

## A MISSIONARY LIFESTYLE

Because EFM bases its acceptable standards of behavior on organizational and individual commitments to God and to the Bible, and is committed to biblically based lifestyles of morality, marital fidelity, and faith, all missionaries will be held to a high standard of conduct. Because these standards are based on biblical principles, acceptable behavior for our missionaries will differ from that considered acceptable by society in general.

- A. Believers are commanded to avoid all appearance of evil and we are not “to cause a weaker brother to stumble.” Hence the missionary must conduct himself in a manner that is above reproach and be an example of godly living. This principle is lived out through two different approaches.

The first has to do with behaviors clearly prohibited by scripture—drunkenness, immorality, homosexual behavior, greed, dishonesty and anything that destroys the body are just a few examples. With biblically prohibited behaviors, the Board expects the Director to initiate a disciplinary process that has as its first objective repentance and restitution. This process may include the missionary being placed on leave of absence. It also may include, after consultation with the Executive Committee, the possibility of immediate dismissal.

The second level has to do with conduct not explicitly forbidden by scripture, and may include some behaviors that are practiced by some as a matter of Christian freedom—consumption of alcohol or tobacco, gambling and some aspects of entertainment might be included in this list. The Board absolutely affirms freedom of conscience for those who follow Christ. It also recognizes that Christian leaders must embrace the extraordinary privilege of setting aside some illicit behaviors—including those listed above—as a witness to their destructive character and eliminate any chance of being a stumbling block to the weak. It should be clear that alcohol and tobacco consumption, drug use, pornography and gambling often wreck devastating consequences on both individuals and society; and because Christian leaders have a responsibility to provide models for overcoming those consequences, the Board stands for abstinence from these practices. The Board envisions that the Director counsel with missionaries regarding these (or other potentially questionable) behaviors as a way to examine more deeply this leadership responsibility in the missionaries’ specific context. If necessary, the Director may ask the Executive Board to consider a specific circumstance and then provide direction to the missionary regarding the behavior in question. The missionary is expected to abide by the Board’s decision or resign.

- B. Misuse of Mission Funds: Any misuse of mission funds for personal purposes or any embezzlement of mission funds will be cause for immediate dismissal, restitution and possible criminal prosecution in a severe case.

- C. **Materialism:** It is recognized that a difference in standard of living between missionaries and nationals can be a cause for tension. Money and things may nullify a missionary's effectiveness with nationals. Simplicity, balance and generosity with things is encouraged to avoid the development of a barrier between missionary and nationals.