



## **ACCOUNTABILITY: INSURANCE FOR YOUR INTEGRITY**

**By Kameel Majdali**



Why did this have happen?:

- Why did the church treasurer run off with the Lord's money?
- Why did the pastor who was saved and delivered in a spectacular manner, return to his former sinful lifestyle?
- Why did the handsome evangelist leave his beautiful wife and children to pursue a plain, troubled woman?
- Why, indeed?

Underscoring these and many more incidents is a simple common denominator. Somehow, somewhere, the individual failed to be accountable. They thought they could continue on their pathway, in the dark, with impunity. Lacking both the fear of God and man, they continued to pursue their personal passion until someone turned on the lights.

Accountability is more than just a good idea. It is a Biblical principle that will protect and defend you. Far from being an intrusion to your lifestyle or restraint upon personal freedom, accountability sets boundaries for the wayward and keeps honest people honest. It is an insurance policy for our integrity.

The unaccountable leader is a disaster waiting to happen. A so-called "successful" pastor, with a thriving church, was asked the question, "To whom are you accountable?" Taking an immediate dislike to the question, he snapped back "I am accountable to myself." Within a few years, he had left the church, the ministry, and his family. Unfortunately, he is not alone in either attitude or outcome.

### What is Accountability?

In short, it means being responsible and answerable for your actions. You do everything as if someone is watching at all times...for indeed, Someone is! Moses to Jethro, Ruth to Naomi, David to Nathan, the 12 to Jesus, and Timothy to Paul, all learned to answer for their actions as part of their development in God. The purpose is not to pry, intrude or embarrass an individual, but, on the contrary, to monitor behavior, encourage progress, prevent backsliding, and bring restoration. Accountability is like a clean windshield, rear view and side mirrors, which help us see the complete picture and get us safely to our destination.

Romans 14:12 says "*So then each of us shall give account (logos) to God.*" The word "logos" normally means (written) Word of God. Here it means an account which one gives by word of mouth. Thus, our mouth is going to be used to shed light on our actions. Better to let you to shed light on your own actions rather than wait for others to do it—usually at an inopportune time.

## Under the Microscope

How does God see accountability? It can be described at three levels:

1. **Accountability is Spiritual:** Pastors are committed to the spiritual welfare of God's people and should be fully aware that they will one day have to give an account for their actions (Hebrews 13:17). Timothy was to be held accountable by allowing everyone to see his spiritual and ministerial progress (I Timothy 4:15). Accountability to God and His representatives is part of the process of being a spiritual man or woman of God.
2. **Accountability is Desirable:** The protective side of accountability should be highlighted, since it is an excellent means of not going astray. Jesus said we shall know the truth and the truth shall set us free (John 8:32). Accountability is giving and receiving the truth about ourselves and actions and, though it can be awkward, convicting, and even stinging, ultimately it is liberating. When wisely exercised, it and loving confrontation can help win back a wayward believer (Matthew 18:15 and Luke 17:3).
3. **Accountability is Inevitable:** Make no mistake: accountability is going to happen. It is more inevitable than death and taxes. God is going to judge our work (II Chr 19:5-10); He will punish sin and reward righteousness (Ez 18:20,30), people will have to give an account on the Day of Judgment for every idle word they speak (Matthew 12:36) while believers will stand before the Judgment Seat of Christ (II Cor 5:10) to give account for the deeds done during their earthly life.

It is possible to postpone accountability, like the driver who eluded police during a high speed chase, the war criminal who escaped the tribunal by living anonymously half way around the world, or the crooked businessman who left town to avoid prosecution. Postpone—but not escape, because accountability is inevitable. Many try to run from God Himself, but He await them at the end of the track. Hebrews 4:13 says “*And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account.*”

## Accountability in Practice

**Everyone needs a bottom line of some sort; everyone needs to be responsible, accountable to whomever it is they are serving.** Bob Buford

Find a respected, trustworthy, spiritual individual outside your circle, who has no vested interests in your situation. Give them the right to speak into your life. Be open to their comments and correction, and be willing to answer to them for your actions. This is especially imperative if you are struggling with an area of your life.

## MAJDALI: Accountability--Insurance for Your Integrity

The basic principle to bear in mind is: whatever you do personally, spiritually, or professionally, be prepared to give an account. If you find yourself doing something that would cause you shame were it known—then integrity demands “Stop doing it.” If you cannot stop, then seek help. If you face a sin problem or life-controlling habit, accountability is absolutely indispensable. Let the mentor or accountability person set the parameters. Be prepared to tell the truth...even if it hurts or you risk a personal rebuke *“Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful”* (Proverbs 27:6).

Some leaders may think they are “accountable enough” because they have a Board, however experience shows that structures alone are not enough. Devious individuals are masters of circumventing accountability by controlling and limiting information. That is why accountability starts with a ready and willing heart—an individual who chooses to live like the public example they’re suppose to be and cultivates a culture of transparency among peers and followers. Accountable people are communicative people. They let relevant parties know what is happening...and not just superiors. They never bristle when asked what they are doing and why. They are consultative, not sneaky; open-hearted, not guarded; bright eyed, not sullen and moody.

Accountability is not for the embattled ego or the faint-hearted. It is for the person who embraces the calling to be a “man or woman of God.” By it we can attain to the marvelous status of “overcomer,” to whom God will give us all things (Rev. 21:7 KJV).