

Should churches cease from gathering in light of recommendations by the government that groups over ten people not gather?

Some churches continue to meet regardless of recommendations by government officials. I heard one pastor say that during this time, people have jobs to do, and his job was to preach the Gospel, and he was not going to stop doing it. Others have held to the verse in Acts 5:29 to justify meeting, where Peter and the disciples said, "We ought to obey God rather than the [*government*]."

I would say, for the time being, churches who continue to meet are doing so on the basis they feel led by the Lord. While no one can disagree with what they believe, it seems they are putting themselves and their members in harm's way. I know some will respond by saying, "If we obey God, He will keep us safe." While no one will argue the point that God will keep us safe, however, it is essential we listen to the guidelines of the health experts and also see the devastating results occurring within groups who meet in large numbers. It is also important to remember when the devil told Jesus to jump off the pinnacle of the Temple, Jesus said, "It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God" (Matt. 4:7). Even though Jesus knew the angels could protect Him from being hurt if He jumped off the top of the Temple, it would not have been an act of faith but one of foolishness or presumption. God also calls for His people to exercise wisdom, and submitting to the recommendation of the government discouraging social gatherings of more than ten people seems like the wise thing to do.