

THE CHURCH OF PENTECOST - GENERAL HEADQUARTERS

COMMUNIQUE ON COVID-19 VACCINES AND RELATED MYTHS AND CONTROVERSIES.

All Assemblies The Church of Pentecost Worldwide

The people of the city said to Elisha, "Look, our Lord, this town is well situated, as you can see, but the water is bad and the land is unproductive." "Bring me a new bowl," he said, "and put salt in it." So they brought it to him. Then he went out to the spring and threw the salt into it, saying, "This is what the Lord says: 'I have healed this water. Never again will it cause death or make the land unproductive'" (2 Kings 2:19-21 NIV)

As we continue to trust God for His healing grace and the eradication of the COVID-19 virus, leadership has decided to address the concerns of our Ministers and members regarding the vaccines that have been developed and the attendant myths and controversies surrounding them. There are clear theological, social, scientific, medical, legal, and economic implications for the general misinformation and conspiracy theories circulating in the mass media (mostly on social media), which pose a threat to fighting the pandemic. In spite of significant benefits that vaccines have brought to mankind, anti-vaccine movements have always emerged with their discovery, since 1796.

In response to this, the Executive Council, put together a COVID-19 Technical Committee, made of experts with diverse background including Theologians, Pharmacists, Clinicians, Public Health Consultants, Lawyers, Psychologists, Social Workers etc. to evaluate the myths and controversies surrounding the development, distribution and administration of the COVID-19 vaccines, and make recommendations to assist the leadership of the Church take a position, and properly guide the church public on the subject matter.

Upon further deliberations on the committee's work, and extensive consultations with ministers and other experts, it is obvious the conspiracy theories cannot be substantiated and are not sustainable.

It is therefore the view and position of the Executive Council that The Church of Pentecost is not against the administration of COVID-19 vaccines duly approved by the regulatory agencies of the various countries.

This position does not take the right of individual members to either accept or refuse a vaccine based on their own personal reasons. Ministers, officers and members of the Church are therefore discouraged from using the platforms of the Church to fuel and promote myths, controversies and falsehood to misinform people and members on the usefulness and benefit of COVID-19 vaccines.

The Executive Council's position, was influenced by the following considerations:

- a) The Tenet of the Church of Pentecost (#8) supports divine healing as well as medical interventions.
- b) Science and religion are not necessarily in conflict, rather they are mostly complementary as most scientific discoveries constitute a blessing from God (Isa. 28:23-29).
- c) Some of the scientists and medical personnel who are working on the vaccines are genuine Christians seeking the best interest of humanity.
- d) Vaccination can be argued to be the mark of good citizenship, which is a demonstration of the Christian principle of "loving your neighbour as yourself", in preventing spread of deadly diseases and infections.
- e) Governments and regulatory agencies of our respective countries of residence have the responsibilities and liabilities for ensuring that vaccines approved for use meet all the safety standards and the laid down public health, ethical and legal standards required to ensure that their citizens are well protected.

Conclusion

- The Church of Pentecost is not against the administration of duly approved COVID-19 vaccines by the regulatory agencies of the various countries.
- Because social media is saturated with fake news, the Church public is advised to avoid depending mainly on social media for information without checking from reliable sources.

Let us continue to pray for God to perfect other forms of interventions being developed, including finding a cure as well. It is our firm belief that God is building and will build His Church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. God bless us all.



**ERIC NYAMEKYE (APOSTLE)
CHAIRMAN**

Dated: Sunday, 21st February 2021

APPENDIX

The following are some of the popular myths and conspiracy theories identified by our team of experts and some of their responses in brief:

Myth 1: The COVID-19 vaccines have been hastily developed; they simply cannot have a good safety profile.

Response: Regulatory bodies have indicated that all the required phases and steps were followed in the development of the COVID-19 vaccines. This was achievable because money was readily available to fund the research and many volunteers willingly signed up for the trials.

Myth 2: The COVID-19 vaccines have terrible unpredictable side effects.

Response: The COVID-19 vaccines are highly effective, but persons vaccinated so far, have shown side effects ranging from mild headaches, pain at the injection site, and flu-like symptoms, to vomiting, fatigue, decreased appetite, which are common to previous flu vaccines. Note that almost all vaccines have some form of mild side effects.

Myth 3: Natural prevention better than artificial inventions, therefore vaccines are not needed.

Response: COVID-19 is a highly infectious and deadly disease. As of January 2021, it had caused over 2 million deaths globally, hence the need for the vaccine. Herd immunity (making majority of the population resistant to the virus) can be achieved better through vaccination than through natural means.

Myth 4: We know they are all systematically hiding the real data behind the vaccines, because we never see the real data. All the world's medical scientists are deceiving the public.

Response: Vaccine development is conducted by different pharmaceutical companies and independent research teams all over the world. There is ample evidence available to various regulatory bodies and the general public globally.

Myth 5: The COVID-19 vaccine may give you COVID-19 disease. It is a trick and a deceptive way of harming targeted populations.

Response: The entire global population has been affected by COVID-19, so the idea of selected targeting is weak and should not be entertained. There is negligible risk of any vaccine giving you the disease - and in the case of COVID-19, none of the vaccines being administered currently contain the live virus, not even in a weakened form, so it is impossible to get the disease from the vaccine.

Myth 6: Taking the COVID-19 vaccine is accepting the mark of the beast (666) as written in the Bible (Rev 13:16-18). There is a widespread opinion that the 666-beast passage is playing out in our days, where a microchip could be introduced into the COVID-19 vaccines to secretly impose it on Christians.

Response: This is not possible because, the context of the 666 passage is one of persecution. The anti-Christ team would try to compel Christians to take the mark of the beast to end their suffering. There is no suggestion that the mark would be administered to people secretly or unawares in Scripture.

Secondly, Considering the timelines of prophetic predictions, the mention of 666 is located within the series of events known as the Great Tribulation by which time, the Church is believed to have been raptured. This era, when the anti-Christ shall appear to administer the mark is believed to be in the remote future since the Church has not yet been raptured.

Myth 7: The COVID-19 vaccines have foetal cells and products of abortion as components, and since the Church does not support abortion, Christians cannot take such vaccines.

Response: COVID-19 vaccines do not contain foetal cells from aborted babies. The COVID-19 vaccines contain mRNA, DNA material or viral proteins.

Myth 8: The COVID-19 vaccine would be administered to all persons under compulsion.

Response: Vaccination remains a voluntary activity unless it has been made compulsory through legislation in several country contexts.

Myth 9: The COVID-19: The vaccines contain nano-robots with computer chips and would be used to transmit data from our bodies into the cloud using 5G network. This would put all who take the vaccine under remote computer control.

Response: The tiny fat droplets (lipid Nano particles) are not robots. There is no evidence suggesting that the COVID-19 vaccines manufactured so far contain computer chips or tiny robots.

Myth 10: The COVID-19 vaccine is a move to eliminate the black race and also to ensure women are not able to conceive and give birth.

Response: With respect to fertility, there is no evidence to suggest that COVID-19 vaccines will affect fertility, and no woman who has been vaccinated has gone on to develop fertility problems.