

Assemblies Of The Lord Jesus Christ



Empowering Apostolics For World Harvest

Ministerial Code Of Conduct

**How
Thou
Oughtest
To
Behave
Thyself**
(Code Of Conduct)

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INTRODUCTION: AS A MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL

“These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly: But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth” (I Timothy 3:14-15). “Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” (II Timothy 2:15).

You have been given the most important office on earth the moment you exercise the God-given calling placed upon you. You are more important than the president of the most powerful nation on earth. You have been vested with an office into which no one can elect you and no human can displace you. And for that matter, no one can replace you. You have not been chosen by man or men, but by the God of the universe. You are not called to seek your own nor project your own desires; you are a servant of Jesus Christ, and nothing more. Keep this truth first and foremost in your mind all the days of your ministry.

This booklet will not give you all the answers for a successful, God-fearing ministry any more than road maps are able to describe side roads and ditches along the roads, yet these are many and varied. But as a traveler depends on a map for directions, he also relies on experience, knowledge, common sense, and divine protection to enable him to complete a journey. And with that statement, may you examine the contents of this dissertation as a help and not a complete formula for success.

You are unique in that God does not call everyone into the ministry. Great care must be taken then, to always protect that uniqueness. As you remember Him of Whom you are called and commissioned, you will be inspired and strengthened to commit your all to His service. In your moments of weakness (not if, but when), always review your calling and commission. All your difficulties and problems throughout life will always be attributable to people in some way, but it is to people that you are sent, and you are called to minister (become a servant) to people! You can never write them off, disregard, denigrate, shun, or short-change them with your ministry. Your ministry must never be for personal gain; God takes care of His own.

The Apostle Paul willingly accepted and unashamedly confessed that he was the bondman (servant) of Jesus Christ. Much could be said or written about the abuses of the ministry, but let it never be forgotten that Judgment Day will erase all the inequities. You may often feel eccentric in determining to fearlessly fulfill your call, but you will always be right in doing so! Read on through this booklet for valuable help in charting and staying your course for God.

PART ONE: LABORERS TOGETHER

Apostle Paul used the expression, *“For we are laborers together with God...”* in I Corinthians 3:9. The cohesiveness of the Spirit bonds us all as one into the Body of Christ. Along with this, however, there is another bond which is needful and beneficial to our ministries - a uniting with an Organization. Joining forces with others who share our desire to promote the work of God will not only bless our own ministry, but will become a blessing to others as well.

The Assemblies of the Lord Jesus Christ is not a sticky, we-are-going-to-control-you-and-your-ministry type of Organization. Fellowship with others of like-precious faith is the purpose for our uniting together. We share the burdens of others, which motivates us to reach out to the world as we promulgate the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Together, we strongly feel that we can reach our world for the Lord Jesus Christ. We believe that we CAN make a difference in our communities - in our nation - in our world! While we alone will be able to make a measured, personal impact on our communities, together we will magnify that impact many times over.

Your affiliation with the Assemblies of the Lord Jesus Christ is a positive step forward for your ministry. You are encouraged to share yourself with others in this Organization. It offers so many opportunities for your involvement, and there is a need for every type of ministry. Your contribution will be greatly appreciated and thankfully received.

Become involved locally first of all. Offer your ministry and services to your Section and to your District. Attend all District functions: camp meetings, conferences, etc. You will never be able to influence your District unless you appear, voice your opinions, and vote. Strong districts make strong organizations; strong ministers and churches make strong districts.

Before complaining about something of which you don't approve in your District, examine yourself to determine whether you have made any personal efforts to remedy the situation!

Your attendance at General Conference is absolutely essential. The General Conference convenes each year during the latter part of June. Make attendance of this national gathering a priority on your calendar. At this function you will be able to make positive contributions toward directing the Organization on a course you feel it needs to follow. Be present in all of the business meetings, voice your opinion, and vote.

