

PAUL B COULTER

Seeking, Serving and Sharing Christ

Code of Conduct in Ministry

1. Purpose

I am Paul B Coulter. You can find out more about me or contact me through my personal website: www.paulcoulter.net. This personal code of conduct outlines the standards I am committed to under Christ. I invite others to hold me accountable to these standards and correct me if I fall short.

2. My approach to ministry

My approach to ministry will always be:

- a) **Christ-centred** – I will serve the Lord Jesus Christ and others in his name for his glory, pointing always to him and depending prayerfully on the grace of God received through faith in him and the power of Christ provided by the Holy Spirit.
- b) **Gospel-shaped** – I will help others understand their own stories and big issues within God's great story of salvation, the gospel, so that non-Christians will come to believe in Jesus as Saviour and Lord and Christians will know how to live faithfully for him.
- c) **Bible-based** – I will seek to test every idea against the truth God has revealed in the Bible, his living Word, which alone is the authority by which my words must be tested and the sure foundation I seek to help others build their lives upon.

3. Ethical principles

I will serve the Lord Jesus with integrity, speaking with sincerity and simplicity so that I commend the truth to people's consciences in the sight of God.

This means I will:

- a. **Honour every person without favouritism**, regardless of ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age or socioeconomic status, as a precious individual loved by God, by giving them time, providing or sourcing whatever help I can, and sharing Christ with them.
- b. **Listen attentively to people without condemning or prejudging them**, allowing them time and safety to express themselves so I can understand them fairly and accurately, asking questions only when necessary to gain understanding.

- c. **Glorify Christ** by acknowledging him as the giver of every good gift, the only Saviour and Lord and the transformer of lives and by encouraging people to trust and obey him and grow in faith, rather than ever becoming dependent upon me.

It also means I will not:

- d. **Force, coerce or manipulate another person** into a decision or course of action, even when I am convinced it would be good for them and right before God.
- e. **Harm another person** through abuse (physical, sexual, psychological, material or discriminatory), exploitation (including financial, sexual or emotional), breaches of confidentiality, or using them for my own satisfaction or ends.
- f. **Exceed my limitations**, physical, emotional, material or spiritual, in a way that would compromise my health, neglect my family, or set a bad example to others.

4. Safeguarding

Safeguarding refers to protection of children and vulnerable adults.

I operate within the Safeguarding Policy of the Centre for Christianity in Society, which is available on request from contact@christianityinsociety.org.

5. Confidentiality

Confidentiality protects the privacy of persons and the integrity of interpersonal ministry. I will not share personal information a person shares with me during personal ministry without the person's prior knowledge and consent except in the following situations:

- a. I am required by law to disclose information to statutory authorities.
- b. I believe a person is or may be at risk of harm or injury.
- c. I believe a person to be at risk of harming himself or herself.

If I cannot maintain confidentiality for one of these reasons, I will:

- i. encourage and support the person to disclose the information to the appropriate authorities or agencies, unless that would put me, the person or someone else at risk;
- ii. if the person cannot disclose the information to the appropriate authorities or agencies, I will seek the person's permission to disclose it, unless that would put me, the person or someone else at risk;
- iii. if the person does not give permission or I cannot ask the person for permission, I will disclose the information, on a need-to-know basis, to the appropriate authorities or agencies without the person's consent.

I may ask for advice from or share requests for prayer with my wife or another trusted Christian adviser who understands the importance and principles of confidentiality. If doing so I will either ask the person's permission to do so or will generalise details and avoid naming the person so that confidentiality is maintained.

I may keep records of what a person shares with me in the course of pastoral care or mentoring to guide me in prayer and help me follow the person's story. All such records are kept in a password protected section of Microsoft One Note on my personal computer. I will share these notes with the person on request.

6. Money, sex and power

In recognition of the fact that money, sex and power have been identified in Scripture and throughout church history as major areas of temptation for Christian workers, I will hold to the following principles in personal interactions in ministry.

- a. I will not engage in any sexual activity or sexualised conversation with anyone other than my wife.
- b. I will not meet alone with a female person other than my wife or a relative in a building where no one else is present or in an enclosed room in a building where others are present unless the door to the room has an uncovered window.
- c. I will not ask people or allow people to ask for absolute privacy but will seek to have all meetings in a place where we cannot be heard but may be seen.
- d. I will not make my availability for ministry contingent on the ability of a person, church or organisation to pay for it or to donate more than others.
- e. I will record all gifts received in relation to ministry and will ensure that all taxable income is taxed and gift aid is only claimed when it is legally permitted.
- f. I will seek to recognise any power imbalance between me and another person and make sure one-to-one meetings are under the control of the person I am serving.
- g. I will seek accountability to the Board of the Centre for Christianity in Society and will take seriously any concerns or complaints I receive.

7. Recognising my limits

Working within the limits God has set upon me is part of my worship of God and faithful service of Christ. Recognising this, I will:

- a. Maintain discipline in getting adequate rest, sleep and exercise, having a healthy diet, and thinking on things that are true, pure and good.
- b. Practising Sabbath weekly by taking a 24-hour period of rest and recreation, enjoying God through creation and covenant, and refraining from financially productive work.
- c. Honour my wife and other family members by ensuring I have quality time with them and care for their needs, taking my wife's guidance on what that means.
- d. Abide in Christ by feeding on Scripture, praying frequently, joining God's people in corporate worship, and speaking often about him with others.
- e. Admit when I do not know something or cannot help with a problem, seeking to guide the person I am serving towards someone who can help where possible
- f. Continue to grow in my own knowledge and understanding by reading, research and reflection on experience as well as joining conferences or courses.
- g. Say no to requests for help if I am overloaded, concerned about my own safety or aware that my ability to function is impaired for any reason.
- h. Maintain a diary that allows for adequate breaks between busy spells and does not involve being away from home on ministry more than two evenings per week.

8. Feedback and complaints

I welcome any feedback you may want to share – positive, negative or mixed – about any ministry activity so that I can learn how to serve Christ more faithfully, apologise if necessary, or clarify any misunderstandings. If you don't have my phone number or email address, please contact me through my website: www.paulcoulter.net/contact.

If you do not wish to contact me about a negative experience or a concern about me, you can raise a complaint with the Centre for Christianity in Society through its complaints procedure, which is available online: www.christianityinsociety.org/complaints-policy.