



## **ACCOUNTABILITY**



## I AM ON A RAMPAGE

I am on a rampage. I am ferociously and aggressively searching out ways to eliminate this foe. I am ruthless in my initiation of assault. I am asking others to join me.

What am I fighting? Sin. Sin in my own life. I am sick of an apathetic approach to tolerating pet sins that have been around for years. I want them gone and I want it now.

What has created this fierce and zealous destruction mentality? Fear. I am afraid of what will happen if I don't pursue holiness. Before me on a piece of paper is a list of names. Beside them are the sins that have either taken them out of ministry or at least created an embarrassing dent in their ministry. Few of these names are strangers. Most of the names are people I love and respect in one area of ministry or another. Yet, somewhere along the way, they stumbled morally and their stories have motivated me to open fire on sin in my own life. I've noticed a pattern. Moral failure does not start out big. It starts with taking a few gym clips home from the office or keeping a little place in your mind for wrong sexual thoughts. It starts with a glance and ends with a youth pastor suicide and 600 kids and their families devastated. It is questionable motives cloaked in an innocent smile. These were not freshmen ministers who have made a wrong choice early in their ministry. These damaged lives were veteran ministers who knew better, whose judgment has been slowly seared into numbness by tolerating a pricked conscience.

I am waging my own war on several fronts. Within the boundaries of my own life I have released the powerful warrior of Truth. I am studying Scripture to uncover patterns of temptation and promises of righteousness and I am prayerfully applying these beacons of truth to my darkest areas. Externally, I have invited allies to join me in my assault. I have humbly and openly shared my vulnerabilities with a trusted few who stand watch over my life. I hold nothing from them. They can ask me anything and I am committed to honestly answer them even if the light is cast on rotting garbage.

The third division of my army works internally and externally, like a spy. It is prayer, my secret weapon. I am praying and have others praying for my victory. I know that prayer is powerful, but its force will most clearly be seen at the end of the way.

I do not want to mop up my blood or the blood of my family and close friends. If I never accomplish another thing in ministry, I want my greatest trophy to be engraved with the words, "Faithfulness." I'm not waiting until a spiritual artery is cut. I'm inspecting paper cuts at this point, because I don't want my name added to this list of devastation. These beautiful balloons for God were not suddenly popped while flying high for God. There was a slow leak that brought their descent and I am vigilantly listening for air.

Julie Norton White





# ACCOUNTABILITY

Sample questions to ask ourselves and if you have an accountability group you might give them permission and encouragement to ask you these types of questions.

## 1. SPIRITUAL

- Am I growing in my relationship with the Lord?
- How do I know?
- Am I spending time in the Word of God and in prayer?
- Is confession a part of my prayer time?
- Am I memorizing Scripture?
- If Jesus were physically present with me now, what would he say to me?
- Am I deceiving myself or others?
- Am I more authentic today than yesterday?

## 2. MARRIAGE

- Do I love my spouse?
- Does my spouse feel “loved”?
- Am I seeking better ways of communicating with my spouse and understanding him/her? Does he/she feel understood?
- Do I work at being more affectionate?
- Do I spend “quality time as well as quantity time” with my spouse?
- When was the last time we were away together and had unrushed time together?
- If my spouse could change one thing about our marriage, what would it be?
- Do we pray together?
- In what areas does my spouse need me to lead him/her, and in what areas should I back off?
- How can I build his/her self-esteem this week?
- Am I aware of the sensitivity required to be in touch with his/her emotions?
- Do we talk about this? Am I too consumed with my desires?

## 3. FAMILY/KIDS

- How am I doing with my family? (especially the kids)
- Am I spending “quality and quantity” time with the family as a group as well as with each individual? Do they feel special?
- Do they feel loved and valued?
- Do they feel secure?
- Do they know they have boundaries?
- Do my spouse and I demonstrate mature conflict resolution to them?
- What goals are we challenging with them?
- What would they say they want most from me (us) this year? Have we asked them?
- What do we do together as a family?

- Do they sense that Jesus is most important in my life and the glue in our marriage? How do they know?
- How are they developing in their understanding and knowledge of God?
- What do they think you “think” about them? What do they hear you say about them to your wife, others?
- What values and priorities are you seeking to build in to their lives?

