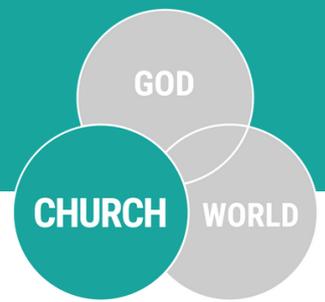


ACCOUNTABILITY

I allow open and honest feedback in my life.



WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY?

There is a small verse in the twenty-seventh chapter of Proverbs. Proverbs 27:17 says the following: “As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.” When iron is sharpened, it goes through a long process of refinement. This process removes abrasive materials that are causing the iron to dull and lose its effectiveness. When the Bible talks about iron sharpening iron, in regards to our relationships with others, it’s talking about how we can personally grow through our interactions with others. We challenge and refine each other, guided by the Holy Spirit, to point out ways in which we need to become more like Jesus.

Often times, effective accountability will lead to a time of confession. James 5:16 says, “Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.” Our times of confession with one another are meant to help drive us towards richer and fuller times of confession with God. For it is only God who can completely forgive our sins, because of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus.

What are some elements of accountability?

- Accountability must be intentional – We don’t develop a life of accountability with others, accidentally. It takes an intentional search for the right accountability partners and intentional efforts of extending trust towards them. If we do not make deliberate efforts for accountability, it will never happen, at least it will not happen effectively.
- Accountability requires patience – As with any aspect of relationship that we want to see grow and become fruitful, accountability takes time. It takes time to earn trust, to give trust and to maintain trust. So, we need to be patient. A relationship with an accountability person, will look different as it moves from its early stages to later stages.
- Accountability works best with humility. – It takes humility to be completely honest with someone. It also takes humility to respond well to someone’s vulnerability. Accountability at its core, is focused on restoration. The purpose of being accountable to someone else, is to have someone who can walk alongside us and support us, as we walk towards Jesus and Jesus’ grace and mercy. As we experience that grace and mercy, we are meant to respond with gratitude, by having lives that mirror Jesus. Accountability helps us to respond appropriately.
- Accountability happens over and over again – None of us are perfect. There will always be a need to confess our sins and refine our actions. As such, accountability is a rhythm that needs to be regularly part of our lives. We never grow out of our need for accountability.



PROCESS

Think through what you have learned and summarize it on your own words or write out how you would explain it to another person.

PRAY

- Pray that God brings someone in your life who can be a good source for accountability. Pray for wisdom and discernment as you seek out this accountability person.

LOOK

- Read Exodus chapter 18. How did Jethro hold Moses accountable? What were some of the tones, attitudes and aspects of Jethro's accountability? How did Moses respond to Jethro?

RESPOND

- Find someone who can hold you accountable. Go slowly. Work on building up trust and strengthening relationships, as you build up patterns of accountability.