

Lifestyle and Conduct of C&MA Official Workers

The Christian and Missionary Alliance expects its official workers, in the power of the Holy Spirit, to live lives that are above reproach. The expectation is that its workers will embody and model biblical principles that result in Christ-like lifestyles, character, and attitudes.

Every sphere of an official worker's life should reflect the Lord Jesus Christ. There is no sphere of life that is off limits to the world, our own sinful nature, or the enemy's attempts to compromise a believer's witness. Time, family, sex, money, dress, speech, entertainment, work (ministry), friendships and food comprise an incomplete list of the spheres of life to be submitted to the Holy Spirit.

The C&MA does not seek to establish any standard for behaviors beyond what is already provided in the Scriptures. Where the Scriptures are not explicit, official workers are expected to determine and practice by faith (Romans 14:5b, 23) a lifestyle that most constructively benefits others (1 Corinthians 10:23–24; Romans 13:10), leads to peace and to mutual edification (Romans 14:19), reflects Christ's walk (1 John 2:6; 1 Corinthians 11:1; Romans 13:14), and glorifies God (1 Corinthians 10:31).

With regard to the consumption of alcohol, the Bible allows consumption in an appropriate context (Psalm 4:7; 104:14–15; Proverbs 31:6; Luke 5:39; Joel 2:19) but warns against drunkenness and any other form of abuse (Isaiah 28:7; Leviticus 10:8–10; Proverbs 20:1; Luke 21:34). Because of this and given the destructive nature of its abuse in our culture, special care should be taken with regard to the consumption of alcohol.

Specifically, the following approaches are described in Scripture:

- Abstinence (Numbers 6:2–3; Judges 13:4–5; Luke 1:15)
- Moderation (1 Timothy 3:2; John 2:1–11; 1 Corinthians 10:27) (including ceremonial use, a guest honoring a host, and in church communion)
- Medicinal (1 Timothy 5:23)

Selection of one of these options is not merely a matter of personal preference. Rather, as described above, in every sphere of life consideration should be given to the entire context, including the effect on one's self, others, the reflection on Christ, and the glory of God. The practice of any one of these approaches without faith would be sinful.

When it becomes apparent that an official worker is reflecting more of the world than of Christ in any sphere of his or her life, the C&MA will follow the instructions given by Jesus in Matthew 18, Galatians 6:1, and other relevant Scriptures to minister to the offending person as described in the Uniform Policy on Discipline, Restoration, and Appeal.

Each official worker is encouraged to seek the Lord in these matters. Careful study of Scripture, time spent in prayer, and seeking godly counsel is advised. Whatever position one takes, grace and love, in pursuit of peace in Christ, should be our attitude towards those with a different position than our own.

Whoever claims to live in him must walk as Jesus did (1 John 2:6).

Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show it by his good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom (James 3:13).

Anyone, then, who knows the good he ought to do and doesn't do it, sins (James 4:17).

Be careful, however, that the exercise of your rights does not become a stumbling block to the weak (1 Corinthians 8:9).

'Everything is permissible'—but not everything is beneficial. 'Everything is permissible'—but not everything is constructive. Nobody should seek his own good, but the good of others (1 Corinthians 10:23–24).

So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God. Do not cause anyone to stumble, whether Jews, Greeks or the church of God—even as I try to please everybody in every way. For I am not seeking my own good but the good of many, so that they may be saved (1 Corinthians 10: 31–33).

Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ (1 Corinthians 11:1).

Join with others in following my example, brothers, and take note of those who live according to the pattern we gave you. For, as I have often told you before and now say again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is on earthly things. But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body (Philippians 3:17–21).

For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example . . . We did this, not because we do not have the right to such help, but in order to make ourselves a model for you to follow (2 Thessalonians 3:7a, 9).

Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as he is pure (1 John 3:2–3).

Love does no harm to its neighbor. Therefore, love is the fulfillment of the law (Romans 13:10).

Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature (Romans 13:14).

Accept him whose faith is weak, without passing judgment on disputable matters . . . Who are you to judge someone else's servant? To his own master he stands or falls. And he will stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand . . . Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind . . . For none of us lives to himself alone and none of us dies to himself alone. If we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord . . . So then, each of us will give an account of ourselves to God. Therefore, let us stop passing judgment on one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in the way of a brother or sister. I am convinced, being fully persuaded in the Lord Jesus, that nothing is unclean in itself. But if anyone regards something as unclean, then for that person it is unclean. If your brother or sister is distressed because of what you eat, you are no longer acting in love. Do not by your eating destroy someone for whom Christ died. Therefore, do not let what you know is good be spoken of as evil. For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, because anyone who serves Christ in this way is pleasing to God and receives human approval. Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification. Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food. All food is clean, but it is wrong for a person to eat anything that causes someone else to stumble. It is better not to eat meat or drink wine or to do anything else that will cause your brother or sister to fall. So whatever you believe about these things keep between yourself and God. Blessed is the one who does not condemn himself by what he approves. But whoever has doubts is condemned if they eat, because their eating is not from faith; and everything that does not come from faith is sin (Romans 14:1, 4, 5b, 7–8, 12–23).

Now see to it that you drink no wine or other fermented drink and that you do not eat anything unclean, because you will conceive and give birth to a son. No razor may be used on his head, because the boy is to be a Nazirite, set apart to God from birth, and he will begin the deliverance of Israel from the hands of the Philistines (Judges 13:4–5).

Now the overseer must be above reproach . . . temperate, self-controlled . . . not given to drunkenness . . . (1 Timothy 3:2–3).

Do not love the world or anything in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For everything in the world—the cravings of sinful man, the lust of his eyes and the boasting of what he has and does—comes not from the Father but from the world. The world and its desires pass away, but the man who does the will of God lives forever (1 John 2:15–17).