

Why Is Accountability So Important to God?

We see it everywhere in daily life: in court cases, on political campaigns, even in our interactions with our family, friends, and co-workers. Accountability is something that is held in high regard by many but is pretty hard to maintain, especially if you are in a higher form of authority.

Yet accountability is something God sees as very important for us to uphold, being that we are made in His likeness and co-heirs of His kingdom with His son Jesus. The Bible talks at great lengths about accountability, shown through verses and characterized in stories of those who believed in accountability, and those who did not.

As we unpack the role of accountability in our lives and walks of faith, the hope is that we can match our desires for people to be accountable for their actions and words to what we project of ourselves regularly. Don't take the mindset of "Do as I say, not as I do," but more "What I say is what I do."

Accountability: What Is It?

To examine accountability and its necessity in our lives, we need to look at the different definitions of the word from faith-based and non-faith-based perspectives.

According to Merriam-Webster Dictionary online, accountability is "the quality or state of being accountable; an obligation or willingness to accept responsibility or to account for one's actions." The definition of accountability as expressed in the Bible is from Romans 14:12: "So then each one of us shall give an account of himself to God."

In a nutshell, accountability is seen as understanding and upholding the responsibilities you have been given, or have volunteered to take, so that whatever job or task you have is completed to the best of your ability. For a child, being accountable could be making sure that homework is completed the night before school the next day. For a college student, it will be making sure to wake up and get to class on time each day. For an adult, it could be making sure to work each day at the job you were hired to do and to own up to your mistakes when you make them.

Given what Romans 14:12 states, for Christians, it is understood that when we die, we then arrive at the throne of God and must give an account of what we did with the life He gave us. If we did what was asked of God, while also accepting what Jesus did on the cross for us, the hope is our names will be in the Book of Life (Rev. 3:5) and we will hear the blessed recognition from God of, "Well done, thy good and faithful servant" (Matt. 25:23).

What Does the Bible Say about Accountability?

When discussing the nature of accountability, the Bible doesn't hold back in telling us that everything, and I mean EVERYTHING, is watched and noticed by the Lord. But before this causes you to become increasingly anxious, it is meant that nothing can be hidden from God, including what is in our hearts, our feelings, and our dreams.

When we accept Jesus's sacrifice, we do so with the knowledge that our actions and words before we were saved are forgiven by God through Jesus. The belief is that after this recognition of salvation, we will go forward in our lives with a changed heart and the sense that what we do is for the glory of the Lord more than the glory for ourselves.

This is not to say that you won't utter a curse word, do something out of pride, or judge someone unjustly. But it is to say that while before it didn't bother you to do or say something like this, you will be bothered now by these words and actions.

Romans 14:12 explains what we are to expect when we pass away from earth and appear before the throne of God, which is illustrated more through other verses of the Bible as well.

James 4:17 affirms that if you know what is right to do, especially in God's eyes, and don't do it, it is sin. This means that if God were to tell you to forgive someone and you say no, you are not only rejecting the privilege of being seen as an authentic Christian to a hurting, misguided person, but you have also rejected God and what He represents in your life.

Jesus talked about accountability in Matthew 12:36 when He stated that every idle or careless word we speak will be discussed by God to each of us on the Day of Judgment. Jesus stated this to convey that it is important to be accountable with our tongues and words, which can make or break others and ourselves, because, on the Day of Judgment, God will remind us of these words and show His happiness or displeasure.

In 1 Samuel 16:7, the Lord spoke to the prophet Samuel to tell him that while a man looks at what a person is on the outside, the Lord concentrates most on the heart. This explains that the heart reveals the true intentions of people and whether they understand the gravity of being accountable to what is asked of them, or if they are immature and not responsible enough to be accountable yet (if ever).

These verses demonstrate that when it comes to accountability, God's Word holds it in the highest esteem. You are to be an example to others of this accountability as a Christ believer.

Why Is Accountability So Important?

In society today, accountability can be seen as something desired by many but truly utilized by few. Just a look at the local news or social media will

show you people who project to be accountable but have instead shown to be otherwise when the truth is revealed.

In the eyes of God, when you become a Christian, accountability to this title of Christian is not meant as a trophy you place on your victory wall. It is meant as a role you daily strive to uphold and convey to those around you through your thoughts, actions, and words.

When we understand the impact that our thoughts, words, and actions can have on others, we know the importance of staying true to the responsibility of being a godly person. For example, we probably all know people that are true to their word in agreeing to help others or are the first to text you when you are going through a trial. This is likely someone who does more things behind the scenes for God than out in the open. We also know people who profess to be Christians in love with Christ, but their behavior toward others, enjoyment of the party life, or proneness to despair or negativity can reflect otherwise.

Proverbs 27:17 describes this belief well with the statement that as iron sharpens iron, we do the same for others' accountability when we are accountable for our actions and words and strive to do what is right.

How Can We Seek or Offer Biblical Accountability?

If we are to be truthful about wanting accountability in biblical standards, we need to realize first that it won't be easy. We live in a world that finds pleasure in pointing out the failures and mistakes of others. So if you were to go out and profess to be an accountable Christian, be prepared to have several eyes watching your every move, especially when in trials.

Galatians 6:2 recognizes the importance of accountability by encouraging us to bear one another's burdens, as this fulfills the law of Christ in loving our neighbor as we do ourselves. This means we know to be accountable for lifting and encouraging our fellow brothers and sisters at all times, knowing that they will be inspired by us and the love we have for Christ. We aren't to take on the problems of others (unless guided to be God), but more to be in prayer about it and monitoring people to see what we can do to help inspire them to continue.

1 Corinthians 1:10 also celebrates the belief in accountability, motivating people to come into agreement with one another over issues to become united in one mind and one judgment. If we are accountable for ourselves, we will begin to form the same opinion on matters and what is the fair judgment of it. If we remember who we all were before Christ and who we are now after Christ, we will be able to see where others are on their paths and know what is best to do to help them become accountable too.

Accountability as Witness to the World

Accountability, especially in this day and age, is thought of at times as something preferred but not necessary among people. However, when we look through the pages of the Bible, we see that accountability is important because it recognizes the sacrifice of Christ and conveys the sense of what it means to be a Christian.

We, as believers, are responsible to God for what we are called to do as His children to a hurting world in need of His love, grace, and guidance. When we don't take those responsibilities seriously, we are rejecting the very love that saved us from ourselves. We are also encouraging others to do the same.

Being accountable sometimes won't win you accolades or praise from others here on earth, but it will make your heavenly Father smile and, when the time comes, utter His praise to His "good and faithful servant."