

Rules and the Christian Life (Community Standards)

The Scriptures encourage us to pursue a course of conduct that is free from both lawlessness and legalism. Rules are not in themselves a test of spirituality, yet a spiritual person will submit to God's Word and to God's established authority (e.g., church, government, employer). Such a person will live in love and self-control in the community in which God allows him or her to live and serve.

The Bible clearly presents certain absolutes of moral behavior. In other areas where absolute principles do not exist, Christians must search the Scriptures for wisdom in dependence on the Holy Spirit. We call our employees to live in accordance with all biblical absolutes. On the other hand, matters of individual discernment will be left to the Christian's conscience (with a few exceptions due to communal considerations). In every instance, the exaltation of God's holy name is what should ultimately determine the employee's behavior.

Biblical Absolutes and Moody Employees

By biblical absolutes, we mean those unchanging scriptural truths about God, his creation, and his will for human beings. Rooted in his character and law, these truths are universal, unchanged by time, circumstances, culture, or human interpretation. Included in the absolutes are certain requirements of the Bible about moral living.

Positive Commands

Because we desire that the life of Christ be manifested in our community, we expect that a believer will seek to follow every direct command of God. Examples of how believers can obey Scripture's positive commands would include actively participating in a biblical Protestant local church, loving all people, being filled with the Holy Spirit, obeying the Word, and trusting God for personal needs (Prov. 3:5-6; Luke 11:28; John 13:34-35; Gal. 6:10; Eph. 5:18-21; Col. 3:12-17; 1Thess. 5:12-22; Heb. 10:24-25).

Prohibitive Commands

Biblical teaching forbids practices such as idolatry, stealing, drunkenness, chemical dependency, gossip, gluttony, dishonesty, occult involvement, murder, profanity, law-breaking, the use of illegal, addictive, or mind-altering drugs (including marijuana), physical abuse or battery, child abuse, all sexual activity outside of the husband/wife marital relationship (including pornography, all other manifestations of the 'sex industry', and homosexual or transgender behavior). Furthermore, attitudes such as lust, greed, divisiveness, thanklessness, pride, hatred, rebelliousness, and jealousy are equally displeasing to God. (Gen. 1:26-27; Ex. 20:1-17; Ps. 11:5; Prov. 6:16-19; Rom.1:26-27, 13:1-14; 1 Cor. 6:9-20, 15:34; Gal. 5:19-21; Eph. 5:1-18; Col. 3:5-10; 1 Thess.4:3-8; 1 Pet. 5:8)

While recognizing that no Christian can attain perfect holiness this side of heaven, Moody nonetheless calls us to let these biblical absolutes govern our lives at work and away from the workplace at all times.

Matters of Individual and Communal Discernment

By individual discernment we mean each employee is free to follow a biblically informed conscience. As noted above, Scripture provides certain moral absolutes that we expect to be

followed. Concerning issues about which Scripture is not clear and Christians disagree, we endeavor to leave these matters to the individual's conscience as described in Romans 14. "Who are you to judge the servant of another? To his own master he stands or falls; and he will stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand ... Each person must be fully convinced in his own mind" (vv.4-5).

The guiding principle of a Christian's moral life is God's glory. This means we will never use our moral freedom as an occasion to abuse our bodies, which are God's temple. It also means our Christian liberty must be balanced by the needs of the broader community to which we belong and our behavior adapted to its benefit.

Therefore, certain prohibitions not mentioned in Scripture are nonetheless necessary for the Moody community. While in the workplace or carrying out job duties, employees are prohibited from consuming alcoholic beverages, using tobacco products or gambling in any form or venue. Though these are not explicit biblical commands, neither are they left to employee discernment; they are communal limitations that allow us to maintain a good reputation so as to glorify God in all things.