

Striving for Herd Immunity

Living through the COVID-19 pandemic, we look forward to when the virus will no longer be a threat. Vaccines are being administered throughout the world. As people become vaccinated, the virus has fewer targets to infect. Although not everyone will choose to get a vaccine, science tells us we will achieve "herd immunity" when 70% of the population is vaccinated. The virus will die out at that point because it will have nowhere to go. There will not be vulnerable people for it to infect. We will all be better off when we have achieved herd immunity.

Although COVID-19 has dominated our attention, there is a more significant risk in our world. It threatens to affect every aspect of our life. The greater danger is the devil. The devil infects our morals, attempting to turn us against Jesus Christ and the Bible's teachings. The devil coaxes us into rationalizing excuses for wrong behavior with lies and half-truths. As Christians, we may think that we are immune to the devil, and the threat is for everyone else. In a world of increasing temptations, unchecked by a loosening moral code, it becomes more difficult for us to live our faith.

Just like COVID-19, the effect of the devil infection is worldwide. Let's look at the numbers. Each year fewer people believe in Jesus. A telephone survey (conducted in 2018 & 2019) discovered that 65% of Americans described themselves as Christians, a reduction of 12% from a decade before. To use the "herd immunity" analogy, we have lost the percentage needed for people of faith to set the moral standard. As evidence, watch some old black and white television shows. Storylines from a generation ago focus on morality in a Christian way. In contrast, today's television programs try to set a new standard for what is considered acceptable behavior. They justify this with a claim of individual freedom. Individual freedom is gradually taking precedence over what is biblically correct. Even our laws are changing to condone behavior contrary to the teachings of the Bible. A growing percentage of the population is resisting God in our culture. The same Pew Research study showed that 26% of Americans consider themselves atheists, agnostics, or "nothing in particular" regarding their faith, a figure that is 17% higher than in 2009.

But there is hope. If we could reverse the trend and increase the percentage of people of faith, we could alter the eroding of morals in our country and world. Perhaps we could "vaccinate" people with the Word of God. As more people come to or deepen their faith, they increase their immunity to the devil's influence. Imagine if we could again achieve or exceed the herd immunity of Christians who recognize and choose to live by the Bible's teachings? Wouldn't it be great if enough people became believers that the devil had fewer people to infect with his lies?



Just as eradicating a worldwide virus pandemic is a significant task that requires many people working together, so would be instilling faith in 70% of the population. Science informs us that by achieving herd immunity to the virus, the entire population will benefit – including those who don't get the vaccine. If we could become a world that lives by the Word of God, the world would have a much higher moral standard. My prayer is that each of us will do our part in the effort to reduce the effects of the devil by pointing the moral compass in the right direction. Encourage others to be inoculated by the Word of God.

Question: What can you do to help spread the Word of God to your part of the world?

The Bible Says: *Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,²⁰ and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (Matthew 28:19-20).*

Prayer: Dear Lord. You commissioned us to spread God's Word in our communities. Let us be bold in sharing our faith as we do what we can to improve our community's Christian moral compass. Amen.