

accountability. He lied to his leader, Elisha and in his leader’s name. He could have been forthright with Elisha and asked forgiveness. It is always better to be honest with one’s actions.

4. David
2 Samuel 12:13

And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the LORD. And Nathan said unto David, The LORD also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die. When God’s prophet caught David in sin (from verse 1), David was not defensive, he was quick to acknowledge his wrongdoing against Bathsheba and Uriah.

5. Judas
Judas endangered himself due to lack of accountability. He kept stealing and thought that Jesus wasn't aware.
John 12:3-6
3 Then took Mary a pound of ointment of spikenard, very costly, and anointed the feet of Jesus, and wiped his feet with her hair: and the house was filled with the odour of the ointment. 4 Then saith one of his disciples, Judas Iscariot, Simon's son , which should betray him, 5 Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and given to the poor? 6 This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein.


Judas had a bad habit the Lord could have helped him with. He chose to keep quiet and later ended up selling his own leader. That bad habit was all that Satan needed to take advantage of to eventually destroy him. Perhaps if he had chosen the path of honesty and sincerity, he would have thrived as a servant of God, and we would be speaking of his exploits today.
God ordained accountability in order to enable the believer to have help as they pursue growth in their Christian walk. Accountability is a safeguard against the wiles of the enemy. If we choose to be accountable in every area of our lives, it doesn’t matter what Satan attempts to do to sway us, he will always lose.

Satan only thrives in darkness, thus his voice will always nudge us to hide things and not bring it to the light. Accountability demands that we always bring things to the light, so that the enemy's plan may always fail.
Regardless of your upbringing and background, you should lose the attitude of being independent minded in the local church. God did not call you to be a lone wolf.

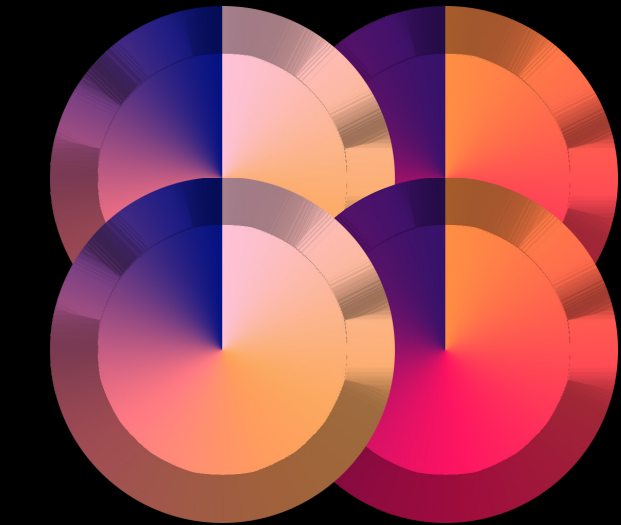
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**THE CULTURE OF
ACCOUNTABILITY**

The local church is God’s big idea.
Psalm 68:6
God setteth the solitary in families: He bringeth out those which are bound with chains: But the rebellious dwell in a dry land.
Upon salvation, we became members of God’s household – the universal church and the family of the local church.

Matthew 28:18-20
And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. 19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

The believer is a disciple receiving training and instruction in the local church.

WHO TEACHES AND TRAINS US?
Jeremiah 3:15
and I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding.
Ephesians 4:8,11-14
8 Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, And gave gifts unto men. 11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; 12 for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

God ordains and gives us leaders to administer this training for the work of ministry, that is, His plan for the earth to see men saved and grounded in the truth of the word.
These leaders are Pastors and their associates like cell and branch leaders to whom we are expected to submit.
This training – discipleship – is for life. This means that at every point in the local church, you will be led. Even when you serve in a position of leadership, somebody else will lead you as well.

1 Peter 5:2-3 (NKJV)
Be shepherds of God’s flock that is under your care, watching over them—not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; 3 not pursuing dishonest gain, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock.
Acts 20:28
Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.
These leaders have oversight over us. They shepherd us to ensure we are well fed and stand perfect and complete in God’s plan.

