



Spiritual Malpractice

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At this writing, over 166,000 people have lost their lives in the past seven months to covid-19 in the United States according to the Centers of Disease and Prevention (CDC). Let that sit with you for a moment. Mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, siblings, cousins, spouses, children, friends, doctors, nurses, fire fighters, EMT first responders, police officers, teachers, pastors, performers, field and package workers, restaurant workers, grocery store employees, and the list goes on of precious loved ones lost. Over 5 million have been infected by the corona virus in this country so far.

Healthdata.org estimates that by December 1st of 2020 over 295,000 lives will be lost in the U.S. An additional 129,000+ souls to perish from now until the beginning of December. Health care experts and scientists all agree that face masks, [preferably made of cloth](#), hand washing, physical distancing and avoiding close contact gatherings especially indoors, are the best ways to prevent contracting the corona virus.

Yet the wearing of face masks has become a symbol of weakness by some political and religious leaders. Some pastors have encouraged congregational members to attend indoor worship services while stating that if we truly believe in God, God will protect us from the disease. Thereby suggesting that contracting covid-19 is a sign of retribution for a lack of faith.

In the Christian Gospel there is an account of Jesus' encounter with the evil one, during his time in the wilderness. The evil one mocked Jesus' relationship with the Divine. He challenged Jesus stating that if he really is the son of God to throw himself off the cliff for God's angels to save him. Jesus' reply was quick, ""It is said, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'" (Lk 4:12 NRSV) In short, Jesus' did not have to prove his faith for the benefit of another.

It is an important object lesson for us to remember that we possess the God given

gift of common sense to live our lives. Yes, I believe God is with us in our journeys in life, however we are directed to bring no harm to ourselves or others. Wearing a mask is a sign of care for our humanity, a respect for life especially to our first responders and those risking their lives each every day to help those inflicted by this horrific disease. Wearing a mask is a symbol that we honor our elders and the most vulnerable among us. Wearing a mask is a demonstration how we show love for one another.

To make wearing a mask a political or religious issue is just spiritual malpractice, akin to asking us to throw ourselves off a cliff to prove our faith in God. Friends, wearing a face mask saves lives. What greater good can we do for each other? When you see me wear a mask, I am saying "I see you. I value you. I care for you."



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