

## Ultimate Accountability

How can I be accountable is probably one of the biggest questions I've been asked. I'm going to share my thoughts on that today. It will take me a minute to get there, but just go with me, while I share from my journey.

Probably in college is the first time God really began dealing with me about my reliance on comfort foods above Him. I was away from home for the first time. On top of that I was on a half tuition scholarship and had opted to live in an older lower priced without a food plan. The dorm had kitchens for every four girls. This meant I had to subsist on the money that was sent to me from home. \$100/month from my parents and money here and there for others. This meant a lot of high carb foods and free meals whenever I could find them. I started gaining weight, which really wasn't good because I had no money for larger sized clothes.

It was also the first time I read all the way through the Bible. When I came to this scripture it stopped me dead in my tracks.

**1 Corinthians 6:12-13 AMP**— Everything is permissible for me, but not all things are beneficial. Everything is permissible for me, but I will not be enslaved by anything, and brought under its power, allowing it to

control me. Food is for the stomach and the stomach for food, but God will do away with both of them.

This passage goes on to talk about premarital sex but because it mentioned food in there, it caused me to go over and over it often. Even though I was well under 200 lbs then, I still knew even 10 a year could be disastrous after 10, 20 or 30 years. Since I hadn't really admitted yet to anyone that I had a problem, I had literally NO accountability on this issue. Still God was at work through His word.

Let's look at what this scripture really means.

In his commentary, Matthew Henry says, Christians should not barely consider what is in itself lawful to be done, but what is fit for them to do, considering their profession, character, relations, and hopes: they should be very careful that by carrying this maxim too far they be not brought into bondage, either to a crafty deceiver or a carnal inclination."

"All things are lawful for me, but not all things are profitable. All things are lawful but I will not be mastered by anything." For something to be "lawful", as Paul puts it, means there is not an express scripture that lays out what each person should do in a given situation. However if we willfully put ourselves under the power of anything other than God, that thing, person or substance becomes our Master, not God. We are under grace, not law. We must follow the intent of the Scriptures. In this case,

if we put ourselves under the power of any bodily appetite, we are choosing not to follow Christ.

Paul's particular statement that food is for the stomach and the stomach for food meant that the stomach is made to receive the foods we need to survive. God gave us that part for a very ordinary purpose—to receive fuel to operate our bodies. It was not made to enslave me. So if I am in danger of being subjected to my stomach and appetite, I am in danger of making my stomach my god (Phil. 3:19). To break that power of the specific foods that I've allowed to master me, I need to abstain whatever kinds of foods have become my master.

There is the distinct message in the rest of this passage that if we are making our stomach our god, we are putting all our eggs in the wrong basket because one day neither of these will be needed.

I was in a Christian college. I was a Religion and Journalism major. In other words, I learned how to study the Bible and I got a lot of head knowledge. However, there is a difference between KNOWING what is right and DOING what is right. Even though I was pretty sure I was well on the way to food becoming my master, I hadn't yet admitted it. And therefore, I was not accountable to anyone for my weaknesses or my strengths.

This is so necessary to understand. Until we admit we have a problem, admit it to God, surrender its hold on us, allow God to give us an action

plan and begin to follow that plan, we have not entered the ultimate stage of accountability. We are simply in denial.

We are accountable for two things. We are accountable for our weaknesses and failures. And we are accountable for our gifts and personal strengths that God has given us.

Utilizing our gifts and personal strengths leading to following our destiny, will become easier if we admit our weaknesses and failures and ask for help to get through the difficulties. This is impossible without accountability. First and foremost we must be accountable to God.

Hebrew 4:12-13 NLT

<sup>12</sup> For the word of God is alive and powerful. It is sharper than the sharpest two-edged sword, cutting between soul and spirit, between joint and marrow. It exposes our innermost thoughts and desires. <sup>13</sup> Nothing in all creation is hidden from God. Everything is naked and exposed before his eyes, and he is the one to whom we are accountable.

I can still hear Grandma singing the little SS song I learned in the one-room country church she and papaw attended faithfully. "Be careful little mouth what you say (or eat), Be careful little mouth what you say (or eat), 'cause the Father up above is looking down in Love. Be careful little mouth what you say (or eat)." I wish I had learned it as "eat"

because then I might have understand the true meaning of this for MY life.

God sees me every minute every day. He knows what I'm doing. But it's not so He can punish me, but it's to help keep me accountable to Him for what I should be doing (my starts, my yeses) and what I shouldn't be doing (my stops, my nos). There are two pieces to our accountability and yet, we always focus only on one piece—being accountable for what we did wrong and getting our 30 lashes from God.

When will we learn that God does not operate that way? He's not mad at you or me. He is madly in love with us. He's madly in love with the one who is following Him diligently. He's madly in love with the ones of us who mess up all the time. He's even madly in love with the non-Christian. As a matter of fact, that's the person He focuses everything on. He helps us, blesses us so we can be a blessing to them, to show them His perfect love so they will come to Him. We each have our part to play in this great Kingdom plan. Everyone of us is vitally important to His plan. He has a purpose for each of us to play in the Kingdom of God here on earth. We are accountable to Jesus as our high priest for how we follow through on our purpose.

**Hebrews 4:14-16 AMP** <sup>1</sup>“So then, since we have a great High Priest who has entered heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold **fast to our confession of faith and cling tenaciously to our absolute trust in Him as Savior.**

“For we do not have a High Priest who is unable to sympathize *and* understand our weaknesses *and* temptations, but One who has been tempted, knowing exactly how it feels to be human, in every respect as *we are, yet* without committing any sin.

“Therefore let us, with privilege, approach the throne of grace, the throne of God’s gracious favor with confidence *and* without fear, so that we may receive mercy, **for our failures**, and find His amazing grace to help in time of need, an appropriate blessing, coming just at the right moment.”