If you are a pastor, encourage your church to get involved with the Organization through its various departments. The Assemblies of the Lord Jesus Christ offers something for every age level in your church. There are Camp Meetings for all ages to attend. General Conference is an interesting and exciting time for the entire family. The Ladies Auxiliary Department presents a very challenging program, stressing involvement. The General Youth Department is a very progressive and equally assertive department dedicated to challenging youth to become dedicated to do more for the Lord. Bible Colleges, working in harmony with the Assemblies of the Lord Jesus Christ, offer your young people an opportunity to attend as they seek guidance in their lives. Home Missions churches across the nation are being built because someone cares. Your church also can help build another church through the Home Missions program. The Foreign Missions Department reaches out to our world. Every Church should be involved in missionary support.

By joining hands with the Assemblies of the Lord Jesus Christ, you will broaden your own ministry. You will be able to touch lives that you would never touch otherwise.

*The challenge is great - but so is our God.
The challenge is great - but together we are more than able.*

PART TWO: DO'S FOR A PREACHER'S PERSONAL LIFE

1. Make every effort to maintain close ties with each member of your family. Spend quality time with every one of them. Establish your wife and children as priorities!
2. If still single, marry only a godly, consecrated woman that will complement (add to, enrich) your ministry.
3. Set aside special days and times to spend with your wife and children.
4. Take time to pray, to be alone with God. Take everything to God in prayer. Keep your mornings for God. Inform all concerned of this arrangement so that lesser things can be done afterward. Take everything to God in prayer. *"Pray without ceasing" (1 Thessalonians 5:17).*
5. Commit each day to the Lord. Take a spiritual inventory of yourself every day. Determine whether you are or are not growing in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord.
6. Be a splendid example of Christian-living for all to behold. Contribute more than a money-tithe to the Lord.
7. Be scrupulous and ethical in all your business dealings. Maintain good financial records. Pay all bills promptly.
8. Be truthful and dependable.
9. Be punctual for all your engagements.
10. Always seek to keep a positive attitude. Never embrace a negative, defeatist attitude. Be positive; search for the good things in every situation.
11. Keep an active, open mind for new ideas – a lethargic one for cheap fads.
12. Practice enthusiasm and alertness.
13. Practice sound hygiene to stay well and strong physically. Health makes a difference in your ministry and could decide victory or defeat.
14. See your physician for regular physical checkups.

15. Check that your breath be pleasant. Halitosis in the preacher is indescribably offensive.
16. Take a little time off each week to recuperate and recharge your mental, emotional, and spiritual strength.
17. Dress appropriately all the time – on Sundays and on weekdays as well. Be clean, immaculate, and in style. Church members want to be proud of the appearance of their pastor.
18. Dress in a conservative fashion. Avoid wild styles and loud colors.
19. Dress casually at appropriate times.
20. Be well groomed. Keep your shoes cleaned and shined, socks matched for color and pattern, your shirt and linens clean, your hair cut and combed, and your fingernails clean, cut and buffed. Check that your tie is straight and your shirt tail is tucked in properly. Keep your study area clean and orderly.
21. Present a wide, wonderful smile as best adornment for every day. Your friends need it and it confuses your enemies!
22. Balance your study with your ministerial responsibilities.
23. Allow sufficient time for study and for sermon preparation.
24. Purpose and strive to be a student all the days of your life.
25. Read biographies of great men, secular and ecclesiastical history.
26. Study literary classics, but constantly study the Bible foremost. One method to accomplish this is to constantly preach through the Books of the Bible.
27. Establish a reading plan. Become familiar with great literature with stories of great art and artists; and of music and musicians. As a result, sermons and addresses will be enriched and strengthened.

PART THREE: FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

A minister can become so obsessed with what he has determined to be the call of God upon his life that he may neglect or overlook his most important supporter - his family. A good family relationship (to a married minister) is of vital importance. Family relationships portend tremendous consequences to the relationship of the pastor and the church family. Family relationships have tremendous influence on whether or not a church family will trust the pastor for counseling as its members are confronted with family problems.

