

# THINKS YOU SHOULD KNOW WHEN WORKING WITH THE MOTORCYCE CLUBS

## PROTOCOL BASICS

These are some things for you as a The Way Riderz Motorcycle Ministry Member to consider when interacting with and dealing with other motorcycle groups, clubs and ministries whether they be of Christian or secular origin. Keep in mind while reading this information that it has been taken from many different sources and is for educational purposes.

Being that our ministry consists of people with a wide range of experience with motorcycle culture and riding, it is our intent that all of The Way Riderz chapters be of like mind in serving the Lord. Please keep in mind that this is the basics and when in doubt, ask an officer with experience about other motorcycle protocol not mentioned below.

1. Just like you, patch holders are people. They have good and bad days, they have jobs, families and normal everyday problems and concerns. As with any group of people, there are the good, the bad and the ugly. Okay, maybe not the ugly (for to us there is beauty in everything.) but definitely good & bad. Let's just say that there are some people who no matter what you say or do it will not be right with them. You will encounter such people. Love them anyway.
2. Protocol and respect are primary rules when dealing with motorcycle ministry patch holders.

If you are formally introduced to a patch holder, make sure either the person doing the introduction (or you) make sure they know what club you belong to and if you are an officer, what position you hold. Under no circumstances do you interrupt to correct a mistake while that person is introducing you or while they are talking. Wait till the introduction is done and politely introduce yourself correctly. i.e....

Joe Rider, The Way Riderz, Sacramento

Joe Christian, Secretary The Way Riderz, Sacramento

(Use your name – not your nickname. Nicknames may come later.)

3. Greet them as you would anyone else and wait until the offer is made to shake hands. DO NOT interrupt, (as this is a sign of disrespect.) wait for them to recognize you. DO NOT be offended or make a big deal if they do not offer to shake your hand.

Many times they want to get to know about us and our MM a little better before they will offer to shake your hand. This is the same as the acknowledgement when riding. You will find that some riders will wave or nod to acknowledge you and some will not. This is just personal preference. Some riders are hard core old school. Some come across friendly. Some do not. Again, DO NOT TAKE IT PERSONALLY.

4. Never, ever, lie. You can refuse to answer a question in a polite manner by saying something like, “That seems like ministry business and I would like to refer that to one of our officers in order to get better information for you.” Be prepared to answer questions about what the ministry is about. Such as...
  - A. “We are a motorcycle ministry and not a motorcycle club and have no intention of ever trying to become a motorcycle club”.
  - B. Our colors are bought and earned by serving (having a servants heart)
  - C. We have monthly dues.
  - D. All makes and models of motorcycles are welcomed.
  - E. We are non-territorial.
  - F. We wear approved MM and MC support patches.
  - G. Women riders are welcomed and can be an officer.
  - H. DO NOT brag about the size of the local or national “The Way Riderz” motorcycle ministry.
  - I. DO NOT volunteer information. If asked about the local chapter, answer it if you can. If asked about the number of members or the National organization, refer them to one of the officers.
5. Women in leadership positions or being patch holders in motorcycle clubs, while not totally unheard of, is very rare. That’s just the way it is. Most motorcycle clubs would also rather deal with a man if there is business to conduct. Most realize what a riding motorcycle ministry is about and will for the most part accept a woman as an officer and a woman officer will most likely be allowed to attend any meeting. Whether or not they will deal directly with a woman officer or not depends on the individual motorcycle club/chapter. There is no set rule for this and they will let you know if it’s okay with them or not. Many motorcycle clubs do not care to deal with the National Officers. They would prefer to deal with the local or state representatives.
6. No “Name Dropping”. If anyone knows a patch holder, don’t let them throw the patch holder’s name/nickname/club’s name around like you or they are a great buddy of theirs (even if you or they are). Many clubs consider that as a major disrespect to the whole club.

7. Just like The Way Riderz of Sacramento's by-laws say, NO GOSSIPING. Watch where you are when speaking about other clubs and patch holders and never say anything about them in public. You never know when that person standing near you might belong to or support the organization that you are talking about. Patch holders and Club supporters do not always wear their colors. You don't ever want to say anything that could end up being misconstrued or misunderstood. Things always have a way of getting back to people. Just be sure you're not part of the story.
8. Anything said between MM members is ministry business ONLY. If comments (even those said in a joking manner) were to get out, problems could start. Discussion outside the privacy of the chapter can start rumors which could cause a lot of problems for not only our particular chapter, but also for other chapters in and out of state.
9. If for some reason you have to say something while in public about a motorcycle club, take the person you're talking with aside.(say ONLY what you need to say to directly to them to get your meaning across.) Say as little as possible so anyone else can't overhear it and misunderstand what you're talking about.
10. Some motorcycle clubs can be very territorial and some clubs don't see any difference between a RIDING CLUB, MOTORCYCLE CLUB or MOTORCYCLE MINISTRY, good or bad. If you are unsure of the areas or places normally frequented by motorcycle clubs, find out from your officers. If you are planning on traveling and are concerned about what situations may be in regard to the relationship with the local motorcycle clubs in the areas you'll be traveling through or staying in, talk to your local officer and ask if they can find something out by contacting the officers in the areas you will be in.
11. "SHOW PATCH HOLDERS RESPECT." That's A #1!
12. If you already know a patch holder or get to know one in the future, don't just walk up to them and interrupt when they are with other members. Wait until they acknowledge you first and NEVER touch them or put your arm around them like a buddy. Don't put your hand out to shake theirs; wait for them to extend their hand first. If for some reason you're not acknowledged at all, just keep walking. If you need to talk to an officer of a Motorcycle Club the proper way is to go through the Sergeant at Arms or one of the patch holders.
13. The Way Riderz Motorcycle Ministry of Sacramento shows respect to all people and organizations. We show respect and go to as many functions that we are invited to as

