

Moore: OK to use COVID-19 vaccine derived from fetal cells. Mohler: That should be taken into consideration when deciding which vaccine to receive

NASHVILLE (BP) – Christians will not act unethically if they receive a COVID-19 vaccine produced from a cell line originally derived from an abortion, says Russell Moore, president of the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention in Nashville.



Moore

A single-dose COVID-19 vaccine produced by Johnson & Johnson and cleared last week by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration uses decades-old, abortion-derived cells in its design, development, and production, as well as its testing.

The two-dose Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 vaccines do not use abortion-derived cells for design, development or production, but some of the laboratory tests on their vaccines use abortion-derived cells and some do not.

On his personal website, Moore wrote that even if a vaccine might involve unethical aspects of research, that “does not

mean that a Christian inoculated from disease by such a vaccine would be sinning to do so. Taking the COVID vaccine is morally right.”

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops issued a statement May 2 on the Johnson & Johnson vaccine, recommending “[I]f one can choose among equally safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines, the vaccine with the least connection to abortion-derived cell lines should be chosen. Therefore, if one has the ability to choose a vaccine, Pfizer or Moderna’s vaccines should be chosen over Johnson & Johnson’s.”



Mohler

R. Albert Mohler, president of Southern Seminary in Louisville, Ky., addressed COVID-19 vaccines during his May 3 podcast, The Briefing. Receiving Johnson & Johnson’s vaccine “does not invoke the highest levels of complicity in evil,” Mohler said. “That’s for two reasons – it doesn’t directly involve the abortion of any infant nor does it directly risk any future evil. You’re not taking this vaccine and thus increasing the risk that some future baby will be aborted.

“Those two issues are important,” he said. “But still the issue of abortion [is] in the background, and there is a very good reason why biblically minded Christians committed to the sanctity and dignity of every human life have to take such issues into consideration.”

In addressing whether receiving the Johnson & Johnson vaccine involves “moral cooperation with abortion,” most of those asking the question “aren’t asking me if they should violate their conscientious objection to the Johnson & Johnson

vaccine,” Moore wrote.

“To them, I would turn to Romans 14:23 and say, with the [Catholic] bishops, seek out one of the other vaccines. But most people asking me this question don’t have conscience objections to taking the Johnson & Johnson [vaccine], but wonder if they should have such objections. Short answer: no. Opposing unethical means of research does not mean that people must shun medical treatments that are discovered through these means.”

David Prentice, vice president of the Charlotte Lozier Institute, has compiled an analysis of all COVID-19 vaccine candidates regarding their connection to cell lines derived from aborted babies. His analysis may be read at <https://lozierinstitute.org/update-covid-19-vaccine-candidates-and-abortion-derived-cell-lines/>.