Paul put it bluntly and clearly when he stated to Timothy in I Timothy 5:8: *“But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel.”* Trouble in a pastor's home will be carried into the Church (even unconsciously), then into the pulpit.

A 50%-50% commitment so popularly extolled by so many is not a guarantee for a successful marriage - it must be a 100%-100% commitment! The moment a minister fails to realize family importance upon the ministry coincides with the moment that family relationships begin to weaken. Counseling effectiveness will be eroded when advising others if the minister is handicapped with marital problems. A minister who is unable to handle his own problems can not possibly expect to handle the problems of others. Rightly could they say, "Physician, heal thyself!"

We are told that behind every successful man there is a faithful wife. A spouse will help make a ministry successful or affect it adversely.

Take time to get away with your spouse. It does not have to be in an extravagant place - just being alone and away from the phone and pressures will refresh both partners. Never become convinced that you are so important that you can't get away from your congregation for a while without the church folding and closing its doors!

Don't get too busy for your children. While the work of God is important - so are your children! You need to spend some time with them. Watch them grow up. Cry with them. Play with them. Compliment them on their accomplishments. Attend their school functions. Pray for wisdom in showing proper respect and recognition between your children and the children in the church.

PART FOUR: PULPIT MANNERS

Standing before a pulpit to deliver the Word of God is an ominous responsibility. It has been said, "Why stoop to be a king when God has called me to preach?!" No work is of greater importance than that of the minister. No work produces greater consequences. Because of this, the minister should ever seriously approach the pulpit.

Having the honor of filling the pulpit does not give one authority to use the position for personal advantage. Be sure to keep personal vendettas out of the pulpit!

Occupying the pulpit is not for the purpose of "straightening people out," but to preach the Word of God. Steak tastes good, but no one wants slapped in the face with a T-bone! The word of God is good, but it is designed for food and never for a weapon! The pulpit is no place to air personal frustrations. Get rid of them before coming to the pulpit.

Alexander Maclaren, who was called "the prince of expositors," said: "*We who are ministers know the dreadful temptations of the ministerial office; how almost impossible it is to meet them unless on the condition of the most rigid discipline of soul; how almost impossible it is to avoid regarding the Bible as a dictionary of texts; how impossible to avoid looking at the magnificent truths of Christianity as weapons with which to assail our hearers. For one minister who fails by reason of what the world calls immorality, a dozen settle down into the perfunctory monotony of professionalism, because they fail to live alone with God and because solitude of soul is forgotten and ceases to be the atmosphere into which they habitually withdraw. The river that is to bring freshness to many a league of plain must have its rise in the solitary cleft of the lonely hills, and draw its water from the snows that sparkle on their tops. The minister to be a man of power must live alone with God.*"

When called upon to minister in another pulpit the minister should show the utmost respect for the pastor of that flock. Leave personal preferences at home when ministering in another pulpit. In five seconds, one word spoken in error can do more damage to a congregation of people than its pastor can heal in five years! Also when responding to an invitation to minister in another pulpit, remember to be courteous - thank the pastor for the privilege of ministering to his flock - thank the congregation for its support of the invitation. Be honest; never patronize. Speak from your heart, and make sure that your heart is right before you speak. Be considerate. Don't take liberties that you wouldn't want taken with you or your congregation. A proper definition for minister is "one who serves." The visiting minister, then, should keep in mind that he is the servant of the pastor and congregation to which he ministers.

A minister should bless — never blister.

A minister should help — not hurt people.

A minister should uplift — not beat down.

A minister should exalt Christ and His Word — never self.

In his last epistle (II Timothy 4:1), Paul instructed Timothy with the following: "*I charge {thee} therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.*"

Peter, who was also a pastor, encouraged all pastors who labor faithfully in the Word of God in these words taken from I Peter 5:4: "*And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away.*" There are two things that should be derived from this statement:

1. The minister must feed people. Only sadistic parents would refuse food to their children, and,
2. Poor parents allow their children to consume food detrimental to their health.

