

WHY IS ACCOUNTABILITY IMPORTANT?

Accountability to God and to one another is the foundation to be addiction-free. But what exactly does that mean? By God's grace, it's being responsible to do what is right and moral according to God's Holy Word. Accountability is one of the means God uses to bring about solid growth and maturity in our Christian walk, to bring about restoration from life-dominating issues.

Accountability to God

We need to have a deep reverence for God first. Our priorities must be God-centered and our values must be based on biblical morality. When this becomes our attitude, our life and family will be blessed and our knowledge of spiritual things will increase.

1. See Proverbs 9:10 and Psalm 115:11. **The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding. You who fear the Lord, trust in the Lord; He is their help and their shield.**
2. According to Proverbs 8:13, what should be our biblical value? **The fear of the Lord is to hate evil; pride and arrogance and the evil way and the perverse mouth I hate.**
3. What should be our attitude for restoration, and how will God bless us? See Proverbs 22:4. **By humility and the fear of the Lord are riches and honor and life.**

Obedience to God

A person who has truly been redeemed by Jesus Christ will not live a life characterized by continuous, willful sin. For restoration to take place, we must be accountable to God and obey Him. We must have a loving relationship with God Himself.

4. In order to obey God, what does He ask of us? See Deuteronomy 10:12-13. **To fear the Lord, to walk in all His ways, to love Him, to serve Him with all our heart and with all our soul, and to keep the commandments and His statutes for our good.**
5. How can God's Word help you to obey? See Psalm 119:9-11. **How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word. With my whole heart I have sought You; oh, let me not wander from Your commandments! Your word I have hidden in my heart, that I might not sin against You.**

Serving God

Restoration comes with accountability in serving God. We can do this by teaching our children about Him or declaring Him to others. Serving God also helps us to remember what God has done for us.

6. Read Deuteronomy 6:6-9 and explain in your own words what this commands. **Teach our children the ways of God, from morning to night. Also our homes should proclaim God's gospel to our neighbors. We should be a testimony of God's goodness to others.**

Accountability to One Another

Just as we are accountable to our employer on the job or accountable to our spouse in a marriage, we also need accountability for our spiritual development. However, we may be prone to resist reasoning, “It’s between me and God. It’s nobody else’s business.” Yet the Bible teaches that we as brothers and sisters in Christ are to be accountable to one another, to the degree that men are accountable to men, and women are accountable to women.

Receiving Accountability

7. See Proverbs 12:15. **The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but he who heeds counsel is wise.**
8. When receiving counsel, what does Hebrews 13:17 instruct? **Obey those who rule over you, and be submissive, for they watch out for your souls, as those who must give account. Let them do so with joy and not with grief, for that would be unprofitable for you.**
9. Without the power of the Holy Spirit and reading God’s Word, it’s impossible to stay accountable to God. See Galatians 2:20 as a reminder of who you are today. **I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.**
10. Read James 4:17 and share your biblical responsibility for restoration. **Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin.**
11. What encouragement do you see in Galatians 6:9? **And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.**

Helping others with accountability

12. What must we consider when keeping our friends accountable? See Hebrews 10:24-25. **And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.**
13. As a Christian, why is it vital to have the courage to help in someone’s accountability? See James 5:19-20. **Brethren, if anyone among you wanders from the truth, and someone turns him back, let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins.**
14. Read Galatians 6:1-5 and share what the Bible teaches about being accountable to one another. **Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. For if anyone thinks himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself. But let each one examine his own work, and then he will have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. For each one shall bear his own load.**

“So then each one of us will give an account of himself to God.” Romans 14:12

ACCOUNTABILITY FOR RESTORATION (Go over with participant)

Is there a person close to you that you can ask to be your accountability partner to help you pray when you are tempted to sin? When you first come to the realization that you have an addiction, tell someone close to you. The Bible teaches the wisdom in confessing your sin to another, so that another person can encourage you and help you in times of temptation. Choose someone you can trust and who loves you—who will be stern enough to put the following guidelines in place for you. **If you are a man, choose a man. If you are a woman, choose a woman as your accountability partner.**

Give the name and contact information of your accountability partner to your Bible study group leader.

Name: _____ Phone Number: _____

E-mail: _____

Give your Bible study group leader's name and contact information to your accountability partner.

Name: _____ Phone Number: _____

E-mail: _____

Accountability Observations

"As iron sharpens iron, so a man sharpens the countenance of his friend" (Proverbs 27:17).

Be sure your accountability partner is observing you to make certain you have not been doing things related to your addiction—24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Encourage your accountability partner to keep you stable and responsible. Also, make sure they are aware of your present and past associations to make sure you do not contact previous relationships that enabled your addiction.

Tell your accountability partner that there is zero tolerance for your addiction. This is a life-or-death situation—physically and spiritually.

"The wages of sin brings death" (Rom. 6:23).

"Sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death" (James 1:15).

Curfew

“Now the works of the flesh are evident...revelries...those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God” (Galatians 5:19-21).

The word “revelry” means late-night partying or according to the dictionary, “lively and noisy festivities, especially when these involve drinking a large amount of alcohol.” Staying out late could be a temptation for you to socialize with people who may be involved with drinking alcohol.

A good curfew is 10 pm unless it’s absolutely necessary (i.e., working, family, church function). Why? Staying out later than 10 pm leaves you open to temptation and situations that are not beneficial to overcoming your addiction. In the same way, if you need prayer, send a text instead of calling. Answering phone calls (for the accountability partner) after 10 pm could be enabling to the addict.

Ask your accountability partner to wait up for you and talk to you when you come home at night. Why? To make certain that you have not jeopardized your plan for victory that leads to restoration and wholeness.

Schedule

“A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep, so shall your poverty come on you like a prowler” (Proverbs 6:10-11).

Write a daily schedule each week and give it to your accountability partner. Why? To keep you accountable to go to work or school. This will also encourage you to go to places and meet with people who will benefit your restoration—and discourage you from going to places that will enable and prolong your addiction.

Bible Study

“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” (2 Timothy 2:15).

Replace the time that you spent on your addictions with Bible study. Grab a church bulletin and note the days and times you can attend each week. Getting addicted to Jesus will overcome your struggles.

PRACTICAL ADVICE FOR ACCOUNTABILITY

1. **Never ask or give money.** Money can never solve your problem or situation, no matter how much of an emergency or dire the situation (Proverbs 3:5-13).
2. **Do not visit places where you will be tempted.** It is wise to avoid people and places that will tempt you and lead you into your sin (Psalm 1:1-6).
3. **Erase all contact with former associates of past sinful behavior.** We recommend deleting phone/e-mail/Facebook contact with former associates who participated or encouraged a sinful life. Also, be willing to give your accountability partner access to your phone at all times to check your Internet history and communications. (Jeremiah 17:8-10).