

## Organizing Our Lives: Accountability 01-24-16 AM

*Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is man's all. For God will bring every work into judgment, including every secret thing, whether good or evil.*

Ecclesiastes 12:13-14

What is the meaning of life in one word? In our society, many would probably define it as pleasure or happiness, but those are empty pursuits. Others might point to love or service, but those are expressions of the ultimate meaning. According to Ecclesiastes 12:13-14, the meaning of life is accountability. We must found our lives in the understanding that we will ultimately be held accountability for everything.

One of the keys to success in spiritual growth (aside from being organized in our pursuit of growth and using the means we have to succeed) is accountability. The nature of accountability (answerability, blameworthiness, liability, and the expectation of account-giving) is the understanding that there needs to be an answer for our actions or inaction. Businesses understand this; the most successful “change” oriented businesses (consider Weight Watchers or Alcoholics Anonymous) are built around mutual accountability.<sup>1</sup> As Christians, we are accountable to God, to the church, and to ourselves.

Scriptures speak at length and most often of our accountability to God. We are accountable: For what is said - Matthew 12:36; For what is done - 2 Corinthians 5:10; For what can be done - James 3:13; 4:17; For what is owned - 2 Corinthians 9:6-8; For what is thought - Matthew 5:28; For what is known - James 4:17.

Scripture also speaks to our accountability in the Church. Consider the words of James 5:16 and the need to confess our sins to one another. Is it not clear that this commandment revolves around the idea of an accessible accountability to one another? What does that accountability look like? A business chart described this question as such: (1) Accepting complete responsibility for your behavior (2) Meeting/exceeding agreed upon expectations. (3) Admitting mistakes. (4) Admitting limitations of knowledge.

What about your accountability to yourself? Paul said in 2 Corinthians 13:5 that you must test and examine yourself. Do you hold yourself accountable? What do you hold yourself accountability for? The only answer is growth and maintenance. Therefore, the question of accountability turns into “do you set goals for yourself”?

Fundamentally, most people resist accountability. It is because we hate conflicts. Too, we love privacy. We think accountability means we are necessarily guilty of sinful conduct. Perhaps we have had a past experiences of bad accountability. Maybe we simply lack spiritual friendships where we are comfortable being accountable. Whatever the reason, the lack of accountability in our lives is a major reason we are not growing.

So you want to grow? The world uses tools to grow that we could learn to use as well. We ought to work on growth by goal setting. If we don't grow, we will die: *"These likewise are the ones sown on stony ground who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with gladness; and they have no root in themselves, and so endure only for a time. Afterward, when tribulation or persecution arises for the word's sake, immediately they stumble."* (Mark 4:16-17)

---

<sup>1</sup> *"Most business managers preach that the key to success is holding employees accountable for actions, but I have found that successful entrepreneurs are all about holding themselves accountable. They skip the blame and complain game, and make things happen despite major obstacles. As a startup investor, I view any evidence of a victim mentality as the kiss of death."* Forbes Magazine, April 30, 2015