

# Living the Life of a Leader

## Standards of Conduct

### Expectations of Leaders in "Walking with Jesus"

"Walking with Jesus" is a ministry called to build up leaders to serve in the church with the Love of Jesus Christ. (Ephesians 4:11- 13) We believe that:

- 📖 Jesus is the one and only Son of God who died for our sins and rose from the dead. (1 Corinthians 15:1-8).
- 📖 The Bible is the inspired Word of God. (2 Timothy 3:16-17).
- 📖 All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, but that forgiveness of sins and the promise of eternal life are available to those who trust Jesus as Lord and Savior. (John 3:16).

"Walking with Jesus" leadership is defined as anyone that is or would like to be an officer, board member, team member in any capacity or sponsor. Pilgrims, while expected to be Christians, may or may not have reached the standards of a leader until after they have gone on a walk and attended a 4<sup>th</sup> day workshop.

The "Walking with Jesus" expectations of leaders include active involvement in a local biblical Christian faith community for fellowship (Hebrews 10:24-25) and spiritual accountability. We consider people who are called into the "Walking with Jesus" community to be charged to live by biblical standards of Christian leadership. The Bible instructs us that grace is freely given and will ultimately be demonstrated in the life of every Christian; however, the Scriptures also take those expectations to higher levels when it describes the life of a Christian leader.

The Apostle Paul wrote to Titus with instructions on what to look for in a leader (Titus 1:7-9) and we believe the same principles apply to those in the "Walking with Jesus" leadership. Though many scriptures speak to lifestyle standards, this passage in Titus summarizes the expectations given by the whole Bible regarding Christian leadership. "For an overseer, as God's steward, must be above reproach. He must not be arrogant or quick-tempered or a drunkard or violent or greedy for gain, but hospitable, a lover of good, self-controlled, upright, holy, and disciplined. He must hold firm to the trustworthy word as taught, so that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to rebuke those who contradict it."

The Bible instructs us that following Jesus Christ means we are not to be conformed to the world, "... but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is that which is good and acceptable and perfect."  
(Romans 12:2)

## Statement of Faith

### Statement of Faith

All "Walking with Jesus" officers, board members, team members and sponsors must affirm our Statement of Faith and exclusive claims of allegiance that Jesus Christ makes upon everyone who would follow Him as Christians. With that understanding, I agree with and will adhere to the following Statement of Faith as one of "Walking with Jesus" leaders, entrusted to advance the "Walking with Jesus" mission.

1. We believe the Bible to be the inspired, infallible, and the authoritative Word of God. [2 Timothy 3:16-17](#); [2 Peter 1:21](#).
2. We believe that there is one God, eternally existent in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. [Genesis 1:1, 26](#); [Deuteronomy 6:4](#); [Matthew 3:16-17](#); [Matthew 28:19-20](#); [Mark 12:29](#); [John 1:14](#); [Acts 5:3-4](#); [2 Corinthians 13:14](#).
3. We believe in the deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, in His virgin birth, in His sinless life, in His miracles, in His vicarious and atoning death through His shed blood, in His bodily resurrection, in His ascension to the right hand of the Father, and in His personal return in power and glory and judgement [Col. 1:15-17](#); [Isaiah 7:14](#); [Matthew 1:23](#); [Hebrews 4:15](#); [2 Cor. 5:21](#); [1 Peter 2:22](#); [John 21:25](#); [John 3:14](#); [John 19:18](#); [2 Cor. 15:3-4](#); [Luke 24:31](#); [Acts 1:1-11](#), [1 Thess. 4:14](#); [1 Thess. 5:23](#); [Rev. 22:12](#).
4. We believe that for the salvation of lost and sinful people regeneration by the Holy Spirit is absolutely essential. [John 3:3-8](#); [Titus 3:4-7](#).
5. We believe in the present ministry of the Holy Spirit by whose indwelling the Christian is enabled to live a godly life. [John 3:5-8](#); [Acts 1:8](#); [Acts 4:31](#); [Romans 8:9](#); [2 Cor. 2:14](#); [Galatians 5: 16-18](#); [Ephesians 6:12](#); [Colossians 2:6-10](#).
6. We believe in the resurrection of both the saved and the lost; they that are saved unto the resurrection of life and they that are lost unto the resurrection of damnation. [2 Cor. 15:51-57](#); [Revelation 20:11-15](#); [Hebrews 9:27 -28](#).
7. We believe in the spiritual unity of believers in Christ. [2 Cor. 12:12-27](#); [Ephesians 1:22-23](#); [John 17:20-23](#).

As leaders in the "Walking with Jesus" community, we are committed to hold each other mutually accountable to be the leaders we are called to be in Scripture.