#### 4. FRIENDS AND RELATIONSHIPS

- Who are my friends?
- Am I a good friend? What is a good friend?
- Do people feel cared for by me?
- How do I relate to people I don't necessarily like?
- Do I need to ask forgiveness or make things right with anyone?
- Are there relational ghosts in my closet?
- Am I making efforts to make people around me feel valued and affirmed?
- How can I make people feel special?
- Do I go out of my way for others? Am I hospitable?
- Am I working on my weaknesses?
- In what areas have I settled for “that's just the way I am” and not been willing to allow the Lord to change or discipline me?
- Am I too busy for my friends? What would they say?
- Do I have an accountability group that is honest with me and asks me hard questions: Who really cares? Or, do I surround myself with people who just tell me what I want to hear?

#### 5. MINISTRY

- What are my motives for my ministry?
- Why am I doing what I am doing?
- Do I have the ability to describe the eternal significance and value of my ministry? Or do I rationalize?
- Could I leave it if necessary?
- Do people sense something different about my dealings with them?
- Would they say I am honest, above board, of high character?
- Are my ethics biblical in handling money?
- Am I building an empire for my own satisfaction or creating an opportunity that can give many others significance and meaning?
- Do I have to have my hands on each part of it for it to succeed?
- Do I trust in others? Do I inspire trust in others?
- Is my ministry giving ourselves generously in time and money to help the community and for the cause of Christ?
- How do I deal with those who stand in the path of my plans?
- What is hardest about living for Christ in my ministry? What discourages me? Where do I struggle?

## 6. FINANCIAL

- What does my checkbook say about my relationship with the Lord?
- Am I giving away more and more?
- Do I give from my abundance only?
- Do I ever give sacrificially?
- Who/ what am I giving to? Why am I giving? Am I a cheerful giver?
- Do I tithe? Do I give offering?
- Am I paying my (our) debts in an orderly fashion?
- Am I a good steward?
- Am I taking steps to eliminate our indebtedness as much as possible?
- How much money do I need (our family)? What will we do with the rest?
- Am I wise about the future? College education, retirement, old age, home, cars, etc.? Who do I talk with about these things?
- Am I teaching my kids a proper perspective on money and finances?

## 7. PHYSICAL

- Am I taking care of my body?
- Am I watching my weight?
- Am I eating right?
- Am I getting regular exercise? What do I do?
- Do I include my kids in learning about physical awareness?
- Am I getting enough sleep

## 8. REPUTATIONAL

- What is my reputation among others?
- Do people see me as being a servant of Christ?
- Does my life stand as a pattern of good living?
- Do I receive respect from non-believers?
- Am I known as loving towards others?
- In what areas have I compromised my reputation or my integrity?
- Have I suffered any persecution for the sake of the Gospel? Have I rationalized some persecutions, or could it be that I have miss-handled some situations?
- Am I leaving a Christ-filled legacy for my children?
- Am I known as a giver or a taker?

## 9. LEADERSHIP

- Where am I using the gifts of leadership that I have?
- Do I stand up for my convictions?
- Do I push others too much?
- Am I working at being a better listener?
- Are my decisions becoming more “wise”?
- How do those under my leadership view me?
- Can I follow when I need to?
- Am I using or losing my talents?
- Does my leadership enable others to become better people and draw them closer to the Lord?
- Can I build a team? And work with a team? Or, am I the strong natural leader type? Or, am I a loner?
- In what specific ways am I working on improving my leadership abilities?

## 10. RENEWAL/ RECREATION

- How do I get refreshed and renewed?
- Do I block out time to rest?
- Do I block out time to think and dream?
- Who holds me accountable for taking time off?
- From whom/ where do I draw my sense of peace? Does my life have rhythm?
- What other guards and guidelines do I have built into my life that will keep me from “burn out”?
- Am I learning about growing old now, before I begin to grow old?
- How is my energy level?
- When and how do I “play”?
- Do I plan and take time for a yearly physical?
- Do I always have to win when playing a game? Or can I play for fun, enjoyment, to be with friends?
- How do I handle solitude? Do I practice solitude?
- What is the most refreshing and renewing thing I have done in the last month? Week?

In this life we deal with the world system, our flesh, and the devil and they are all at war with our souls... We need genuine friends who are willing to hold us accountable.

Pray that the Lord will give you men and women who love you enough to really care. Men and women who can lovingly confront us in the name of our Lord and whose motive is to help us be all we can be as a child of the King.

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