possible while still maintaining our standards of Christ like living. We also support other organizations with like mindedness and servant's hearts by wearing their support patches (i.e. CMA, Biker's for Christ, The Messengers, Black Sheep) we are a "NEUTRAL" ministry. Jesus teaches us to love all people. So we do! All fall short of the glory of God and it is not our place to place judgment. So we don't. We go to the streets with the message of God's love and that love covers a multitude of sins.

\*\*\*\*NOTE\*\*\*\* The best way to support everyone and remain NEUTRAL is to attend only "open to the public" events that a motorcycle club or ministry may be sponsoring.

If you feel you want or need to go to a "limited event", then you'll have to go representing yourself as yourself, preferably without wearing any patches identifying our ministry. Remember, if you're wearing your patch, you are considered by everyone to be representing The Way Riderz. If anything were to turn sour, then the entire ministry could wind up with problems. The Way Riderz patch holders are held accountable by brothers and sisters in Christ for their actions.

14. If someone from a motorcycle club requests that you remove your vest/patch (colors) don't argue. The best response is to say "No problem" and then politely take it off and let your officer know what motorcycle club it was so they can deal with any potential problems. You normally will only get asked once.
15. If an establishment has a sign indicating "No Colors", even though your patch is not considered "colors", the vest should be removed out of respect to the other clubs and the policy for the establishment. It's only respectful to honor the house rules. You will find that patch holders from other clubs and ministries will respect The Way Riderz when visiting in our (God's) house. Motorcycle clubs that honored the "house rules" would probably be deeply offended that you didn't. Also, remember, many establishments choose to have this policy and it applies to all clubs/ministries that use any kind of patch; they do not distinguish between a MC and a RC or MM.
16. Be aware of the local motorcycle club hangouts. Do not wear your patch into a motorcycle clubhouse unless you have asked if it's okay to do so or have been invited for a "sit down" with the officers of the motorcycle club, or been invited as a motorcycle ministry member to attend a function there.
17. In regard to women who are with a MC but not in the club: Old Lady is not a negative or derogatory term; it's just a slang term commonly used. "Property Of" patches are their way of showing support for their man and the club he's in.

18. A patch holder may not and many times will not acknowledge your wife or girlfriend, especially upon the first meeting.
19. DO NOT touch or sit on a patch holder's bike unless invited to do so. Do not expect to receive an invitation.
20. A prospect can usually be identified by the back patch they are wearing. There are many different ways MC's identify prospects. They can have the rockers without the main patch. They can actually have a patch saying "PROSPECT". Some do not wear any patch because all the patch holders know who the prospects are. You want to treat a prospect or even someone you suspect is a prospect the same way you would treat a patch holder – with respect and courtesy.
21. Have absolutely no doubt that a motorcycle club is serious and many have been known to physically educate a person who shows disrespect or displays a bad attitude.
22. Be aware of the behavior and attitude of the other MM members who are with you (remember, we hold each other accountable) at events. If necessary, try to take action to avoid problems before they happen. For example, if someone appears to be getting too angry or loud and possibly disrespectful, take them aside or suggest going somewhere else until things settle down. You could also let one of the officers of the MM know about the situation. If an accident should occur in spite of your efforts when no officers are present, make sure to let them know as soon as possible. If no MM officers happen to be there, then ALL of the MM/RC members that are there need to make an attempt to take that person aside and strongly suggest that the offending MM/RC member go somewhere else to settle down.
23. Be aware that problems created in one part of the country by a RC member or issues with the RC in one area have the potential to affect RC members in other areas and states.
24. The term Brother or Bro has special meaning to a patch holder. Do not call a patch holder Brother or Bro. Their Brothers are fellow patch holders and those that have earned that term.
25. Don't ever touch any part of another club member's colors, which includes the vest or jacket it's sewn on. That is considered serious disrespect, which could cause them to aggressively educate the un-informed.