

On the Corner Fringe: Corona Virus Response March 31, 2020

The following text is a message from Corner Fringe Ministries that was presented by Daniel Joseph. The original presentation can be viewed at <https://cornerfringe.com/media/35hxmzb/otcf-corona-virus-response>

*Portions of this document have been edited from the video message to better present a comprehensive, written document. Special attention was given to preserve the original context, but this document is not verbatim. Scripture verses are in the red text with other quotes in blue. Therefore, it is recommended that this document be printed in color. The Hebrew words are generally accompanied by the transliteration into the English alphabet. In most cases, the Hebrew is to be read from right to left.

Faith and Authority: Church Responses to Pandemic Mandates

This transcript of a message delivered by **Pastor Daniel Joseph** in **March 2020** is a response from **Corner Fringe Ministries** regarding government mandates that restricted religious gatherings during the early stages of the **COVID-19 pandemic**. Daniel acknowledges the tension between **constitutional rights** and **state executive orders**, identifying two conflicting viewpoints within the church community. Ultimately, the ministry advises **compliance with governing authorities**, citing biblical passages from **Romans 13** and **1 Peter 2** to justify their temporary submission. Daniel argues that because the government is not yet forcing believers to **violate their core faith** or worship false deities, the church should prioritize public safety and avoid setting a poor example. However, he warns that this stance is conditional and would change if future mandates require a **direct compromise of biblical commandments**. The text concludes by reflecting on the **spirit of Antichrist** and the potential for a future erosion of liberties that may eventually necessitate a different response.

[Daniel Joseph]

Welcome everyone. I'm Daniel Joseph, and you're "*On The Corner Fringe*." Today I want to talk about something no one on planet Earth is talking about: the coronavirus. Forgive me for being facetious; obviously, everyone is talking about this.

However, I do want to address something that I'm getting a lot of emails, calls, and feedback about, and that is, what is the appropriate response of the church in light of all these governmental executive orders and mandates which are being implemented throughout the country? The mandates are prohibiting churches from assembling.

Two camps are starting to form right now. One camp says we're not going to abide by this. We have a constitutional right. Our First Amendment rights are being destroyed. Because we're going to be



meeting for the sake of God, that's a higher calling, so we're not going to listen to the governing authorities. I'll share with you, in the moment that's not going too well. The second group says, You know what? I think we need to be compliant. I think we need to think about Romans 13 and 1 Peter 2, where we need to subject ourselves to the governing authority and walk that out.

And I'll just read that, because it's worth reading. —Romans 13:1-2—**Let every soul be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and the authorities that exist are appointed by God. ² Therefore whoever resists the authority resists the ordinance of God, and those who resist will bring judgment on themselves.**

I want to talk about where Corner Fringe Ministry lands and why we're there right now. We would land in the latter. In other words, we think it is appropriate, under the current situation, that we follow Romans 13, and 1 Peter 2. That we subject ourselves to the governing authority, knowing that the state, or the federal government, at this point, is not asking us to compromise our faith in any way.

They're not asking us to worship a false God. They're not asking us to throw away the Torah. They're not telling us we can't circumcise our children. You know, we could go on and on. Certain things we saw in the Hanukkah story didn't play out so well for the Jews when these Greeks came in and forced mandates that required compromising their faith. They're not prohibiting us from praying right now. In fact, they're encouraging it, and we can see that through exemptions; I'll talk about that in a moment. They're encouraging churches to hold services online, and not to assemble in person.

At this point, this is where we need to be as a body. I really think we could be setting a bad precedent for the world, and not just simply for the government, but for the world, where that's going to leave a very distorted picture of who we're supposed to be in Yeshua. Now there's a lot of debate going on right now about this throughout churches and throughout the country, because churches are starting to divide on this matter. I have no reservations about sharing that we stand right now on Romans 13, under the current situation. However, if that changes in any way, we will change our position without question.

In other words, if there's any part of this that is going to require us to compromise our faith and our allegiance to God and His commandments and our confession, we will take the stand against that. In Romans, Paul's not talking about subjecting yourselves to governing authorities when that governing authority is telling you to worship Baal or Molech or any other false god. That's when you have problems. Or to abandon commandments, forcing you not to keep certain commandments—yeah, that's where you draw the line. So, I think it's important that we have a good attitude during this time. The government, whether state or federal, is not zeroing out churches with this stay-at-home policy or mandate. It's for everyone. There's no discrimination whatsoever. They're imposing it on the entire population. So, based on everything we have right now, I think this is the appropriate course of action. So, this is where we stand.

I don't know if you've been reading the news lately, but some pastors don't feel the same. Some pastors believe their First Amendment rights are being destroyed and hindered. Some pastors believe they'll be prevented from worshiping their God. One case is in Tampa. This just came across my desk today, and it's worth sharing. The headline reads: *FOX 13 Tampa Bay* on March 30, 2020—[Arrest warrant issued for Tampa megachurch pastor who led packed services despite safer-at-home orders.](#)

We read that Sheriff Chad Cronister and state attorney Andrew Warren announced Monday that an arrest warrant had been issued for Pastor Rodney Howard Brown. I know many of you probably know who he is. He's quite big in the Pentecostal arena, and now he has an arrest warrant because of what he did last week. He held services on Sunday and totally ignored the stay-at-home order, and I guess he had over 500 people at one of his services. So, it looks as though they're going to make an example out of him. Here's a quote: "I think it's unfortunate that the pastor here is hiding behind the First Amendment," State Attorney Warren offered. "One, it's absolutely clear that emergency orders like this are constitutional and valid. Second of all, leaders from our faith-based community across this country have embraced the importance of social distancing."