We do not have to be afraid to admit our failures to Him. Remember, “His grace is enough. It’s all we need. His power comes into its own in our weakness.” 2 Cor 12:9 MSG

It’s when we fail and immediately admit it to our accountability partner, Jesus, the one who understands because He knows exactly how it feels to be human, that grace and forgiveness bring us back into right relationship with Him and back on track to our destiny.

We are all different. We all have different things to be accountable to God for. We all hear from Him differently. We all follow-through differently. Paul goes on to say in 1 Corinthians 7:17 AMP, **“Let each one live the life which the Lord has assigned him, and to which God has called him, for each person is unique and is accountable for his choices and conduct, let him walk in this way.**

Romans 14:12 NLT— Yes, each of us will give a personal account to God.

By now you get my point. We are accountable to God and in the end that is the only One we are accountable to. However, we are all here in this group to learn how to do what we really want to do, which is lose weight, when in the moment of temptation, we many times go against that. Many of us need ways to be accountable to ourselves, a mentor who has been there, others on the journey and God. So let me deal with each of these.

### **ACCOUNTABLE TO OURSELVES**

We must be accountable to ourselves or we will not be accountable to anyone else, including God. If we are waiting for a booming voice from heaven saying DROP THE COOKIE, it's not going to happen. God doesn't work that way.

I'm convinced most of us don't really want to know where we are on the journey. We join a weight loss group HOPING a miracle will happen and just because we forked out money for the group something magical will happen and we will begin losing weight or God will hear us and we'll immediately drop 10 lbs. I will tell you I've seen miraculous things happen in my life and the lives of others who are committed to God and to their own personal journey, but nothing happens without hard work. So here is my five-step accountability plan.

### **Step One: Knowledge Not Denial.**

This may seem like a “duh” step, but many avoid the scale and see it as a monster looming to devour them. The scale is your best tool to help keep you accountable. Don’t ignore it. Weigh every day. Know where you are on your journey. Don’t beat yourself up if you gained, just understand by using the next steps what you did or didn’t do. Know that weight fluctuates because of a number of reasons, calorie intake is just one of them. It may be the time of day you ate, how often you ate, the types of food you ate, how much you moved during the day, stress and lack of communication and intentional time with God, lack of sleep, the amount of sodium, sugar, protein, fiber, fats you ate. Keep a daily journal with food intake, amount of water and other beverages, how you felt, amount of rest, level of stress, amount of exercise and your weight.

### **Step Two: Have a plan and follow it.**

We’ve talked about asking God to help you develop what your lifestyle change plan should be. Write this down and include number of calories, protein, carbs, fat, sugar, fiber, water you will consume each day. How much exercise will you do each week? How much sleep will you get each day? How much intentional time alone with God will you do each day? Write down everything that will go into your day. Evaluate each day by these criteria. Myfitnesspal.com or other online apps are great for tracking food intake, water and exercise. Your daily journal should track how you felt that day, stress and other feels, and your time with God.

### **Step three: Evaluate**



Did you follow the plan? What helped you do that? If you didn't, where did you fail? Admit to God where you failed. Ask for forgiveness. Ask God what you can you do next time to fix that. You may know immediately what you need to do. Confess it to God and commit anew to do that.

#### **Step Four: Make Changes**

Tweak your plan or add a new stop-start to address what you need to do. If you had a victory, celebrate that in some non-food way. The group is designed for your successes and your failures so feel free to post there for kudos and encouragement every day!

#### **Step Five: Surrender**

Surrender each area of weakness to God again. Remember why you are on this journey and thank Him for His grace that has brought you this far knowing that He who began a good work in you will complete it in His time.

#### **ACCOUNTABILITY TO YOUR GROUP**

The best way to be accountable to your group is to stay in touch. To me an online group is the best because it is open for posting any time and in any time zone and you don't even have to get dressed, get in your car and to there. All you have to do is post. Post your victories and your defeats. Be real. Be vulnerable. Let others come alongside you. Everyone is going through much of the same problems and have the similar issues. You are never alone. Post your victories to encourage yourself and

others. Post your defeats to get prayer and encouragement. Life happens. You have a great team pulling for you. You are not alone. You have God with you and you have this group.

### **ACCOUNTABLE TO YOUR COACH**

I love being your coach. However, I can't help you if you never post. So you can be accountable to me by watching the teaching videos, participating in calls, asking questions and doing the action steps. I like every post I read because that helps me keep my place in the group. It's my way of being accountable to you. I pray over my answers and discuss it with the Master before He gives me a response. Sometimes a more indepth response will come through a video. Many times teaching videos come from questions from various individuals. It helps me to know the pulse of the group and what issues you need me to address if you post. Being silent is not being accountable. I want to hear from you.

### **ACCOUNTABLE TO GOD**

God wants to hear from you. He longs to hear from you. He's waiting patiently to hear from you. He's waiting for you ask for His help. He's waiting to see if this time you really are surrendering everything to Him.

Because then, He can lead you to more than you can ask, think or dream in your wildest imaginations.

I'm living proof. 260 pounds gone. That's something I still have a hard

time wrapping my brain around. And He promises that He will do greater things than this.

Here's the truth, God is our ultimate accountability. He always keeps His promises to us. He sees those as non-negotiable contracts. We must see our promises in the same way. We've made a contract between us and God. We must keep our agreements with ourselves and with God. He is the final authority, the only Voice that matters. He is our ultimate accountability partner.

**Action Step:** Spend some time sharing with God your greatest victory and biggest defeat for this day. Then, listen to His loving response. Go to the FB Group and post that same thing and any insights you have about that. Determine to be accountable to God, your group and your coach each day.