



St. Joe Church of Christ

508 Jefferson St
PO Box 285
St. Joe, IN 46785

(260) 337-0442
www.stjoecofc.com
stjoecofc@gmail.com

Elders:
Allen Holman
Carlyle Holman
Rod Laux
Jerry Markle
Jerry Storer

Senior Minister:
Donny Goff
Associate Minister:
Dustin Cross

“Should Christians wear masks? Is it right for the government to tell churches they have to wear masks? It’s a mandate, not a law, so do we have to follow that?”

These questions, and more, are being asked by so many people. The root question is, what does the Bible say about Christian wearing masks in church? So many people are giving their opinions, sharing their feeling on this. Some use scriptures, some don’t. Several said that God has given us authority, so we do not have to obey other authorities. Many people have used the scripture in **Acts 5:29** **“Peter and the other apostles answered, ‘We must obey God, not men.’”**

Some Christians rise up, shake their fists and proclaim “Preach it!” with this scripture. Yet, I want to share something with you. So please bear with me. When Peter voiced this, he was being told to directly disobey God. He was being told to stop talking about God, about Jesus. Peter was commanded by those in authority, to stop preaching the Gospel. And his reply was to say God’s commands supersede man’s laws. Being asked to wear a mask to protect others, is not even close to being threatened with bodily harm for sharing your faith.

Jesus taught us to obey earthly authorities in matters where they have authority. Public safety is not a matter for the Church, but the government. The Church, as a witness to faith and obedience to God, should support the state in such matters. Whether right or wrong, contrary to what some have posted about the authority of the believer, God has given the government this authority.

Romans 13:1 NLT Everyone must submit to governing authorities. For all authority comes from God, and those in positions of authority have been placed there by God. God has established that authority. Your response, because you are a believer in Christ, is to obey. Anything else is rebellion to God and His established authorities. We are commanded to obey governing authorities, unless those commands/laws directly oppose God’s laws.

Look at the next verse, **Romans 13:2 NLT So anyone who rebels against authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and they will be punished.** Christians, as a testimony to our faith, as proof of our submission to God, we must also submit to the governing authorities. We must abide by their leading. We submit and obey until they lead against God and His Word.

“But what about my rights?” people ask. People are asking about their American rights. Jesus is saying in **Matthew 5:40-42 NLT If you are sued in court and your shirt is taken from you, give your coat, too. ⁴¹ If a soldier demands that you carry his gear for a mile, carry it two miles. ⁴² Give to those who ask, and don’t turn away from those who want to borrow.**

Isn’t it ironic that people have no problem shouting out the injustice to their perceived freedoms, but do very little in sharing of their faith to help others avoid Hell. We are not called to fight for our rights, but to walk in love, to walk in a way that points others to Jesus.

“But what about my rights?” **1 Corinthians 6:19-20 NLT Don’t you realize that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, who lives in you and was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourself, ²⁰ for God bought you with a high price. So you must honor God with your body.** As a believer, as a Christ-follower, you have submitted yourself to God, and to God alone. Which means, our job, our responsibility, is to share His message and not fret about minor issues like mask wearing.

Are there times to disobey governing leaders or laws? Yes. But again, look to all of scripture for the examples of when it is right to do this. Daniel was told to pray to only the king, and yet Daniel still went and prayed to God despite being threatened with death. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were told to bow and worship an idol. They disobeyed knowing it would mean being thrown into a fire. When it comes to speaking out about God, about salvation in Jesus, then we can use the scripture where Peter said, “We must obey God, not men.”

The problem is with Christians, who are trying to compare the strong and bold stance of Peter, of Daniel, of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, to their person refusal to wear a mask. The two are completely different. If someone in authority tells me that I cannot share my faith with others, I will not obey. I would urge every believer to not obey such a command or law.

If those same people in authority tell me to wear a mask, something that takes little sacrifice on my part, to protect others and myself, than I will chose to obey the governing authorities. Because my actions are a representative of my faith in Jesus.

So let me finish this by being a bit more blunt. If you are trying to take a stand of religious freedoms on this mask issue, and yet you are not actively trying to disciple people into a faith relationship with Jesus, you are already disobeying the ultimate authority, Jesus. **Matthew 28:18-20 NLT Jesus came and told His disciples, “I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹ Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. ²⁰ Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”**

Jesus told all of His disciples (Bible believers, Christians, Christ followers) to go out and teach, preach and make more disciples (Bible believers, Christians, Christ followers), who will go out and do the same. This is basic Christianity 101. We should be out front, leading the way in truth and love, teaching and preaching the truth about Jesus. Not flooding Facebook with arguments over whether or not wearing a mask is a violation of our American or biblical freedom.

We have to get back to the basics, back to what we as Christians are called to do.
We can do that with masks on.



St. Joe Church of Christ is here to **Connect** people with God and each other, to provide an atmosphere where we can **Grow** our faith in God, and to **Serve** one another in the name of Christ.