## **“Walking with Jesus”: Standards of Conduct**

The Christian faith is a welcoming respite for wanderers who fall short of God’s glory, and Grace is God’s overwhelming theme throughout the Bible and in the “Walking with Jesus” ministry, but for those involved in leadership, particularly leadership with our community, we are held to a higher standard. Being a part of the ministry of “Walking with Jesus” is not a “right”, it is a calling and privilege that must be affirmed by those placed in positions of authority within “Walking with Jesus”. Individuals who are truly called to be in the “Walking with Jesus” ministry will gladly strive to serve Christ with lives marked by holiness and godliness in lifestyle. The highlighted sections below are not meant to be an all-encompassing list of standards or sins. (2 Timothy 2:19) “But God’s truth stands firm like a foundation stone with this inscription: ‘The Lord knows those who are His,’ and ‘those who claim they belong to the Lord must turn away from all wickedness.’” (2 Timothy 2:14-26)

### **I. Marriage**

The Bible teaches that the appropriate place for sexual expression is in the context of a marriage relationship. The biblical description of marriage is one man and one woman in a lifelong commitment. In Matthew 19:4-5, Jesus says, “Have you not read that He who created them from the beginning made them male and female, and said, ‘Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh?’” Repeatedly, God uses the symbolism of His relationship with believers as the picture of marriage. Husbands are exhorted to love their wives as Christ loves the Church and wives are exhorted to honor their husbands as the Church does Christ. With this imagery and the truth of God’s ideal for marriage in mind, any sexual relationship outside the marriage context is described in the Bible as either fornication or adultery and (as stated in the sixth commandment) is prohibited throughout the Old and New Testaments. Therefore, sexual advance, activity or relationship between individuals not in a Biblical marriage covenant is sin. “Walking with Jesus” leaders must not engage in sexual activity or cohabitation outside of marriage but conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the above in such a way that their sexual expression and lifestyle is above reproach. Genesis 2:21-24; Matthew 19:3-11; Mark 10:2-9.

### **II. Sexual Identity**

Scripture is clear in sharing that all Christians are to find their identity in Christ, including sexual identity. 1 Peter 2:9-10 tells us, “He called you out of the darkness into His wonderful light. Once you had no identity as a people; now you are God’s people.” Because of God’s redemption of our identity, we find complete and appropriate expression of who we are, including our sexuality, when our actions align with God’s design. God’s design for sexual expression is in the context of a biblical marriage relationship. Scripture is clear that sexual activity or sexual

relationships between individuals of the same gender is sin ([Romans 1:26-32](#)) just as is any sexual relationship falling outside of God's biblical design. Therefore, "Walking with Jesus" leaders must not engage in same-gender sexual advance, activity or relationship.

Same-sex attraction falls into the category of a temptation like other sexual temptations and is not in and of itself a sin unless you act upon that temptation. We recognize that because we live in a fallen world, our desires do not always align with God's design, ([James 1:12-15](#)) but give rise to temptation, and leaders are responsible for their actions when facing temptation. ([Philippians 1:20-21](#))

### **III. Gender Identity**

Scripture is clear that God created two genders, distinct and mutually exclusive. [Genesis 1:27](#) tells us, "So God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them." God's created order has given unique identities to men and women for His glory, and each person's gender identity is assigned to them by God's design, therefore "Walking with Jesus" leaders must not engage in transgender-related or sex change activities. The purpose of these policy statements is not intended to judge or punish. It is to hold our leaders to be consistent with Scripture's prescriptions for those who deal with sexual and gender identity issues, and to see every leader experience the fullness of identity possible only in Christ's redemption of our lives, including our sexuality. ([Psalm 139:13-18](#))

### **IV. Human Life**

We believe that human life is sacred from conception to its natural end; and that we must have concern for the physical and spiritual needs of men and women. [Psalm 139:13](#); [Matthew 22:37-40](#); [Romans 12:20-21](#); [Galatians 6:7-10](#).

### **V. Pornography**

Sexual immorality such as the use of pornography is described in scripture as sin ([Matt. 5:27-28](#)). As servants furthering the gospel and providing spiritual leadership, we must live lives that are holy and consider the interests of others above our own. In so doing, "Walking with Jesus" leaders must not engage in immoral behaviors such as the use of sexually explicit materials, products and pornography. The purpose of this policy is not to be punitive to those who deal with sexual temptation or addiction, but to see every leader experience freedom in Christ. While we desire to be redemptive of all leaders who struggle with sexual immorality of any kind, we maintain a primary commitment to high standards and expectations of anyone involved with our mission and pray for restoration for those who cycle back into addictions. Leaders with a history of addiction must be in recovery and accountable to someone who practices this standard of conduct. ([Ephesians 5:15-17](#); [Luke 21:34-36](#); [James 1:12-15](#))

## **VI. Divorce**

“Walking with Jesus” places a high priority on healthy marriages, strongly discourages divorce, and supports the overriding scriptural “one-flesh” principle. “Walking with Jesus” believes in forgiveness of sin and that Jesus died and rose again to purify us from our past sins and that a past divorce will not eliminate a man or woman from the ministry, but it must be remembered that, in the light of Scripture, God’s ideal is that there be no divorce and that husbands and wives stay together until death separates them.

