

Christian Accountability - The Essential Element of Relating

Relating is an important factor in Christian accountability. It is helpful when the group shares a common bond or has been through similar experiences. People who relate to one another can empathize and share with an understanding heart. People can feel comfortable in sharing their circumstances, and can be totally accepted without fear of rejection.

Christian Accountability - Biblical Guidance

Does the Bible speak of Christian accountability? First of all, the Bible says that God holds us accountable. Romans 14:12 says, "So then each of us shall give account of himself to God." This is personal accountability.

Christians are also accountable to one another. In 1 Corinthians chapter 12, we read that Christians are all part of the same body - the body of Christ - and each member needs or belongs to the other. This Scripture suggests the importance of strong accountability between Believers. It is important for every Believer to have at least one other person in which to confide, pray with, listen to, and encourage.

Galatians 6:1-2 gives a helpful principle, "Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted. Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ." If your accountability friend has done something contrary to the Bible, you are called to confront him gently, forgive him, and comfort him. It also admonishes you to consider yourself because no one is above temptation. Another aspect of Christian accountability is encouraging each other to grow in their spiritual maturity. Hebrews 10:24 says, "And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds." 1 Thessalonians 5:11 says to, "...encourage one another and build each other up..."

Are you accountable? Do you have a friend to whom you can go? Will that person hold you accountable in your spiritual walk? Are you the type of person that people can come to when they need accountability? Christian Accountability - Personal Action

Do you want to develop Christian accountability in your life? Here are some steps to help you find an accountability friend or group:

Begin by praying for God to reveal the group of men.

Consider the possibilities: other men in your Sunday School class, Bible Study group, or other Ministry. Invite the person to lunch, meet each other's family, or talk on the phone. If it's a group, ask if you can attend a meeting to see what it's like. Get to know one another. Do you get along? Do you enjoy your time together? If you are confident that this is the right person or group, ask if they would be your accountability friend(s).

Christian Accountability - The Next Steps

Be patient. Developing an accountability friendship takes time and intentional effort. Participate in activities together and pray regularly for one another and with one another. If your friend confesses an issue, like, "I'm really having trouble spending enough time with my kids," then next time you meet, ask about that issue. This will begin a basic accountability relationship. Then you can begin to hold one another accountable for things like: Bible reading and prayer, physical habits like exercise and dieting, establishing a good witness at work, integrity issues, and so on. Remember, it is essential to keep your discussions confidential! If possible, it is wise to establish a set time where you can meet together or talk on the phone. This creates consistency and shows how much you value your accountability relationship. Perhaps when you meet, you want to do a Bible study together or share what you've been learning in your quiet times with God. This will get the discussion started.

Want to Set Up a Group?

Find 3-6 friends.

Agree on a meeting time.

Agree on a Format and List of Accountability Questions

Begin meeting!

If you need help getting a group together, let us know. Contact Pablo or anyone on the Men's Home Page Contact List.

John Wesley and Accountability in the UM:

When John Wesley began his work in the 1730's, part of his spiritual discipline was attending what he called the Class Meeting. This was his accountability group.

Here Were Some of the Questions of the Group:

What sins have you committed since our last meeting?

What temptations have you faced?

How did you escape the temptations?

What have you thought, said, or done, that you're not sure if it's a sin or not?

For more detailed information about John Wesley's accountability groups and additional discussion questions that Wesley used, see:

http://himnyc.org/Articles/jw_dscplshp.html

Where can I learn more?

For developing an accountability group that emphasizes both works of mercy (acts of compassion and justice) and works of piety (acts of worship and devotion) and that also balances the personal (compassion and devotion) and social (justice and worship), see this page from the United Methodist General Board of Discipleship:

<http://www.gbod.org/smallgroup/accountable/covenant.html>

For finding help relating to Internet Accountability, Covenanteyes.com provides a software solution that is an effective way to keep you accountable when you're surfing the web. Also has links to other good resources related to Internet accountability. www.covenanteyes.com