

The Power Of The Accountable Man

I. Scripturally God is wanting to gather a people who are not only rooted and established in relationship to Him, but are properly related to each other in the Body Of Christ.

A. God's purpose in accountable relationships is to bring His children to maturity in Christ.

1. You have been delivered from the domain of darkness into the kingdom of God.
Colossians 1:13

2. And from this present evil age - Galatians 1:3.

a. You must not let the influence of either to press you into its mold - Romans 12:1-2

b. Instead you are to be conformed to the image of Christ - Romans 8:29.

c. You are incapable of escaping the influences of this world alone.

3. As Christians we make the mistake in overestimating the power of the will of a regenerated person.

a. You take for granted that because you know God's will, that you will do God's will. That because you have knowledge that you will automatically act on it.

b. Over and over again, I discover in my own Christian walk that no matter how much I know and how badly I may want to walk in all that I know, I cannot trust myself to actually do it.

Romans 7:14-23 - *"The law is good, then. The trouble is not with the law but with me, because I am sold into slavery, with sin as my master. I don't understand myself at all, for I really want to do what is right, but I don't do it. Instead, I do the very thing I hate. I know perfectly well that what I am doing is wrong, and my bad conscience shows that I agree that the law is good. But I can't help myself, because it is sin inside me that makes me do these evil things. I know I am rotten through and through so far as my old sinful nature is concerned. No matter which way I turn, I can't make myself do right. I want to, but I can't. When I want to do good, I don't. And when I try not to do wrong, I do it anyway. But if I am doing what I don't want to do, I am not really the one doing it; the sin within me is doing it. It seems to be a fact of life that when I want to do what is right, I inevitably do what is wrong. I love God's law with all my heart. But there is another law at work within me that is at war with my mind. This law wins the fight and makes me a slave to the sin that is still within me."* NLT

4. This is the basis for your need for godly relationships.

a. You need to be related to people who will help you, either by encouragement or correction to walk in what you know.

- b. In order to walk in what you know you need to be related to people who will confront you with the gap between your information and your walk

B. The question that has to be answered is this, “Am I my brother’s keeper?” Genesis 4:1-9.

- 1. In verse 9 - God asks Cain a question.

- a. **It’s a question that both God and Cain know the answer to.**

- b. Cain evades the truth by answering with another question.

- c. Cain’s question became God’s answer.

- 2. **I believe that God is still asking the question today, “Where is your brother?”**

- a. To answer this question we need to take time and try to locate where our brother is.

- b. Once we locate him, we have the responsibility to do something about it.**

- 1) “Responsibility” is two words put together, respond & ability.

- 2) God wants to help us develop the ability to respond redemptively to the things that we find when we locate our brother. Hebrews 12:15**

- 3) “Accountability” means that I have become personally responsible for your growth and you have become personally responsible for mine.

- 4) “Accountability” means that I give you the right to ask me about anything in my life, to meddle in my affairs, and to mind my business.**

II. Accountable relationships don't get you into something they are designed to get something into you. Accountability will release power to impart provision to four primary areas of your life.

A. Accountability will release power to provide cleansing for your life.

- 1. This provision of cleansing is released through confession.

- a. God will use your honesty to produce His reality.**

- b. God can’t change you into somebody you are pretending to be already.
1 Corinthians 5:6-7

- c. You can’t put something behind you until you face it.**

2. I John 1:7 - Truth will bring fellowship, fellowship will bring cleansing.

a. Dishonesty takes us out of the light.

b. Honesty brings us into the light - John 3:21 - *“But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what he has done has been done through God.”* (NIV)

c. Leviticus 17:11 - "The Life is in the Blood." - The life of Jesus is in His blood and the blood flows through the Body.]

1) If I cut my hand off it will die. Because it is cut off from the life that is in the blood.

2) If we cut ourselves off from the Body of Christ we will die.

d. The life and blood flows in honest fellowship. This is why the majority of us aren't clean - we are legally clean but not practically clean because we avoid one another and aren't honest with one Another.

e. Fellowship in the Lord with one another will bathe us, it will cleanse us.

f. You can't get clean by yourself - we get clean in relationships.

g. You don't know where the dirt is until you meet up with someone who is clean in that spot.

1) then they say I was cleansed in that area.

2) let me apply the blood that cleansed me to you.

