

WATER Lesson 6: Accountability



- Q: Have you ever made New Year's resolutions? Did you make your goal? Why do you think so many people fail to follow through with their resolutions?** Setting goals is a great idea, but unless we have the willpower or some accountability we will eventually give in to the desire to give up. When we get tired we question why we are even making the effort to change and we start to justify easing up or letting go of the original plan. When the going gets tough, many people just give up! We need to have a plan with a built-in strategy for success. One way that we can do that is through accountability.
- Q: Read Ephesians 4:14-16. How have you seen your involvement at church help you to grow in your faith on a personal level?** Being involved at church will help you to apply what you believe which in turn solidifies your faith. Serving, learning, sharing your faith, inviting people to church, getting baptized, joining a small group, or sharing your testimony can all be ways to stretch yourself - invigorating the flame of God's Spirit within you.
- Q: Looking back on your life, what has helped you to grow in your faith the most?** For some people it was a transformational experience. For others it was a special relationship or group. Some of us might remember a class, a sermon, our baptism, or maybe an event or mission trip where God really did a great work on our heart. There isn't one right answer to this question because God speaks to each of us in different ways and reaches into our lives in a manner that speaks to us where we are at.
- Q: Look at Proverbs 27:17. Is it possible to grow in faith without being accountable to other Christians? Why is accountability so important?** There are some Christians that are independently strong and rely upon God for strength, but for most of us we need other people to build us up, to point us in the right direction, and to kick us in the rear if we need it from time to time! Accountability from someone who cares about us bolsters our faith in God and in our ability to achieve success in our lives. When we feel alone we can lose the drive to thrive because if I don't really care to press on, what does it matter? Accountability reminds us that someone cares and our goals do matter.
- Q: During His earthly ministry, Jesus allowed some people to be closer to Him than others. Aren't we called to love everyone? What do we learn from His example?** We are called to love everyone, but we cannot be everyone's best friend. Jesus demonstrated this for us perfectly (of course!) by having an inner circle (Peter, James, and John), and by choosing 12 disciples from among the hundreds and thousands that followed Him. We don't need to have a lot of close friends; just a few who really know us, get us, and push us to be all that God has called us to be. What a blessing these people can be to us in our times of need.

Q: Read James 5:16. Have you ever been in a friendship where you were held accountable for your actions? If so, please share about some of the benefits of your experience. Not many people have had a relationship where they've been asked questions like:

1. Have you spent daily time in the Scriptures and in prayer?
2. Have you had any flirtations or lustful attitudes, tempting thoughts, or exposed yourself to any explicit materials that would not glorify God?
3. Have you been completely above reproach in your financial dealings?
4. Have you spent quality relationship time with family and friends?
5. Have you done your 100% best in your job, school, or retirement?
6. Have you told any half-truths or outright lies, putting yourself in a better light to those around you?
7. Have you had the opportunity to share the gospel this week?
8. Have you taken care of your body through regular physical exercise and proper eating and sleeping?
9. Have you allowed any person or circumstance to rob you of your joy?
10. Have you lied to us on any of your answers today?

Q: Do you have any creative ideas for others on how to find a good mentor or friend for accountability? Be a friend. Go out for coffee. Make the ask. Start with a friendship that you already have. Perhaps you have a family member. Ask your pastor for ideas. Get connected to a Bible Study, Men's/Women's ministry, or a small group! Other ideas?

Q: Consider Ephesians 5:15-16. Why do you think that it's important to have structure for your conversations? Is it really that necessary? People who are intentional are more likely to achieve their goals and to accomplish great things! No, you don't need to have structured conversations to have a good relationship, but if you want to push one another to be all that God has created you to be then it would be good to have a plan. It could be a curriculum, it could be studying the Bible, it could be spearheading a new ministry together. Proverbs 15:22 says that *"Plans fail for lack of counsel, but with many advisers they succeed."*

Q: If you've been in an accountability or discipleship relationship, what kind of structure did you use? See another example of discipleship in Titus 2: 1-8. Paul encourages Titus to lead the people to build one another up and train them to be godly. Check your church library for possible curriculums or talk to your pastor about what they would recommend for where you are at right now in your life. Real Zeal is a good resource, or perhaps Building on the Rock, but Navigators also puts out some good curriculum and there are many others.

Q: Is there someone in your life that you could see yourself opening up to? Is this someone God might want you to meet with for encouragement or exhortation? This has been a theme for the Water section of the *Growing Up Together* curriculum. Hopefully you've spend some time thinking about and planning for an intentional relationship where you can mutually benefit from the challenge to grow in your faith. It really is important. You can just get together and ask the questions listed above each week and pray for one another - it's as simple as that! Don't miss this opportunity to set yourself up to grow spiritually and to find accountability that will bear fruit in your life!

Q: Who will you ask? Don't ignore this question! Don't skip it! Make sure that everyone in your group has an idea and a plan. If you need help with this, seek help from your pastor! :)

Class Assignment: If you haven't already, ask someone about starting to meet on a regular basis to get to know them and see where God leads!

Memory Verse Final Review:

1 Corinthians 12:25-27 - *"there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it. Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it."*