals in the faith community who we know have our best interests at heart.
- *“Where there is no counsel, the people fall; But in the multitude of counselors there is safety. (Prov. 11:14)*

Two articles cited by such professionals follow:

- ***Important Information Regarding the COVID-19 Vaccines***
m.medicalinfohub2.com/rest/head/mirrorPage/@fAtbvEpRMEzm16yBeimgBu_5Au7onnhvSUGmb5g9wKMDwkbxjHyM1R-XSDFx6qGrReN3aoODfAXr8skN11-O_dIFXweEo6JblWTSEfnahCMuT-4.html
- ***Dr. Eugenia South - I'm a Black doctor who didn't trust the COVID vaccine. Here's what changed my mind.***
[Dr. Eugenia South: I'm a Black doctor who didn't trust the Covid vaccine. Here's what changed my mind. \(nbcnews.com\)](#)

4. The Peace of God through Prayer

The scripture teaches...*Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus* (Philippians 4:6-7 NKJV).

I believe that along with good science and guidance from the medical community and our personal physicians, overcoming our anxieties about this vaccine and everything else in our lives ultimately comes from God.

I have personally come to a place of peace about the COVID-19 vaccine and look forward to receiving it when it is available.

Many of us still have that little round scar on our left shoulder as evidence of a vaccine we were told was necessary to receive years ago. (That vaccine, and a combination thereof, was given to stave off emerging epidemics of the times, namely Smallpox, Polio, and Measles).

Above all, I am urging everyone to trust God and wholly lean on Him, for He is our Rock in all things. Secondly, I am appealing to the ByFaith Family to remain sober and informed about the immediate remedies made available to us through painstaking research, science, health care organizations, and the medical community.

Given that, along with your personal conviction and your physician's guidance, as your Bishop, I want to encourage you to prayerfully consider receiving either of the COVID-19 vaccines when they become available. It is my conviction that the benefits of the vaccines far outweigh the risks. And what are those risks? Local irritation at the injection site, body aches, and possibly low-grade fever within the first 24 to 48 hours. As I cited earlier, such reactions are signaling that the vaccine is working.

The most highly anticipated benefit you receive is a 95% chance of eradicating the virus in your system before it can make you sick! The ultimate result is peace of mind and conditional promise to prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers!

Finally, please keep in mind that even if you decide to receive the vaccination (or not), it is still imperative to wear masks. You should continue practicing other preventive measures such as hand washing, social distancing, and employing all the tools available to help stop this pandemic. Please receive this guidance in the spirit that we are still our brother's keeper.

For His Service,



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