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Spiritual Disciplines: Accountability

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**HANDOUT NOTES**

* **Introduction**
* **What Is Accountability?**

**Accountabil'ity, noun**: The state of being liable to answer for one's conduct; liability to give account, and to receive reward or punishment for actions.

**Account', noun**: A sum stated on paper; a registry of a debt or credit; of debts and credits, or charges; an entry in a book or on paper of things bought or sold, of payments, services etc., including the names of the parties to the transaction, date, and price or value of the thing.

**Account', verb intransitive**: 1. To render an account or relation of particulars. An officer must account with or to the Treasurer for money received.

2. To give reasons; to assign the causes; to explain;

3. To render reasons; to answer for in a responsible character.

**Jeremiah 17:9** The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?

**Genesis 8:21** … the Lord said in his heart, “… for the intention of man's heart is evil from his youth ...”

**Matthew 25:14-30** “For it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted to them his property. To one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. He who had received the five talents went at once and traded with them, and he made five talents more. So also he who had the two talents made two talents more. But he who had received the one talent went and dug in the ground and hid his master's money. Now after a long time the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them. And he who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five talents more, saying, ‘Master, you delivered to me five talents; here I have made five talents more.’ His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.’ And he also who had the two talents came forward, saying, ‘Master, you delivered to me two talents; here I have made two talents more.’ His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.’

He also who had received the one talent came forward, saying, ‘Master, I knew you to be a ***hard man***, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you scattered no seed, so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here you have what is yours.’ But his master answered him, ‘You wicked and slothful servant! You knew that I reap where I have not sown and gather where I scattered no seed? Then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received what was my own with interest. So take the talent from him and give it to him who has the ten talents. For to everyone who has will more be given, and he will have an abundance. But from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’”

* **What Does It Mean to Be Accountable to God?**

**Romans 14:12** So then each of us will give an account of himself to God.

**Hebrews 4:13** And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

**Romans 14:10b** For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God

**Ecclesiastes 12:13** The end of the matter; all has been heard. Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of man.

**John Gill**: “He calls him ‘Lord’, though he had not served him, and pretends he knew him; but if he had, he would have had a true affection for him, faith in him, and would have observed his commands; and he would also have appeared altogether lovely to him, and of an amiable character, and not in such a light as he represents him; which makes it a clear case, that he was ignorant of him, or he would never have said, that he was an hard, severe, or austere man; one very difficult of being pleased, cruel and uncompassionate to his servants, unjustly withholding from them what was due unto them, and rigorously exacting service that could not be performed by them: all which is the reverse of Christ's true character; who accepts of the meanest [smallest] services of his people: and takes what is done, though ever so little, as even a cup of cold water, given to the least of his disciples, as done to himself

is merciful and compassionate, both to the bodies and souls of men; and is not unrighteous to forget any labour of love, shown to him or his; and makes his strength perfect in the weakness of his servants, and his grace always to be sufficient for them ...”

* **What Does It Mean to Be Accountable to Our Fellow Brothers and Sisters in Christ?**

**Galatians 6:1-3** Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. For if anyone thinks he is something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself.

**1 John 1:8** If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

**Galatians 6:3** For if anyone thinks he is something, when he is nothing, he deceives himself.

* **What Are the Hallmarks of an Accountable Christian?**

The hallmarks of the accountable Christian are most notably summed up by looking at the fruit of the spirit.

**Galatians 5:22-23** But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control ....

**Proverbs 3:7** ​​​​​​​​Be not wise in your own eyes; ​​​​​​​fear the Lord, and turn away from evil. ​​​

* **Accountability as a Means for Progressive Sanctification**

**Q97. What is progressive sanctification?** Progressive sanctification is growing in holiness through obedience to the Lordship of Jesus and His word from a right heart. By grace, it is a lifelong process powered by the Holy Spirit to change us to become more like Christ.

**Charles Spurgeon**: “It is not possible for us to be divine, yet it is written that we are made ‘partakers of the divine nature.’ We cannot be precisely as God is, yet as we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly, whatever that image may be.”

**Matthew Poole**: “to be conformed to him in holiness and sufferings here, and in glory hereafter.”

**1689 Confession of Faith**: “Many storms and floods [that] arise and beat against them, yet [these trials] shall never be able to take them off that foundation and rock which by faith they are fastened upon; notwithstanding, through unbelief and the temptations of Satan, the sensible sight of the light and love of God may for a time be clouded and obscured from them, yet He is still the same, and they shall be sure to be kept by the power of God unto salvation, where they shall enjoy their purchased possession, they being engraven upon the palm of His hands, and their names having been written in the book of life from all eternity.”

**Colossians 3:9-10** … seeing that you have *put off the old self with its practices and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator.*

**2 Timothy 4:7** I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.