The church doesn't want, doesn't need, and shouldn't be fed spiritual garbage. It needs healthful, spiritually uplifting, doctrinally sound teaching and preaching. The minister must realize that the flock to which he preaches is not his, but God's. Avoid saying, "my church." The minister didn't purchase the congregation that he pastors with his own blood; he did not beget it; it is not his own. He is but a custodian, while the Lord Jesus must remain the Chief Shepherd.

While a minister rightly expects adherence to Hebrews 13:17: "*Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that {is} unprofitable for you.*" - that same minister must realize that he will also be held accountable for his own ministry.

PART FIVE: FINANCE — FRIEND OR FOE?

One of the most fearful snares facing any minister is that of financial ruin. Managing personal finances in a sound, sensible manner is of utmost importance, according to the Word of God. Improper handling of financial affairs has caused countless problems for the ministry and, subsequently, for the churches pastored by these incompetent ministers. Being affluent is not a virtue, and being less than affluent is not a sin. Jesus, however, made an interesting statement in Luke 16:9: “*And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that, when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations.*” The word “mammon” could be defined “wealth,” and pertains to one’s financial condition. Money can be either friend or foe to us. It depends entirely on whether we control it or it controls us.

Money is not evil. It is the love of money that produces evil. Paul explained in I Timothy 6:10: “*For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.*” It is evident that we can not exist without money, but we must never be its slave. Enslavement can come from two areas: debt or greed.

Live within your means. Don't buy things you can't afford. Don't budget your entire income for expenses. Maintain a reserve; set aside a portion for rainy days. If you constantly run short of cash, swallow your pride, and seek professional financial guidance. Pay your bills. Never allow yourself to become so loaded with financial obligations that they will affect you, your family, and eventually, your ministry. Strive to maintain a good name in the business community. Never borrow to get out of debt. You can never be successful so long as you're a slave to finance.

Be frugal, never miserly. Save, but don't be a tight wad. Remember that God multiplies by dividing. It is entirely possible to be thrifty (and God expects us all to be, whether we earn \$10 or a \$1,000 an hour), and still not be stingy. God will never honor a stingy preacher.

Maintain good financial records - honest records. Many fool the IRS; no one fools God! Obtain the services of an expert CPA or tax lawyer, and ask questions - lots of them. Tax laws change constantly.

A minister, pastors especially, often occupy the unique position of controlling large sums of money. That position is often grossly abused. People place their trust in their pastor to handle their money as well as his own. They expect (and rightly so) that he disburses finances prudently, wisely, and in the fear of God. Mishandled church funds produce reverberations heard all across the continent. Wise stewardship, however, will produce a positive influence in the community of the church.

In many churches, the pastor has the oversight of or receives the tithe of the congregation in full. Yet he must not assume that he is lord over God's heritage. Possessing a right and abusing that right are two entirely different things. An extravagant lifestyle due simply to an abundance of funds could well be detrimental to the minister's effectiveness in the pulpit. Nothing should ever be permitted in a minister's life that would adversely affect his ministry.

A final word to pastors: Don't allow your ambitions to blind you to reality. A new church building may be tempting, but is building it feasible? Is it necessary? Loading down a church family with an over-sized financial obligation for pride's sake alone could be disastrous.

PART SIX: DOCTRINALLY SOUND

Paul commanded Timothy to *Preach the Word*. People expect ministers to tell them the truth about doctrine. They feel safe when they hear the same truths repeatedly, year after year. Nothing is more confusing than an indeterminate stand on doctrinal issues. As a leader, the minister must know the doctrine, and consistently preach it.

In Proverbs 25:19 Solomon wrote: “*Confidence in an unfaithful man in time of trouble {is like} a broken tooth and a foot out of joint.*” And while this is normally associated with unfaithfulness in church attendance, it is certainly applicable to those who are unfaithful to the doctrine of Jesus Christ.

