

# Despite Government and Satanic Opposition, Southern California Stadium Revival Sees Baptisms, Blessings

*Update: Neither the L.A. County health department's mask mandate, nor 100-degree heat, nor smoke from the raging Lakes Fire could keep people away from Saturday's Stadium Revival. Pastor Shane Idleman reports just under 1000 people attended. And praise God, 24 people came forward to be baptized! This included at least six children, including one 11-year-old girl who had a dream about Jesus the night before and rushed to get baptized.*

Recently, a few news outlets asked, "What's going on in California?" That question prompted me to write these articles (you can view the first one [here](#).) With the beach gatherings, along with Pastors Jack Hibbs', Rob McCoy's and John MacArthur's bold stances, our church decided to launch a Saturday night service in Lancaster, California, at JetHawk Stadium on July 25, tagged #TheStadiumRevival.

To get you up to speed: Although the event was primarily for our local body as a way to come together, word quickly spread, and approximately 1,000 people show up every Saturday. This move of God simply shows how hungry people are to be encouraged and uplifted—and even convicted. But when God is moving, so are opposing forces.

Complaints prompted calls to the Los Angeles County Health Department. We were told that we cannot sing, even if we are six feet apart, but that they would consider allowing singing if we double our social distance and wear masks the entire service. We're not sure what will happen on Saturday (will they attempt to shut us down midway through like they suggested?), but you can watch the live feed [here](#) Saturday at

7 p.m. PST to see what happens.

We respect our governing authorities and comply when possible (the Bible is clear here), but when mandates begin to hinder efforts to worship God and we see tons of inconsistencies (for example, protests are not shut down or challenged), then we must take a stand.

Others far more gifted than I, such as John MacArthur, have written extensively on this topic, but I'd like to share some thoughts. First, I love America—I love how God has blessed us. I read the writings of the Founding Fathers and the Puritans often. My heart beats for restoration and renewal. Second, my heart is to honor and obey our elected officials when they are trying to honor God. Third, it's important that Christians respond in wisdom rather than react in pride.

I don't think it was a First Amendment issue, at least not initially, because the stay-at-home order appeared to be short-term and very specific. I also believe that reacting can damage our witness if decisions are not bathed in prayer and carefully considered. It can demonstrate a spirit of rebellion and send a wrong message across the landscape of America. Civil rights must be viewed in the context of social responsibility, such as "Will exercising my 'right' hurt others?" But also, "Will keeping our church closed hurt others mentally or spiritually ... from depression to suicide?"

An interesting dynamic, as well as a transition, is taking place—dynamic in that some of our leaders are not truly seeking God, so decisions are made in fear and guided by anxiety. And it's crystal clear now that COVID-19 is being used as a political weapon. All kinds of evil are being exposed, from pedophilia rings to satanic agendas. Anyone who denies this is either naive or on the side of deception. Granted, COVID-19 is a real virus, but when does compliance turn into complacency, and when are mandates overkill? We must seek God wholeheartedly and unconditionally if we truly desire

wisdom.

We have been very compliant, but as this drags on, we will need to make decisions based on the biased targeting of churches. Maintaining 6 feet to pray for the sick may be an impossibility. Jesus laid hands on the sick and the leprous. I'm not implying that we become rebels and do what we want; there is a fine line between presumption and faith, but at some point, the church must be the church. God-given rights must be maintained.

My conviction is that we continue to support local ordinances when they are realistic and fair across the board. During this time, we must humble ourselves as we fast and pray for direction. Are you doing this? I don't think anyone should speak out until they have first sought the heart of God, and no Christian should incite unbiblical rebellion. Are you "reacting" in anger or "responding" in wisdom?

As I said in a recent article, in addition to bringing back the economy, we must constantly turn to God and His Word. Psalm 119:67 reminds us of an essential truth: "Before I was afflicted I wandered, but now I keep Your word." Affliction via difficulties, challenges and obstacles can lead us back to God.

In one fell swoop, COVID-19 has dethroned many of our idols. We are finally realizing what is really important. In this sense, I am incredibly encouraged since this is fertile ground for revival. Revival thrives in brokenness, repentance, humility and passionate prayer. I am concerned that America is fearful but not repentant, anxious but not surrendered to God, worried but not worshipful, confused but not diligently seeking Him. What will it take to draw us back to God? Like the Israelites in Joel's time, we must change course and cry out to Him in repentance with prayer and fasting. God heard His people then, and He will hear us now—once again pouring out His Spirit on a dry and thirsty land, for whoever calls on

the name of the Lord will be saved (Joel 2:25-32). This is our goal at the Stadium Revival services in Southern California. Would you please keep us in prayer #TheStadiumRevival? {eoa}

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