

KEYS TO EFFECTIVE ACCOUNTABILITY

THE PURPOSE OF ACCOUNTABILITY

Effective accountability should help point our eyes toward Christ and see Him as the treasure above all things (*Matthew 13:44-46*). At times, we can confuse love with permissiveness, but accountability should always involve grace and truth. Grace without truth breeds moral indifference...and truth without grace breeds self-righteous legalism. Confession, repentance, Scripture-reading & prayer are essential during any time of accountability.

During effective times of accountability, we should strive to encourage and remind one another to live-out who we are in Christ. We address our:

- **Beliefs:** The truth of God's Word vs. the lies we believe
- **Identity:** Who you are in Christ vs. what culture tells us
- **Need:** Confess our sin and our need & love for our Savior

We strive to "renew our mind" (*Romans 12:1-2*) to gain freedom from sin, as we point one another to Christ (*Isaiah 53:6, Colossians 3:16, Hebrews 3:13*).

WHAT ACCOUNTABILITY TIME LOOKS LIKE

- **Share your condition**
 - Sharing who I am and how I'm doing...really!
 - You are accountable to others
 - But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin (*1 John 1:7*).
 - Community Core Value: Live Authentically
- **Know their condition**
 - Knowing who they are and how they're doing...really!
 - Accountable for others
 - Then the Lord said to Cain, "Where is Abel your brother?" He said, "I do not know; am I my brother's keeper?" (*Genesis 4:9*).
 - Community Core Value: Pursue Relationally

WHAT ACCOUNTABILITY IS NOT:

- "Stop it!"
 - Shaming or penalizing each other into behavior modification
 - Legalism and condemnation
 - Self-help or fixing each other
 - The real "secret" to living a sin-free life
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MODELING HEALTHY ACCOUNTABILITY

1. Be Vulnerable & Humble

- The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise (*Psalm 51:17*).

2. Nurture Trust

- The words of a whisperer are like delicious morsels; they go down into the inner parts of the body (*Proverbs 18:8*).

3. Confess Sin to God & Others

- Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working (*James 5:16*).
- See also: *Psalm 32, 51:4, Proverbs 28:13, John 3:21, Proverbs 19:2; cf. 25:8, 21:5*

4. Respond with Grace & Truth in the first 30 seconds

- Grace: *Psalm 103:10, John 8, Romans 8:1*
- Truth: *John 1:14, 17:17, Proverbs 27:5-6*

5. Offer & Receive Biblical Counsel

- All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work (*2 Timothy 3:16-17*).
- See also: *Proverbs 26:11, 17:10*

6. Repentance

- Repent therefore, and turn back, that your sins may be blotted out...(*Acts 3:19*).

7. Remain Christ-Centered

- My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous (*1 John 2:1*).
- See also: *Philippians 2:13, 3:13-14*

8. Walk by the Spirit

- But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh...(*Galatians 5:16-18*).
- See also: *Galatians 2:20, 3:3, Proverbs 24:16, Philippians 3:13-14*

9. Focus on the Heart, not the Sin

- I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing (*John 15:5*).
- See also: *Hebrews 12:1-3*

10. Be Patient & Encourage One Another

- Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other... (*Colossians 3:12-17*).
 - See also: *1 Thessalonians 5:9-13, Hebrews 3:13*
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GENERAL ACCOUNTABILITY QUESTIONS:

- What can you celebrate that the Lord is doing in your life right now? What are you thankful for? (*Psalm 107:1, 1 Thessalonians 5:18*)
- What Scriptures have you been studying this week? (*Psalm 119:11, Matthew 6:33*)
 - What is the Lord teaching you? How has your relationship with Christ been changing?
- How consistent has your prayer life been this past week? (*Ephesians 6:18, Colossians 1:3*)
 - What have you been praying about?
- How have you served others and loved your neighbor this week? e.g. those in need, co-workers, friends, neighbors (*Mark 12:31, Matthew 22:39*)
- What do you need to confess/repent of from this past week before God and community? (*Psalm 51, James 5:16, 1 John 1:9*)
 - Do you understand the “trigger” for your sin struggle?
 - What emotional desires are you trying to fulfill with this sin struggle?
 - What is the “lie” in this and the truth that God promises when you trust Him?
- Is God speaking to you in an area that you find difficult to listen/act?
- Have you used your financial resources this past week to glorify God?
- Who is one person you would like to share the Gospel with or invite to church this week?
 - What is your action plan for doing so?
- Are you walking in purity (of mind, body, and heart) before the Lord? (*Psalm 51:10, 1 Corinthians 6:18-20*)
- In what ways have you stepped out in faith since we last met?
- Are the “visible” you and the “real” you consistent? (*1 John 1:7*)
- What measurable and attainable goals do you have that will challenge you to grow this week?
- What is your number one prayer request for next week?
- Have you answered these questions truthfully? (*Proverbs 27:17*)

MARRIAGE ACCOUNTABILITY QUESTIONS (*1 Peter 3:7, Ephesians 5:25-33, Philippians 2:3-4*):

- How have you spent quality, relational time with your family this past week?
 - How have you cultivated oneness with your spouse this past week?
 - Do you regularly share with your spouse what God is doing and teaching you?
 - How are you doing at praying with and for each other?
 - Husbands: how are you being the spiritual leader of your family? How are you pursuing emotional intimacy with your wife?
 - Wives: How have you showed honor and respect to your husband this week?
 - How can you serve your spouse more effectively in these areas?
 - Do you have a good pulse on how your spouse is doing this week?
 - Have you had conflict with your spouse this week? If so, how have you resolved the conflict? (*Ephesians 4:3*)
 - How have you been putting your spouses’ needs above your own this past week? (*Philippians 2:3-4*)
 - How has your tone and speech been with your spouse this week? (*Ephesians 4:29*)
 - When is your next date?
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SPOUSE-TO-SPOUSE ACCOUNTABILITY QUESTIONS (taken from Emily Loerke's blog: todaysletters.com):

- How did you feel loved this past week?
- What does your upcoming week look like?
- How would you feel most loved & encouraged in the days ahead?
- How would you best feel pursued in sex / intimacy this week?
- How can I help you this week in your pursuit of Christ?
- How can I pray for you?

PARENTING ACCOUNTABILITY QUESTIONS:

- How are you investing spiritually in your children?
- How are you doing at managing anger with your kids?
- How are you doing with disciplining your children?
- How are you going with honoring your spouse in front of your children?

Special thanks to
Watermark Community Church
Plano, TX
For providing this material