Doctrine is so important that Jesus spent three years teaching His Apostles. There is Scriptural evidence that the Apostle Paul also was taught of the Lord directly for three years in the wastes of Arabia. The burden of the Church and its doctrine is too great to entrust in the hands of a novice. The responsibility of continuing the work of the Church today demands total commitment to knowing the teachings of the Word of God.

Our generation faces more divisive issues than any generation in history. Protestantism itself is split into hundreds of denominations. Some issues facing us within the Apostolic Church are not salvation-determining, yet they are hotly defended by their proponents. No minister should be a floater on issues, for none would trust his decision on essential issues if that were the case. Still, many issues that we argue among ourselves should give way to essential issues, the essential doctrines expounded more and more frequently, and fellowship enhanced thereby. No non-essential, personal conviction should ever be allowed to disrupt fellowship. We must focus on essential doctrine.

You are Apostolic or you are not. You are a One-God proponent or you are not. You embrace the teachings of the Apostles or you don't. There are only two sides to any issue: right or wrong. There is but one plan of salvation.

It is essential that you teach water baptism by immersion in the Name of Jesus Christ. You must not waver on this issue. You must teach a Holy Ghost baptism evidenced by speaking in other tongues as an essential for salvation. You must not waver on this issue. It is necessary that you believe and teach that Jesus Christ is God manifest in the flesh. There is no trinity of God. You must not waver on this truth.

In the same chapter that Paul advised Timothy to "Preach the word," he also warned of the time *in the which they will not endure sound doctrine*. They, instead, he said will, *after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears*. Preaching for the sole satisfaction of an occasional "Amen!" may bolster our egos, but it could also lead to the damning of souls, both those of our listeners and our own! Above the din of confusion of compromise, we need a clarion call for a firm stand for the doctrine of Jesus Christ!

Few prophets were loved. All of the Apostles were rejected by the unbelieving ecclesiastics of their time, and they often were rejected by the Gentile Church! One can wonder why only long enough to admit the fact that all these godly men stood firm on doctrinal truth. Do we dare do less? Whether received or not, doctrine still must be expounded. Paul put it well in these words taken from Romans 1:16: "*For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.*"

PART SEVEN: MORALS AND MORALITY

Moral misconduct destroys the effectiveness of a minister. Not only does his unrighteous conduct harm him, but it also causes a pall of suspicion to descend on his close acquaintances. Due to the elevation of the position of the minister, his constant exposure to and reception by so many, he sometimes tragically assumes the spirit of immunity from lust.

Be alert more to the spirit of sin than to the manifestation of it. The spirit of lust is father to many sins and not restricted to fornication or adultery, though these manifest it more clearly than others. As a minister, you must realize that you are engaged in spiritual warfare, so you must always be strong spiritually. It is the head of the body that the enemy will attack. If he can destroy you, the head, he will have gained access to the body, the congregation. In the case of adultery, for instance, Jesus warned that though this is a terrible and tragic act, many commit the act in their hearts through lust. The spirit of lust must be totally burned out of a minister's being lest he weaken and succumb to that spirit.

In Romans 12:3 Paul warned: "*For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think {of himself} more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.*" This admonition is so necessary, given the importance attached to the ministry. Of all Christian callings, the ministry is the most unique.

There is no higher calling than that of preaching the Gospel. However, this does not immunize a minister from contagion by sin. If anything, the minister must pray more, not less than anyone else. He must be alert to the spirit of lust more than others about him, not less. Succumbing to lust is possibly the greatest betrayal that a minister can deliver his followers. This must never happen. Tragically it does happen, but it can be prevented by being constantly full of the Holy Ghost.

Because of his position, his ego perhaps, his inflated self-esteem sometimes, a minister becomes an attractive target for *silly women laden with lust*. Solomon, who penned the foregoing, also wrote: “*{But} whoso committeth adultery with a woman lacketh understanding he {that} doeth it destroyeth his own soul.*” But may we not get bogged down with the spirit of lust only. There is another evil spirit attributable to moral sin in about the same number as the spirit of lust - it is the spirit of pride.

