



# WESTMINSTER PRESBYTERY

A Presbytery of the  
Presbyterian Church in America



## *Statement on Religious Exemption to Mandatory Medical Treatments*

Standing in the ancient Christian tradition, committed to the Westminster Standards and the supremacy of the Holy Scriptures, Westminster Presbytery affirms our religion's principles of liberty of conscience (WCF 20:2a; Romans 14:4-20), of honoring and preserving human life from conception to natural death, (WLC 135-136; Exodus 20:13) as well as the sovereignty of individuals and families under God in medical and healthcare decision-making. (1 Corinthians 7:23; 1 Corinthians 10:27-31)

No government or institution should overstep its bounds of authority as defined by the Bible. Therefore, we state our unequivocal support for the right of refusal of mandatory medical treatments (1 Corinthians 6:19-20), whether ordered by a branch of civil government (Acts 4:17-19), an employer, or any other institution to which an individual is subject or dependent – in the event that an individual sincerely believes his or her life, health, wellbeing, or morality is potentially threatened by such treatments or products (2 Corinthians 11:32-33), or in the event that a parent has the same concern for his or her child, born or unborn. (Exodus 21:22-25; WLC 135-136)

We affirm that our Christian religion protects the liberty of individuals and families to refuse any medical treatment or product on the basis of sincerely held concerns for known or unknown side effects, experimental or emergency uses, potential involvement in fetal cell lines whether in development or testing (Romans 3:8), or medical and/or political corruption or coercion. (Romans 14:23; 2 Corinthians 11:32-33)

Therefore, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we defend the rights and responsibilities of our members to research these issues in consultation with their medical providers in order to make responsible medical decisions for themselves, including refusing vaccination or gene therapies on religious grounds. (Proverbs 22:3; 24:6b) And we hereby call upon all governments, schools, employers, and other institutions to respect these deeply held religious convictions by upholding this religious liberty and/or providing religious exemptions as requested.

WCF 20:2 *God alone is Lord of the conscience, and hath left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are in any thing contrary to his Word, or beside it in matters of faith or worship. So that to believe such doctrines, or to obey such commandments out of conscience, is to betray true liberty of conscience; and the requiring an implicit faith, and an absolute and blind obedience, is to destroy liberty of conscience, and reason also.*

Exodus 20:13 "You shall not murder.

WLC 135. *What are the duties required in the sixth commandment?*

A. *The duties required in the sixth commandment are, all careful studies, and lawful endeavors, to preserve the life of ourselves and others by resisting all thoughts and purposes, subduing all passions, and avoiding all occasions, temptations, and practices, which tend to the unjust taking away the life of any; by just defense thereof against violence, patient bearing of the hand of God, quietness of mind, cheerfulness of spirit; a sober use of meat, drink, physic, sleep, labor, and recreations; by charitable thoughts, love, compassion, meekness, gentleness, kindness; peaceable, mild and courteous speeches and behavior; forbearance, readiness to be reconciled, patient bearing and forgiving of injuries, and requiting good for evil; comforting and succoring the distressed, and protecting and defending the innocent.*

WLC 136. *What are the sins forbidden in the sixth commandment?*

A. *The sins forbidden in the sixth commandment are, all taking away the life of ourselves, or of others, except in case of public justice, lawful war, or necessary defense; the neglecting or withdrawing the lawful and necessary means of preservation of life; sinful anger, hatred, envy, desire of revenge; all excessive passions, distracting cares; immoderate use of meat, drink, labor, and recreations; provoking words, oppression, quarreling, striking, wounding, and *whatsoever else tends to the destruction of the life of any.**

1 Corinthians 7:23 You were bought at a price; do not become slaves of men.

1 Corinthians 10:27-31 If any of those who do not believe invites you to dinner, and you desire to go, eat whatever is set before you, asking no question for conscience' sake. 28 But if anyone says to you, "This was offered to idols," do not eat it for the sake of the one who told you, and for conscience' sake; for "The earth is the Lord's, and all its fullness." 29 "Conscience," I say, not your own, but that of the other. For why is my liberty judged by another man's conscience? 30 But if I partake with thanks, why am I evil spoken of for the food over which I give thanks? 31 Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? 20 For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

Acts 4:17-19 But so that it spreads no further among the people, let us severely threaten them, that from now on they speak to no man in this name." 18 So they called them and commanded them not to speak at all nor teach in the name of Jesus. 19 But Peter and John answered and said to them, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you more than to God, you judge.

Exodus 21:22-25 "If men fight, and hurt a woman with child, so that she gives birth prematurely, yet no harm follows, he shall surely be punished accordingly as the woman's husband imposes on him; and he shall pay as the judges determine. 23 But if any harm follows, then you shall give life for life, 24 eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, 25 burn for burn, wound for wound, stripe for stripe.

Romans 3:8 And why not say, "Let us do evil that good may come"?--as we are slanderously reported and as some affirm that we say. Their condemnation is just.

Romans 14:23 But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because he does not eat from faith; for *whatever is not from faith is sin.*

2 Corinthians 11:32-33 In Damascus the governor, under Aretas the king, was guarding the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desiring to arrest me; 33 but I was let down in a basket through a window in the wall, and escaped from his hands.

Proverbs 22:3 A prudent man foresees evil and hides himself, But the simple pass on and are punished.

Proverbs 24:6 For by wise counsel you will wage your own war, And in a multitude of counselors there is safety.