

Accountability Group Structure

Questions to Consider

1. Have I dealt in integrity with all my work and business relationships?
2. Have I harbored a spirit of unforgiveness or grudge bearing against anyone? Do my actions agree with the answer I just gave?
3. Is there any unconfessed sin in my life that I am not willing to deal with?
4. Have I maintained purity with the opposite sex in all areas of my life?
5. Have I viewed any immoral material, or fallen to lust?
6. Have I sinned this past week, especially in any besetting or habitual way?
7. Have I faithfully met my financial responsibility before God?
8. Has my devotional/prayer life been consistent and meaningful?
9. Have I invested time and energy in my family in recreation, conversation, and spiritual instruction?
10. Have I lied or misrepresented the truth in any way which I have not confessed and made right?
11. Has my thought life honored God?
12. Is my conversation sound? Have my talk, jokes, opinions, and expressions been consistent with a Christ-like commitment?
13. Do I seek opportunities to share my faith in Christ? Did I share out of love or out of guilt?
14. Do I have a purpose for living life? What have I been doing to find/fulfill it?
15. Have I just lied in any of these areas?

Misconceptions about accountability:

- It is punishment for those who can't quite make it on their own.
- That it is something to be feared.
- Those who need accountability are somehow less Godly than I am. (You see, we are all accountable. Accountability to God is unavoidable. Furthermore, accountability to our brothers is not only a fact, it is a command. To the extent that we acknowledge it and avail ourselves of its benefits is the extent to which we desire God's blessing. See list of Scriptures Goals point 3, which advocate accountability and mutual exhortation)

Suggested accountability group setup:

1. This is a program comprised of any member of the congregation that desires to be part of a group for the purpose of spiritual growth. Groups are not to be mixed genders.
2. Groups should be set up by a church leader or loyal lay member. I might suggest that a leader be assigned for each group simply to help things flow more smoothly. Thought should be taken in regards to personalities, family ties, and any other factors so as to maximize openness and stability among the groups.
3. Groups are to be reassigned once every year or so, with a goal to avoid a tendency towards cliques. This is a voluntary program. For those who choose to join, please don't look down on those who do not. For those who don't join, please don't feel threatened by those who do. Each person is responsible for a mature and Christ-like response within themselves.
4. Each group of three or four finds a mutually acceptable time and place to meet with the other members of their group. All groups need not meet on the same day or time.

Structure of the meeting:

- The Group Leader arranges for each member to take a turn leading out.
1. The Meeting Leader asks the Questions and each one answers the question in turn. It's up to each group whether the whole list of questions is asked every single meeting. It can get pretty grueling if you use the whole list every time.
 2. Share about victories as well as defeats. Share the exciting things the Lord is doing in your life.
 3. You may also use the Topical Memory System published by NAVPRESS. This meeting was also a time to check up on how our Bible memorization was progressing.
 4. Prayer is an important element of these times together. Pray for your families, the others in the group, pastors, brothers and sisters in the church, etc.
 5. Laugh Together. If we're always serious when we get together, it can turn into something we dread, almost like a physical exam.
 6. **There is much value in planning a general assembly of all the men involved in the accountability groups at regular intervals for a Bible or book study, outside speaker, or some sort of group encouragement. Have coffee and donuts if possible. Start with fellowship. Follow that with an address to the whole group. Then break up into small groups (with leaders assigned for each small group) for discussion of the material shared and prayer time.**

Make the Groups successful:

1. Develop the commitment to Agape Love. That no matter what happens, you are able to choose to love your brother, in action and motive, as well as word.
2. Be humble enough to expose your weakest areas; don't defend yourself in the group. Then accept the reproof that follows.
3. **BE CONFIDENTIAL**-- Why bother adding the sin of gossip and pride to the list of things we need to confess. Note: please do not repeat anything personal or anything that would hurt another person, to anyone outside your group in any form whatsoever. (i.e. Prayer request, concern, etc.) If you feel someone needs to know, please encourage that person who has the struggle to share his struggle with the person that needs to know. A general overview of the meeting as well as one's own personal struggles may be shared with your own spouse, but not the struggles of another individual in the group.

Goals of the Group

1. Set up Spiritual Goals for yourself, your family, and the church. Keep your eyes on them. Review the goals frequently.
2. Encourage each group member find a way to minister to others in a spiritual outlet.
3. Realize the purpose of the group is simply to develop and encourage openness in my own life with the rest of the church. Our goal needs to be that the focus of conversations would shift from the things of this world to the things of the Lord. It assists in fulfilling the commands to exhort, care for, and share with each other (Hebrews 3:13, James 5:16, 1 Thess. 5:11-14, Gal 6:1-3, Hebrews 10:24-25, Romans 12:1-2, 1 Cor. 4:16, 2 Cor 1:4, 2 Cor. 2:7-8, 1 Thess. 4:17-18, 2 Thess 2:17, 2 Tim 4:2, Titus 2:6, Romans 12:9-16, and many more).
4. **Many, many of our people are very lonely. Here is a structured way to address that issue and begin building meaningful relationships within the congregation.**