

DROPPING YOUR GUARD: THE VALUE OF OPEN RELATIONSHIPS

THE NECESSITY OF ACCOUNTABILITY

PROVERBS 13:10–20; ROMANS 12; 1 CORINTHIANS 5:1–3



The Heart of the Matter

Our society of isolated, distant individuals teaches a false philosophy: “Live and let live.” To those who have escaped from an oppressive, controlling government, that sounds like a haven . . . a long-lost dream realized. But when we flesh out that motto, it often leads to peril. *We need each other!* Even those who don’t think so. Even those who seem totally self-sufficient, strong, and stable. Christians are unwise when they remain out of touch and live in secrecy. Being responsible includes being accountable, not just to God but also to one another. If carried out in the power and under the control of the Holy Spirit, accountability can be one of the most secure and reassuring facets of our Christian experience.



Discovering the Way

1. Accountability: What It Is and Isn’t (Hebrews 13:16–17)

Accountability is the willingness to explain one’s actions. It requires vulnerability, availability, and honesty. Accountability turns into legalism when too severe, and when too loose, it turns into a license to sin.

2. Instruction and Examples from Scripture (Proverbs 13:10–20; Romans 12:4–12; 1 Corinthians 5:1–3; 3 John 1:9–10)

Christians are accountable to God and to each other. Paul held Peter accountable when Peter showed favoritism, and Samuel reproved Saul when he disobeyed God.



Starting Your Journey

As you begin practicing accountability, follow these three suggestions. First, stop and consider the value of accountability. Second, choose at least one person with whom you can relate deeply. Third, develop a relationship that strengthens your grip on spiritual things.



Tools for Digging Deeper



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