

# GRACE BIBLE CHURCH LORTON

## Biblical Accountability

### Why Accountability?

We need help. This isn't a result of the Fall either, it's a result of Creation. God created us to be in need of His help, first-and-foremost, and to need help from each other (Gen. 2:18). We were created to need help. In fact, to resist help, is to act counter to God's creation. To resist help is to lean into our stubborn fallenness, but to pursue and receive help is to lean into the way in which we were created. The truth is, there's transformative grace found in the community of believers that God has lovingly placed us in. We know this to be true in light of the many "one another" commands in the New Testament. As we share life with other believers, God the Father gives each of us grace to come alongside one another to encourage, exhort, instruct, teach, bear one another's burdens, love one another, and so much more. Below is a just a sampling of these "one another" commands:

- Edify (build up) one another.....Rom. 14:19
- Instruct (admonish) one another.....Rom. 15:14; Col. 3:16
- Carry the burdens of one another.....Gal. 6:2
- Bear with one another.....Eph. 4:2; Col. 3:13
- Encourage one another.....1 Thess. 4:18; 5:11; Heb. 10:25
- Spur one another to good deeds.....Hebrews 10:24
- Confessing sin and praying for one another.....James 5:16

### Key Principles for Accountability

#### With the Gospel

The Gospel isn't just for unbelievers, it's also for believers. The Gospel is the source of life from start to finish. We must not move beyond the Gospel when encouraging those that we're in accountability with. The Gospel is where we find grace for ongoing faith, forgiveness, repentance, and our ongoing secure right standing with God, just to name a few of the gospel's glorious benefits. (e.g. Rom. 1:15-17; Gal 2:15-16; Eph. 2:4-10; Col. 1:13-14)

#### By God's Grace

We pursue obedience to God and Christ-like change by God's enabling grace. We must not pursue change in a moralistic and graceless way. Yes, we must put forth godly effort, but we do so by God's grace working in and empowering us to do so. (e.g. 1 Cor. 15:10; 2 Cor. 3:18; Phil. 2:12-13)

#### Aim for The Heart

The heart is the target when pursuing real long-lasting change. The Bible says that the heart is the "causal core" of our being. It is from our hearts why we do, think, speak, love, desire, and hate. (e.g. Deut. 6:4-9, 30:6; Jer. 31:31-34; Matt. 12:33-37; Mark 7:14-23)

#### With Humility

We enter into accountability with humility, knowing that we too are sinners in need of more change. What's more, we know our own sin *way more* than we know others, so we can easily say with Paul, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost" (1 Tim. 1:15). (e.g. Luke 6:37-42; Phil. 3:12; 1 Peter 5:5bc)

#### With Honesty

If we are not willing to be honest, then we will not receive the help that we really need. (e.g. Col. 3:9; James 4:6)

### **With Love**

One of *the* distinguishing marks of a disciple of Jesus is their genuine, Christ-like, selfless love for others. And love always expresses itself in action that is directed for the good of others. (e.g. Matt. 22:36-40; John 13:35; 1 Cor. 13:1-7; Eph. 4:1-2; 1 John 4:19-21)

### **Without Sinful Judgment**

One of the most detrimental things we can do relationally is to sinfully judge another person. By God's grace, we must not make sinful or ungracious judgements. Rather, we should try to humbly discern by asking good questions. (e.g. Luke 6:37-42; Rom. 14:13)

### **With Discretion**

We need to be a "safe place" for people to share their burdens and sins, so that they will be willing to share and then receive help. (i.e. Prov. 17:9)

## **Questions to Consider in Accountability**

Remember the above principles when working through these questions. Additionally, our engagement with the answers to these questions should be in a spirit of gentleness, based in Scripture, and saturated with the Gospel.

1. Are you in the Word every day?
  - a. What has God been teaching you?
2. How is your prayer life?
  - a. How have you been encouraged in your praying?
3. Are you pursuing sexual purity? How are you struggling?
4. How are you doing in your marriage/singleness?
5. How are you doing in the area of generosity with your time, talents, and treasure?
6. What's your biggest struggle/temptation right now?
7. Is there an area of your life in which you are fighting discouragement?
8. Are there areas of your life or in your heart that are hindering your spiritual growth?