B. Accountability will release power to endure the tests and temptations of your life.

1. This provision of endurance is released through encouragement

2. The Lord has given all of us the *“ministry of encouragement”*

Hebrews 10:24-25 - *“And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another-and all the more as you see the Day approaching.”* NIV

3. Hebrews 3:12-13 - *“See to it, brothers, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God. But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness.”*

a. God is telling us that it is possible for us to be so deceived by sin that our hearts will become hardened, our lives will become sinful, and we will end up again in unbelief.

b. This will cause us to fall away from the living God.

4. Falling away from God is a gradual process.

a. It's little by little, area by area.

b. Satan's tactic is to concentrate on one area at a time.

5. The Antidote for a sinful, unbelieving heart is, "daily encouragement."

a. *"But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today."*

Acts 11:23 - *"Then when he had come and witnessed the grace of God, he rejoiced and began to encourage them all with resolute heart to remain true to the Lord."*

1 Thess 4:18 - *"So then, encourage one another with these words."* TEV

1 Thess 5:11 - *"And so encourage one another and help one another, just as you are now doing."* TEV

2 Timothy 4:1-3 - *"I solemnly urge you to preach the message, to insist upon proclaiming it (whether the time is right or not), to convince, reproach, and encourage, as you teach with all patience."* TEV

b. We can't get by on once a month, what God says we need everyday.

c. We need to encourage each other to not do certain things and to start doing other things.

- **Daily encouragement will inspire hope in situations of despair.**
- It will breathe life to areas that are dying.
- **It will sustain one another's faith.**

C. Accountability will release power to produce character in your life.

1. This provision of character is released through correction.

2. If you can see how God uses correction to bless your life, then you will be one who has learned the secret of loving his critic.

a. *Proverbs 10:17* - *"He is on the path of life who heeds instruction, But he who forsakes reproof goes astray."*

“People who accept correction are on the pathway to life, but those who ignore it will lead others astray.” NLT

“People who listen when they are corrected will live, but those who will not admit that they are wrong are in danger.” TEV

- 1) **The Hebrew word for “instruction” is “muwcar” which means a verbal chastening or correction that serves as warning against actual damage.**
 - 2) The Hebrew word for “reproof” is “towkechah” which means a rebuke designed to bring correction to some aspect of your life
 - 3) **One serves as a warning the other serves as a solution.**
- b. Proverbs 12:1 - *“Whoever loves discipline loves knowledge, But he who hates reproof is stupid.”*
“Anyone who loves knowledge wants to be told when he is wrong. It is stupid to hate being corrected.” TEV
- c. Proverbs 13:10 - *“ Through presumption comes nothing but strife, But with those who receive counsel is wisdom.” NAS*

Proverbs 15:10 - “Correction is grievous unto him that forsaketh the way: and he that hateth reproof shall die.” KJV

Proverbs 13:18 - *“Poverty and shame will come to him who neglects discipline, But he who regards reproof will be honored.”*

Proverbs 15:5 - “But he who regards reproof is prudent.”

Proverbs 15:31-32 - *“He whose ear listens to the life-giving reproof will dwell among the wise. He who neglects discipline despises himself, But he who listens to reproof acquires understanding.”*

Proverbs 27:5-6 - “Better to correct someone openly than to let him think you don't care for him at all. A friend means well, even when he hurts you. But when an enemy puts his arm around your shoulder--watch out!” TEV

Proverbs 27:17 - *“People learn from one another, just as iron sharpens iron.” TEV*

Proverbs 17:10 - “An intelligent person learns more from one rebuke than a fool learns from being beaten a hundred times.” TEV

Psalms 141:5 - *“Let the godly strike me! It will be a kindness! If they reprove me, it is soothing medicine. Don't let me refuse it.” NLT*

3. If you forsake correction, you go astray; if you avoid it, you are stupid; if you

presume you don't need it, you will end up in strife; if you hate it, you will die.

4. But if you receive it, there will be wisdom and honor; you will be prudent, you will come into knowledge, you will be on the path of life, it is a sign of friendship, it's a means to learning wisdom and it is a medicine.