For those that are presently going through divorce “Walking with Jesus” adheres to the Biblical model that divorce is only accommodated in the following instances:

1. Unfaithfulness of a spouse involved in an adulterous or illicit sexual relationship (Matthew 5:32)
2. Desertion by a spouse (1 Corinthians 7:10-15)
3. Spousal violence or abuse breaking the one-flesh principle (1 Corinthians 7:33-34; Ephesians 5:21-33)

In instances of marital difficulties, “Walking with Jesus” encourages reconciliation, that God may be glorified in the healing of relationships. Leaders are encouraged to prioritize the health of their marriages.

## **VII. Substance Use/Abuse and Addictions**

Addiction is a tragic but prevalent reality in our society and therefore must be addressed. We are a ministry of restoration and transformation into the likeness of Christ. While we desire to be redemptive of all leaders who struggle with addictions of any kind, we maintain a primary commitment to high standards and expectations of anyone involved with our mission and pray for restoration for those who cycle back into addictions. Leaders with a history of addiction must be in recovery and accountable to someone who practices this standard of conduct. (Ephesians 5:18; Luke 21:34-36)

## **VIII. Financial Responsibilities**

“Walking with Jesus” expects our leaders to manage all finances of the organization and their personal finances with upmost integrity. As stated in 2 Corinthians 8:20-21, “We take this course so that no one should blame us about this generous gift that is being administered by us, for we aim at what is honorable not only in the Lord’s sight but also in the sight of man.” Financial misconduct includes, but is not limited to, mismanagement of donations and other ministry funds, embezzlement, theft, misuse or abuse of “Walking with Jesus” property or assets, identity theft, and misuse of financial and personal data. Such misuse of “Walking with Jesus” assets will not be tolerated.

## **IX. Behavioral Appropriateness**

Our goal is to strive to maintain a culture who live a life free from intimidation, threats, or violent acts. This includes, but is not limited to, intimidating, threatening or hostile behaviors, physical abuse, emotional abuse, vandalism, or any other act, which is inappropriate. In addition, insensitive or offensive comments are not tolerated. Except in cases of emergency, volunteers are expected to contact any "Walking with Jesus" board member if they believe there is a serious threat to the safety and health of themselves or others. (1 John 3:11; Philippians 2:3-5; Romans 15:1-7)

## **CONCLUSION**

"Walking with Jesus" leadership retains the discretion to make assessments about the leader's sin and their ability to continue in this ministry. While we desire to be redemptive toward those who struggle with sin of any kind, we maintain a primary commitment to biblical standards and expectations of anyone involved with our mission. We pray for restoration for those dealing with sin but are uncompromising in our commitment to protect the "Walking with Jesus" community.

"Walking with Jesus" expects every leader to be consistent with these standards in their lifestyle and in their teaching, and to use "Walking with Jesus" reporting processes whenever they have a good faith belief that these Standards of Conduct are not being followed. The areas of concern listed in this document are not an exhaustive list. "Walking with Jesus" desires that every involved leader should live a life above reproach using good and appropriate biblical judgment in all matters.

## **Reporting**

All failures to follow these standards will be addressed fairly and consistently and in a timely manner, but behaviors that are noncompliant, unrepentant, and ongoing are of particular concern. When these standards of conduct are not being followed, you should follow the approach in **Matthew 18:15-17**: If another believer sins against you, go privately and point out the fault. If the other person listens and confesses it, you have won that person back. But if you are unsuccessful, take one or two others with you and go back again, so that everything you say may be confirmed by two or three witnesses. If that person still refuses to listen take your case to the church. Always be discreet and maintain confidentiality when confronting the person. If this does not resolve the issue, then directly contact the Board of "Walking with Jesus". (**James 5:19-20**).

Officers, Board members, team members and sponsors: By signing below I acknowledge that I have read and agree with "Walking with Jesus" Statement of Faith. I further agree to comply with "Walking with Jesus" Standards of Conduct in my lifestyle serving and teaching.

By signing I agree to the "Walking with Jesus" Standards of Conduct & Statement of Faith

Print Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature\_\_\_\_\_

Date\_\_\_\_\_

Print Name, sign and date this page and return it to [Admin@walkingwithjesusmd.org](mailto:Admin@walkingwithjesusmd.org)