Paul warned of this spirit. He urged that pride's antidote be embraced and practiced by everyone. It is especially important to the minister. “*Charity suffereth long, {and} is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up.*” Charity is the giving of one's self and not of one's abundance. It costs to be charitable. It is a great standard with which to battle not only pride, but lust as well. It is a powerful tool.

No “affair” will ever work, can be hidden, or will ever be right. Like Sampson of old, adultery or fornication will destroy a minister's spiritual strength, annihilate his effectiveness forever as a minister, and blind him spiritually. Even though he repents and is forgiven and makes every possible restitution, a non-erasable, indelible mark will taint him to the day of his demise. “*But whoso committeth adultery with a woman lacketh understanding: he that doeth it destroyeth his own soul. A wound and dishonour shall he get: and his reproach shall not be wiped away*” (*Proverbs 6:32-33*).

1. A minister should never entertain the thought of an affair (Matthew 5:28).
2. He must immerse sexual fantasies in total repentance once he has allowed a sexual attraction to reach that proportion.
3. Remain so unattracted by the opposite sex that he has difficulty telling his wife what color dress a particular woman wore to church when his wife was absent.
4. Maintain a "hands off" policy for all women other than his wife. Hugging the opposite sex as a greeting in the presence of others is not acceptable, though a simple handshake might serve the same purpose and avoid body contact at the same time.
5. Express extreme displeasure for familiarity from the opposite sex. There seldom is any such thing as an “innocent” touch.
6. Be courteous to the opposite sex but never condescending to the point that a possible relationship more than minister/saint relationship might evolve.

In summation of this subject, no minister has an excuse for betraying his wife, family, friends, and church. When he solemnly pledged, "I do," he pledged it before a just God. And not only this, but the Apostle Paul stated that nothing could separate a person from God who was totally committed to God. Once again, if a minister keeps himself totally immersed in the SPIRIT, he will have far fewer difficulties with the spirits!

PART EIGHT: FELLOWSHIP

Undeniably, there is strength in unity. Individually, many things can be accomplished; together, so much more can be done. Christians need each other. The battle is difficult enough as it is without striving to fight it alone. The challenge is great, but with togetherness it will be met.

Nehemiah accomplished the task of rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem without even a wheelbarrow in just fifty two days. He rallied the formerly dispersed Jews to the awesome task, and he attributed his success to the words in Nehemiah 4:6: “*So built we the wall...for the people had a mind to work.*” The challenge facing the Church of Jesus Christ can never be met except there is unity in the Body.

A minister who isolates himself from others of like-precious faith is doing himself great harm. As he refuses to expose himself to others he is robbing himself of strength and blessings that he could not otherwise know. Every minister needs to listen to the views of others on scriptural subjects. Never fear exposing yourself to the ministry of others. Don't be afraid of opposing views. Never fear exposing yourself to the ministry of others. What you hear will either strengthen your own convictions on a given subject or cause you to reevaluate your own position.

A loner who insists on arriving at his own opinions in his own study often comes up with some very "strange" views. Too often a minister errs simply because he has shut himself off from the ministry of others and the help that those ministries could have provided. It is cruel also to isolate a church from fellowship. This displays a spirit of selfishness or distrust. Every congregation needs more than the ministry of one man holed up in his own realm, tied to his own personal convictions. This is why the five-fold ministry includes more than pastors.

A minister should always be aware of the fact that his ministry affects the lives of others. What he says and what he does affect those who look to him for leadership.

Associations with a fellow-minister are of vital importance. He is a co-laborer in the Kingdom of God. Ministers should compliment and balance the ministry of others, and never seek to destroy. Attacking the integrity of a fellow minister is degrading the attacker's own ministry. It is always better to say nothing than to verbally castigate another.