And so, it's interesting that we see it's getting real. Now, I want to be clear, and I'm sure some of you may commend Rodney Brown for what he's done. I commend him on conviction. I don't think what he's doing is right in the current context. I believe what he's doing would be right in a different context where he's being required to compromise his faith, but not in the current context.

And so, this is going to become problematic; we could talk about that. I got another article across my desk today on de Blasio, the mayor of New York, and actually I have it right here. Listen to this: *Jerusalem Post/Diaspora*, by Celia Jean, March 30, 2020—"A small number of religious communities, specific churches and specific synagogues, are unfortunately not paying attention to this guidance even though it's so widespread," de Blasio said. "I want to say to all those who are preparing for the potential of religious services this weekend: If you go to your synagogue, if you go to your church, and attempt to hold services after having been told so often not to, our enforcement agents will have no choice but to shut down those services," he warned... And so again, it's getting real, it's getting serious, and they're going to start cracking down on this.

Now, it's going to be interesting to see how this plays out because there are a lot of people, fundamentalist patriots of this country, who I respect very much regarding wanting to protect the Constitution. It's going to be interesting to see how this plays out because this hasn't been tested constitutionally in the sense of what's going on. We've never seen the government respond to a coronavirus outbreak like this. Yes, we had the Spanish flu; the difference is the government didn't respond the way it's responding today. So, what we're really going to be testing is the government's response to this, if any court cases come out of it.

However, to be honest with you, I don't think they're going to fare too well regarding the churches disregarding the mandate, and here's why: because there are new and profound ways of circumventing the Constitution. Every day they're designing these things, and it's really sad, but they're definitely going to stand on that point. We're in a crisis, and because you're harming another person's well-being, you're threatening their life; therefore, you're infringing on their life, pursuit of happiness, and constitutional rights as a citizen of America.

There are so many ways they could spin this in their favor, and I think, courts that are heavily left-leaning, defines our judicial system... When we look at the three branches of government: executive, legislative, and judicial. The legislative can create the laws, and the executive can enforce them, but who cares? The greatest power of the three is the judicial branch, those who interpret the laws.

Think about that, there's a boatload of power in the judicial system. All you need to do is look into history at major cases that have gone to the Supreme Court and changed the course of our history, such as *Roe v. Wade*.

So, as we look at what's going on, I know there's a lot of conflict within a lot of believers. There's conflict within me, because the worst part of it is when you see what's happening in our country, and you know it's calculated, and you see the spirit of Antichrist behind it. I see what he's doing, and no, I don't like it. I absolutely detest it. Many people say, "No, we need to make a stand right now, or we're going to lose all our freedoms." We as believers need to make a stand for righteousness first and foremost and to consider our current situation as... unfortunately, biblically, I believe it is incumbent upon a believer to submit to the governing authorities at this point.

I do believe a day is coming very soon when that is not going to be the case, and you're going to hear me sing a very different tune. Because do I think what is happening right now, and how they're responding to this virus, is leading to something that will strip away more liberties and freedoms? You better believe I do. I know that's coming. It pains me to see it unfold.

Under the current situation, though, and everything laid out before us, and what the government is still allowing, I think we must err on the side of Romans 13 and 1 Peter 2, fight back a lot of emotions, and trust in the Lord on this. And then as things develop, and things will develop, we will see where this is going and we won't like it, but when we get there, then we can make that stand.

It's interesting that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego could live in Babylon, and these great men could even be groomed, to be a part of their country and their system. And the only times you see any revolt is when they were pushed to worship another God. That's when Nebuchadnezzar crossed the line. Or when Daniel was given the delicacies of the king, and he would have crossed the line on the biblical laws of food and what is kosher to partake. That's when he pulled back, but in all other respects he didn't rebel against the system. We're living in very unique times right now, and it's kind of surreal.

But with this coronavirus, whether you believe it's being manipulated or not, the public sees it as being for the public's well-being, whether that's true or not. For now, we need to fall in line on that. When things develop later on, we can have another conversation.

So, I'm going to end it here, and you'll hear more about the legitimacy and spirituality of what is happening these days. I'll be doing more messages, you know, Lord willing. And with that, the Lord bless you and keep you. Amen.

Faith and the Mandate: A Scriptural Response to COVID-19

Priority on Constitutional Rights



The Resistance Camp

Groups refusing to abide by mandates, citing First Amendment rights and a higher calling.



The Compliance Camp

Groups citing Romans 13 and 1 Peter 2 to subject themselves to governing authorities.

500+
Attendees

Legal Consequences of Defiance

High-profile arrests occurred when pastors held large services despite "safer-at-home" orders.



The "Line in the Sand" Criteria

Current Compliance is Appropriate

Mandates are currently acceptable because they do not force the worship of false gods.



The Red Line When to Take a Stand

Resistance is required only if authorities force believers to abandon God's commandments.



Universal Application

Non-Discriminatory Mandates

The government is not zeroing out churches; policies apply to the entire population.

Biblical Precedents for Action



SUBMISSION

Authorities are appointed by God for order.



DEFIANCE

Forced to worship a false god (Nebuchadnezzar).



DEFIANCE

Forced to violate biblical dietary laws (Kosher).