D. Accountability will release power to produce the unbelievable in your life.

1. This power to produce the unbelievable is released through unity.
 - a. **Even in the beginning God recognizes how powerful unity is:**
Genesis 11:6 - "the people are one, and this they begin to do: and now nothing will I)e restrained from them, which they have imagined to do." KJV
 - b. Ecc 4:9 - "Two are better than One."
 - 1) **Natural and Spiritual Phenomena - 2 yoked together produces a third**
 - 2) Deut 32:30 "I will put a 1000 to flight, 2 will put 10,000"
 - c. Matthew 18:19-20 - The Lord asked for the least amount in hopes of getting that.
 - 1) **It's easier to get a small group into unity than it is a larger one.**
 - 2) Gideon went from 32,000 to 10,000 to 300
 - 3) **All great revivals started with just a few.**
2. Any kind of unity will release power to do the unbelievable
 - a. **The unity of silence released power that fell the wall of Jericho.**
 - b. The unity of song released power that to overcome Israel's enemies in 2 Chronicles 20
 - c. **The unity of sadness and supplications released power on the day of Pentecost**
3. Colossians 3:12-14
 - a. **"bearing with one another" means to endure the problems that arise in all relationships.**
 - b. It means to learn to put up with people you can't change
 - c. **It means we need to learn to love the people you are stuck with.**
4. It's what I call "stuckitis," which is a combination of two words "stuck meaning trapped" and "itis" being the six letters you tag on to any word you want to sound impressive.

a. All of us know the claustrophobia that comes with commitment.

- 1) She is your wife, or he is your husband
- 2) **He or she is your child**
- 3) That is your church and he or she is your brother or sister in Christ.

b. Stuckitis is something we are volunteer for, All relationships require loyalty for survival.

E. There are only three ways to deal with “stuckitis” - Flee, Fight, or Forgive.

1. **Most opt to flee**

- To get out of the relationship and to start again elsewhere.
- **Though they are surprised when the condition surfaces wherever they go.**
- Real commitment doesn't leave you this option. (Church in Orlando)
- **If God led you into a relationship He knew what was awaiting you.**

2. Others fight

- **Relationships become combat zones - Tension becomes a way of life**
- They fight to vindicate themselves - They want to be right more than they want to be reconciled

3. **A few discover the on real cure for “stuckitis” forgiveness.**

4. Jesus, Himself, knew the feeling of being stuck with someone. For 3 years He ran with the same crew.

- a. How did Jesus stay devoted to these men? - How was He able to love people who were hard to like.

b. The answer to these questions are found in John 13:1-5

5. *“Just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you.”* We are to be like Jesus.

a. Oh I could never do that, the hurt is too deep, the wounds are too many. Just seeing the person causes be to cringe.

b. That's because you are looking at the wrong person - Remember, the secret of being just like Jesus is *“fixing our eyes on Him”*

c. You need to shift our glance from the one who hurt you and fix your eyes on the one who saved you.

- 1) You need to remember that Jesus gazed upon the darkest acts of your life
- 2) **Instead of recoiling in horror - He reached out in kindness**

d. Because He lives in us, you and I can do the same

6. Jesus washes our feet for two reasons.

a. The first is to give us mercy and the second is to give us a message

b. The mercy of Christ preceded our mistakes and our mercy must precede the mistakes of others

c. Those in the circle of Christ had no doubt of His love and Those in our circles should have no doubts about ours.

7. To have a heart like His means to touch the grimy parts of the people we are stuck with, washing away their unkindness with kindness.

a. A lot of us won't because we are not the guilty party, we weren't the ones who lied or cheated. You probably not - but neither was Jesus

1) **Of all the men in that room, only one was worthy of having His feet washed**

2) The one worthy of being served, served others

b. The genius of Jesus' example is that:

1) The burden of bridge-building falls on the strong one, not the weak one.

2) **The one who is innocent is the one who makes the gesture.**

3) Relationships don't thrive because the guilty are punished but because the innocent are merciful.

4. This kind of Unity doesn't come easy - it comes at a cost.

a. This kind of Unity isn't produced in good times but in bad, not in the easy times but the tough.

b. When God lets some things go wrong in your midst this is what you need to do:

Instead of griping about the problems they gathered for prayer

Instead of gossiping about each other they decided to guard one another

Instead of seeing it as a chastening, they say it as a challenge

Instead of getting depressed they got determined

Instead of blaming each other they started to build each other

Instead of splitting from one another they decided to stay with each other