

MINISTERIAL COVENANT OF ETHICS

Ethics define and protect our personal life, family, ministry, and relationships as ministers in Open Bible Churches. These ethics are rooted in the principles of Scripture. A breach of ministerial ethics could result in disciplinary action.

PREAMBLE

As a minister of Jesus Christ, called by God to proclaim the gospel and credentialed by Open Bible Churches, I commit myself to this code of ethics. I make this commitment sincerely and wholeheartedly so my ministry will be acceptable to God, beneficial to my family and church, and a witness to the world.

PERSONAL AND FAMILY

1. I will continue to develop my spiritual life through consistent prayer, Bible reading, and personal application of Scripture.
2. I will seek to maintain balance between family and ministry and will treat my family with love, attention, and respect.
3. I will pursue physical and emotional health through regular exercise, healthy eating habits, and adequate rest.
4. I will be a life-long learner through the pursuit of educational opportunities and resources.
5. I will manage my personal finances with integrity by promptly paying bills, avoiding excessive debt, and preparing for retirement.
6. I will abstain from gambling, pornography, alcohol, tobacco, illegal drugs, abuse of legal medication, and affiliation with secret, fraternal orders.

CHURCH RELATIONSHIPS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

1. When preaching I will prepare and deliver biblically based messages and communicate with honesty, giving credit when using another's material.
2. In counseling I will keep strict confidentiality except to prevent physical harm, harm to the church body, or as required by law.
3. I will use discretion and wisdom with the opposite sex to prevent the appearance of evil, temptation, or sin.
4. I will make sure proper checks and balances are in place so finances are managed with integrity and in accordance with state and federal laws.
5. I will not loan money to the church or receive a loan from the church or its members without the written consent of the church board and either the district or regional director. (Note: Some state laws forbid non-profits from lending money to corporate officers.)
6. I will inform potential staff members of the church's policy regarding their retention or release in the event of the resignation or release of the Senior Pastor.
7. I will minister without partiality and not allow a personal relationship to unduly influence the decisions and direction of the church.
8. I will join in marriage only individuals who fulfill biblical guidelines.
9. I will use caution and discretion before choosing to endorse products or agencies. In my capacity as a pastor, I will not endorse political parties or candidates running for public office.

RESPONSIBILITIES TO COLLEAGUES AND OPEN BIBLE LEADERSHIP

1. I will treat all ministerial colleagues, including predecessors, with respect in word and actions.
2. I will work in cooperation with Open Bible leaders and ministers and will resolve conflicts in order to maintain a spirit of unity.
3. I will, upon becoming aware of the serious misconduct of an Open Bible minister, no matter how that knowledge is acquired, contact the regional executive director.
4. I will contact the Senior Pastor of a church prior to contacting one of his/her staff or members concerning ministry opportunities.
5. I will not start or locate a new church or relocate an existing church without first receiving written consent from the regional executive director.
6. I will not accept an independent pastorate in a city where an Open Bible church exists without first informing the regional executive director.
7. I will not approach or consider an offer from a church whose pastor has not officially resigned.
8. I will, upon leaving a church, cease attending, unless invited by the incoming Senior Pastor and church board.
9. I will not, upon leaving a church, provide ministry to persons in the church except with the consent of the Senior Pastor, and I will not exert influence or undermine the leadership of the church.
10. I will treat ministry guests with courtesy, providing adequately for their needs, and I will not invite persons to minister in the church who are under discipline, have questionable character, or have fundamental, doctrinal differences.
11. I will not attempt to unduly influence people to leave other churches.