

seeJesus Community Covenant

seeJesus is a global, discipling mission made up of board, staff, and volunteers. We want to reflect Jesus, his person, his teaching, and his work in all our work and relationships both inside and outside our mission. When people see us, we want them to see Jesus.

Missionary orders have historically drawn up a "Rule" that serves as a guide for how they relate as a community. This Community Covenant is our Rule or guide for our relationships. In order to maintain the spirit of this Covenant we will read this rule regularly. Every member of our community agrees to abide by this Covenant.

Incarnation

We want to be an incarnating community. If we are concerned by someone's work performance or behavior, we want to find out what might be wrong, to incarnate instead of judge. Following the footsteps of our Master, we want to step in others' shoes and seek to understand them. Like Jesus, we want to first look, feel compassion, and then act.

Grace

If someone offends us, we want to be quick to extend grace and slow to extend judgment. We want to begin praying for that person, waiting for a good time to speak to them. We want a ministry of prayer to precede a ministry of honesty. The last thing we want to do is to tell another member of our community how someone else has hurt or disappointed us. Even supervisors who at times need to talk about job performance need to guard against speaking negatively about someone else.

Avoid repeating negative comments about another person. Repeating negative remarks increases drama. Put energy into assuming the best about another person. Actively work to protect others' reputations. Just because a remark is true does not mean it should be repeated. Love covers a multitude of sins.

Submission

If we are an incarnating community, it is easy to presume on the grace of others and not do our job well. We want to serve our superior as if we are serving Jesus. It is important to not only follow the letter of the law but the spirit. Sometimes the best way to bless your superior is to ask them questions or challenge them graciously in an appropriate setting. If you feel your supervisor is still wrong or not listening to you, you may appeal up the chain of command with your supervisor. It is important to do this together. It is also important to not talk to others inside our community about your concerns because that creates a faction. We want open, honest disagreement that respects the chain of command.

Leadership Behavior

Give a staff member or volunteer control over their work as much as possible. Encourage open disagreement; draw out minority opinions. Listening doesn't mean you have to do what someone else says, but it is important that people be heard. You always learn something. In the short run, this will slow down decision-making but make it more effective in the long run.

Keeping Short Accounts

If someone is bothering you, go first to God, then to the other person. We naturally want to "check" our opinion by going to another person to confirm our concern, but that will often lead to a mini-tribe or faction where a small group begins to share mutual concerns. Not involving other people keeps a level playing field. It is important to go even if you are convinced the other person won't listen. Avoid tribalism by living with the mess of possibly being misunderstood. And just because you've gone to the other person doesn't mean you are right. If the other person doesn't listen and you consider it serious enough, then find a second person to go with you. If that fails, then tell the Executive Director or Board Chairperson.

If someone comes to you with a complaint about another member of our community and you discover that they have not gone to that person, first ask them to go and talk to the other person directly before involving you.

If you sense that someone is upset or bothered by you, after praying, go to them and ask them if you've done anything wrong. Because Christ with his own body has broken down the tribal barriers that divide us, we want to break down those barriers every time we sense them going up.

Go gently. Never think you are just "shooting from the hip" or "that's just my personality." In order to be gentle, we need to first slow down and reflect on whether we do the same thing (that we are upset about). Then we need to pray about our timing and tone of what we want to say. Avoid coming with a list. Most of us can handle only 1-2 concerns at a time.

Avoid communicating disagreement by email. Pick up the phone or ideally wait to see them in person. The human voice softens interactions. Our face softens them even more.

Open Honesty

Don't shy away from speaking up in meetings. If you find yourself telling someone privately after a meeting your concerns about what someone else did or your opinion, you might be overly submissive or living in the fear of people. Guard against living in or creating your own world.

Don't talk to other people prior to a meeting to get them on your side. Keep a level playing field that leaves room for our Chief Executive, the Holy Spirit, to speak through others.

Forgiveness

When others offend you, forgive. When others break this covenant, forgive. A lifestyle of forgiveness constantly resets our relationships to normal. Otherwise, slights will accumulate in your heart leading to restoring the wall that Jesus has broken down. Check the thoroughness of your forgiveness by making sure your heart is open with another person, that you haven't withdrawn emotionally.

Loyalty

If a staff member is underperforming or struggling with their work, seek to understand them and their gifts. Work to find a place where they can flourish. Try to enhance strengths instead of focusing on weaknesses.

Pray

Pray daily for every person in seeJesus that you interact with. Pray over every aspect of your work. We participate in the weekly prayer meetings because we want the Spirit of Jesus to be ruling and guiding our work. By praying together regularly and in our own prayer lives, we cultivate an atmosphere where the Spirit can lead and direct our work. If we are going to reflect Jesus, we need to make room for Jesus.

Enjoy

Enjoy the differences that will emerge in our community. Guard against too much mocking even though it is meant in fun. Celebrate one another's accomplishments.

Humility

In meetings, be careful of dominating especially if you are the leader. Humility helps us incarnate and be wisdom seekers because we aren't confident we know what is best. Humility helps us pray because we are acknowledging our need for help.

Believe the Gospel

We know that because of the cross, of Christ's death for us, we are not only forgiven but, by faith, declared righteous by the Father. This enables us to receive criticism, to listen, to enjoy other people's success, and to give honest feedback. It first frees us to be ourselves, then it frees us to receive feedback from other selves. We have nothing to protect because we have all died and are "in Christ."

Fellowship of His Suffering

As carriers of Christ, we expect suffering. We know that the pattern of our Master's life, death and resurrection will be the pattern of our lives and the pieces of our lives. Like Jesus, we receive this as from the Father. But we also expect resurrection, first in our hearts and then in our circumstances. We are a resurrection people.

Ministry Idolatry

Take care not to boast about or idolize the work of seeJesus. Not only does that create an idol out of our ministry but it also wounds our executive, the Spirit of Jesus. He withdraws when the central love is not Jesus. We are thankful for our work and its impact, but we want Jesus to receive the glory. So we rejoice when people both enter and leave our community. We want to communicate to our ministry partners God's blessing on our work without boasting about it.

Sexual Purity

We want to take particular care to maintain sexual purity in our community. Ultimately, each of us needs to police our own heart, but we want to guard against developing emotional intimacy with members of the opposite sex. We want to avoid being alone with a member of the opposite sex in dining, traveling, or staying at a hotel. If you find yourself needing to be in that situation inform your supervisor and, if married, your spouse, preferably getting their permission before the trip.

We know and abide by Scriptural commands that forbid pornography, pre-marital sex, homosexual behavior, and any other sexual relations outside the bonds of marriage between husband and wife.

Love of Money

The love of money comes in many forms. We want to guard against overstating our work in order to get donations. We want to guard against not being honest with our ministry partners because we are afraid of losing their giving. We know that it is the Father who provides for our needs.

Jealousy

The most subtle relational sin is jealousy. It usually masks itself as something else, such as concern about unfairness, being not included, or feeling neglected. The best way to unmask jealousy is to express your concerns about unfairness, etc., to the people involved. That gives them the space to either correct you or learn from you or both. Jealousy grows in the dark.