

**Spiritual Growth (5)**

**Accountability**

*As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another. – Prov 27:17*

Growth demands effort and energy. The decision and commitment to grow is an important step, but now the real work begins. Actually making the changes, forming new habits, stopping bad habits, doing things differently will take personal discipline **along with** support, encouragement and accountability. Accountability is an uncomfortable topic to many people because it carries memories of guilt, shame, abuse, violation of privacy and many other negative images. Nevertheless, accountability is an important part of growth and can be a very healthy and rewarding experience....when done in healthy ways.

**What is accountability?**

Accountability is a tool that you use to give yourself traction for growth, something to keep you pressing forward, avoiding the natural tendency to default to old patterns.

**What makes accountability healthy and helpful?**

Healthy accountability always keeps the person wanting the accountability in control. Healthy accountability focuses on growth and overcoming obstacles rather than criticism and guilt. Healthy accountability focuses on specific goals rather than on general life issues.

**What does it look like?**

Accountability can take many different forms. It can be a daily reminder generated by your calendar program, text messaging service or email subscription. It can take the form of placing reminder cards and notes in strategic places that you know will catch your attention. The most powerful form of accountability is asking a faithful friend to periodically ask you a specific question.

**Example:**

Suppose you have a goal of spending 20 minutes a day reading the Bible. You could ask a faithful friend (someone who consistently believes in you) to help you with your goal saying, *“I am trying to develop a new habit of reading my Bible and praying 20 min every day. I was wondering if you would be willing to call me every Sunday night and ask me this question, ‘How many days this week were you successful in reading your Bible and praying?’”*

**This Week**

- Consider what resources of support, encouragement and accountability do you need to be successful with the growth goals you are committing to this year. Put them in place.

Sun	What specific action can you do this week related to your growth goals?			31
Mon	Gen 32,33	Jam 5	Psa 21	1
Tue	Gen 34,35	Gal 1	Psa 22	2
Groundhog Day				
Wed	Gen 36	Gal 2	Psa 23	3
Thr	Gen 37	Gal 3	Psa 24	4
Fri	Gen 38,39	Gal 4	Psa 25	5
Sat				6