Paul, the prisoner traveling to Rome, was met at Appi Forum by brethren aware that he would pass that way. They rendezvoused with and prayed with Paul. Acts 28:15 states: "...whom when Paul saw, he thanked God, and took courage." Paul had experienced a very trying journey up to that point. He had been shipwrecked, been bitten by a serpent, and been threatened by death. The charitable thoughtfulness of the brethren to meet Paul must have been so refreshing to that weary prisoner.

And so it is with fellowship. Life's journey for the minister is fraught with danger and trouble. He might triumph alone in his battles, but oh how much better the fellowship of others makes his situation. Fellowship is just that - all the fellows in the ship! When desiring fellowship expect:

1. To give rather than receive.
2. To extend rather than be reached.
3. Intend to be a blessing rather than receive one.
4. Be persistent in unselfishly promoting togetherness.
5. Arrange your schedule so that it does not hamper fellowship.
6. Determine to edify every minister in your fellowship group every time you assemble.
7. Pray that God will forgive you every time someone in your circle offends you.
8. Absorb every good thing. Eat the chicken; toss the bones.
9. Encourage your entire congregation to fellowship.
10. Be absolutely sure that your entire family is involved.

John wrote in I John 1:7: "*But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.*"

PART NINE: LOYALTY

It is ever-important that we remember the pit from whence we were digged. While many in the ranks of the Assemblies of the Lord Jesus Christ have shown evidence of great success, the greater number embraces struggling ministers. Those who have shown success and remain an integral part of the Assemblies of the Lord Jesus Christ stand as commendable bulwarks of loyalty.

The Organization very likely never afforded any of them one dime in financial compensation, yet they have given enormous amounts of money to the many programs of this fellowship. Success to them apparently does not mean being affiliated with

the largest organization, but in complementing an organization lesser in number than the largest. Being the giants that they are, they realize and appreciate the opportunity to serve. As you will remember, the subject of charity was addressed earlier in this booklet. These great men are prime examples of charity.

Success is not foreign or even rare in the Assemblies of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is an everyday occurrence. Some successes are great; others are small. All are successes. A deplorable mind-set occurs, however, when success is equated to moving on to something bigger, not necessarily better. No minister should be allowed to walk away debt-less from the organization that birthed, fed, and matured his ministry. But then, perhaps the organization is enriched by the departure of these spirits of self-seeking.

Financial enticements abound for the uncommitted. Ministerial glory before a greater number allures others. But to the totally-committed, the only change they envision is a greater effectiveness in winning the lost by this organization. They realize their debt to the Assemblies of the Lord Jesus Christ and to the God to which it is dedicated. They are not about to be enticed with smiles, handshakes, and overtures made now at the time of success, but absent when they struggled.

In no other organization anywhere in the world will you feel more welcome and loved than in the Assemblies of the Lord Jesus Christ. That is an indebtedness. No organization has so charitable a program for its evangelists as does the Assemblies of the Lord Jesus Christ. Many former evangelists have forgotten this indebtedness. Churches all over America and in many parts of the world have been helped financially and spiritually by the Assemblies of the Lord Jesus Christ, yet the organization owns not one single church! Talk about indebtedness!

The ministers of this great organization walk proudly, not from pride, but from a spirit of brotherly love. Preachers pastoring five hundred people enthusiastically hug the necks of pastors who pastor twenty. What could be greater than that type of spirit?

As you review your reason or reasons for being a member of The Assemblies of the Lord Jesus Christ or your reason for wanting to join, take time to insert pride into those reasons. To be a member of such a commendable organization is something not to be taken lightly. It is something of which you can be very proud in a godly manner. It is something that you will never want to compromise for your own selfish, personal satisfaction.

It is an opportunity to serve, and our Lord ordered us to serve. Opportunities galore will knock as success is displayed in your ministry, but loyalty will dictate repayment of your debt. There are bigger organizations to join – but there is none better! Be proud, be loyal to the Assemblies of the Lord Jesus Christ; it is totally committed and loyal to you.