WHAT SHOULD OUR ATTITUDE BE TOWARDS THESE LEADERS?
Hebrews 13:7
Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation. We are to be mindful of those that God has set over us to lead and guide us.
Matthew 18:2-4
And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, 3 and said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. 4 Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

As a disciple, one must always see oneself as a child, someone who is ready to be trained, corrected, and taught. A default state of mind should be that your spiritual leader is wiser than you. He/she could be your age-mate, family member, or of the same social status as you but he/she is over you in the Lord. This means that you defer to their judgment. So you must trust that your leader can lead you.
Hebrews 13:17
Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.

In the scriptures, we are instructed to obey and submit ourselves to our leaders. Obedience has to do with the act and submission, the heart. Our leaders have to be able to give account for us. Submission thus demands that we be fully accountable. Accountability means you are carrying your leader along with every detail and decision of your life. You don’t just inform them of the outcome but the process too. Your leader should be able to account for your whereabouts as well.

Being accountable involves making the decision to be open, honest and vulnerable to your spiritual leaders. It means you are not hiding information from your leader. Much as your leader can be privy to certain information about you supernaturally, it has never been God’s plan or desire that this is the way they should find out things about you. You must be upfront with what is happening in your life.

Accountability is not grace, it’s a decision you make. It is for your sanity and safety.

One of the reasons God has given us leaders in the local church is so that they can help us get it right whenever we are about to miss it. Therefore you shouldn’t hide your struggles from your leader. Honesty enables you to get the help you need to overcome that struggle. Your leaders are equipped with wisdom, insight, foresight, and experience to help you navigate the seasons of life.

It becomes extremely difficult for them to carry out this responsibility if we choose not to be accountable. The shepherd is able to take full responsibility over the sheep in his care, because these sheep are by nature, fully submitted to his shepherding oversight. Your leader can only watch (account for) you if you submit yourself. You cannot call somebody your leader if you are not submitted to them. You cannot have a leader if you are not following. That you are a member of a church or group does not mean you are being pastored or led.

Submission is voluntary so the leader cannot force you to submit. Though it is true that there are those who have been hurt by some ill-trained and manipulative leaders, God's wisdom cannot change. God will simply heal our wounds, equip us with discernment, and lead us to submit to those who will never take advantage of our vulnerabilities. The truth is, many true and honest leaders like this still exist today.

Examples of accountability
The scriptures contain good and bad examples of accountability.
1. The disciples of Jesus.
Luke 10:1,17
After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come. 17 And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name.

The 70 were sent by the Lord to preach, teach and heal the sick and they came back and joyfully gave account of their work to Jesus. We ought to be accountable for spiritual activities like outreaches.

2. Ananias and Sapphira
Acts 5:1-5,8-10
1 But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession, 2 and kept back part of the price, his wife also being privy to it , and brought a certain part, and laid it at the apostles' feet. 3 But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land? 4 Whiles it remained, was it not thine own? and after it was sold, was it not in thine own power? why hast thou conceived this thing in thine heart? thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God. 5 And Ananias hearing these words fell down, and gave up the ghost: and great fear came on all them that heard these things.

Ananias and Sapphira are a bad example of accountability. They lied to their leader, Peter. Submission and accountability implies you don’t lie to your leader. Half truths and exaggerations are lies too. Your leader is God’s voice over your life. God set them over you. Lying to them is lying to God and is unprofitable for you.

3. Gehazi
2 Kings 5:20, 25-27
20 But Gehazi, the servant of Elisha the man of God, said, Behold, my master hath spared Naaman this Syrian, in not receiving at his hands that which he brought: but, as the LORD liveth, I will run after him, and take somewhat of him. 22 And he said, All is well. My master hath sent me, saying, Behold, even now there be come to me from mount Ephraim two young men of the sons of the prophets: give them, I pray thee, a talent of silver; and two changes of garments. 25 But he went in, and stood before his master. And Elisha said unto him, Whence comest thou , Gehazi? And he said, Thy servant went no whither. 26 And he said unto him, Went not mine heart with thee , when the man turned again from his chariot to meet thee? Is it a time to receive money, and to receive garments, and oliveyards, and vineyards, and sheep, and oxen, and menservants, and maidservants? 27 The leprosy therefore of Naaman shall cleave unto thee, and unto thy seed for ever. And he went out from his presence a leper as white as snow.
From Verse 20, we see Gehazi as another bad example of submission and