

GUARDING OUR COMPANIONS

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Introduction

James 1:23-24 “For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; for *once* he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was.”

I. WE NEED TO TAKE AN HONEST LOOK AT OURSELVES

1 Timothy 4:15-16 “Take pains with these things; be *absorbed* in them, so that your progress will be evident to all. Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching; persevere in these things, for as you do this you will ensure salvation both for yourself and for those who hear you.”

II. WE NEED TO TAKE AN HONEST LOOK AT OTHER’S LIVES

I need you. You need me. We need each other. *testudo* = Latin: tortoise = wall of shields

- Only then do we have a chance of resisting the Devil’s attacks — as he seeks someone to devour (1 Peter 5:8-9)
- Only then will we succeed in our assault on the gates of hell (as Jesus said in Matthew 16:18).

The Keys To Safeguarding Our Lives From Sin

- personal reflection on the cost of sin
- prayer for our own moral safety
- spending time in the Word of God
- openly seeking the help of others
- allowing others to be used of God to help us

III. THE VALUE OF PERSONAL ACCOUNTABILITY

- Genesis 4 — The story of Cain and Abel
- 2 Samuel 12 — The story of King David and Nathan, the Prophet
- Proverbs 27:5 “Better is open rebuke than love that is concealed.”
- Proverbs 27:6 “Faithful are the wounds of a friend, but deceitful are the kisses of an enemy.”
- Proverbs 27:17 “Iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.”
- Proverbs 28:23 “He who rebukes a man will afterward find more favor than he who flatters with the tongue.”
- Luke 17:3 “Be on your guard! If your brother sins, rebuke him; and if he repents, forgive him.”
- Acts 19:18, 20 “Many also of those who had believed kept coming, confessing and disclosing their practices.....So the word of the Lord was growing mightily and prevailing.
- 1 Corinthians 12:14, 25-26 “For the body (i.e. the church) is not one member, but many . . . the members may have the same care for one another. And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it...”
- 1 Corinthians 12:27 “Now you are Christ’s body, and individually members of it.”
- Galatians 6:1-2 “Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; *each one* looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted. Bear one another’s burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ.”
- Ephesians 4:15 “...speaking the truth in love (Greek: *aleuthontes en agape*), we are to grow up in all *aspects* into Him who is the head, *even* Christ...”
- 1 Corinthians 6:3 “Do you not know that we shall judge angels? How much more, matters of this life?”
- 1 Thessalonians 5:14 “We urge you, brethren, admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak...”
- Hebrews 3:13 “But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is still called “Today” so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.”
- Hebrews 10:24-25 “Let us consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another; and all the more, as you see the day drawing near.”
- James 5:16 “Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed.”
- 1 Peter 5:8-9 “Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. But resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world.”

IV. THE PRACTICE OF PERSONAL ACCOUNTABILITY

A. PRAYING FOR OUR COMPANIONS

Ephesians 6:18 “With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints”

Matthew 6:13 “And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil”

B. PROTECTING OUR COMPANIONS

THE THREE FACETS OF ACCOUNTABILITY

Facet #1. Consistent Accountability

“Knowing that I will be tempted, I need to meet with somebody regularly.”

Facet #2. Defensive Accountability

“Before I am tempted, I want to share my particular struggles with somebody.”

Facet #3. Offensive Accountability

“I am being tempted right now. Somebody please help.”

MY PERSONAL ACCOUNTABILITY QUESTIONS

“Watch your life...closely.” (1 Timothy 4:16)

1. Have you been faithful in the Word and prayer? Are you growing in your intimacy with God? Do you have something special going on with Jesus today?”
2. Have you been sensitive to the needs of your spouse? Your family? Others?
3. Have you been struggling with impure thoughts?
4. Have you been looking at questionable materials that would bring shame to the Lord?
5. Have you been alone with someone in any kind of situation when your feelings or actions became inappropriate or where others could have suspected something?
6. Are you experiencing any physical problems? Eating right? Getting adequate rest and sufficient exercise?
7. Are you facing challenges that are negatively affecting your physical, emotional, or spiritual well-being?
8. Have you lied or compromised your answer to any of the above questions?

Conclusion:

1 Corinthians 10:13 “No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it.”

“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith” (2 Timothy 4:7).

2 Peter 1:2-3 “Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord; seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.”

Onward, Christian soldiers! March on, Ambassadors of Jesus Christ!

For further studies, see “The Purity War: A Biblical Guide to Living in an Immoral World” available at www.puritywar.com
Coming soon: “The Accountable Life” also available at www.puritywar.com