

"Accountable to God"

One day, when your life is over, you must give an account to God for how you've lived. Hello, I'm Phil Sanders. And this is a Bible study, "In SEARCH of the Lord's Way." Today we're going to explore our accountability to God. Stay with us.

Welcome to In SEARCH of the Lord's Way! We're here to search the Scriptures for the Lord's will. Hebrews 4:12 to 13 says, "For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account." The Lord gave us His Word not only to tell us of His grace and providence but also to teach us what He expects us to be and to do. The Scriptures are living and active; they look deep into our hearts and souls to reveal what kind of people we really are. We can't hide from God, and one day we will give account for how we've lived. Thanks for studying with us today. We want to be part of your life each week.

In Matthew 25:14 to 30 the Lord Jesus tells the story of how a master dealt with three of his servants. He gave five talents of money to one, two talents to the second, and one talent to the third. The first two servants doubled their money and received the praise and blessing of the Lord, while the third servant hid his money in the ground. You see, he was afraid of his master and thought it would please his master to give back what he had received. But the master rebuked him for being a wicked, lazy slave. Because he did nothing, he was thrown out and punished. And in the same way we are accountable to our Lord for how we've served. Are you a faithful servant of the Lord?

Now if you want to study more about our accountability, we offer this study free. If you'd like a printed copy of our study and live in the United States, mail your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to searchtv@searchtv.org. Or, you can call our toll-free telephone number. That number is 1-800-321-8633. Now if you live outside the United States, we have materials free online, and you can stream this program on our website at www.searchtv.org or on YouTube.

The Edmond church will now worship in song, we'll read from Romans 2:6 to 11, and consider our accountability before God.

Our reading today comes from Paul's letter to the Romans chapter 2 verses 6 to 11. And there he is talking about God and how God will treat people. God verse 6,

WHO WILL RENDER TO EACH PERSON ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS: to those who by perseverance in doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life; but to those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, wrath and indignation. There will be tribulation and distress for every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek, but glory and honor and peace to everyone who does good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For there is no partiality with God.

Yes there is no partiality with God. And each of us will be judged by the things which we think and things which we say and things which we do. Let's pray together. Heavenly Father we pray that we may always come to love You and to count Your will as more important than our own personal desires. Father help us to love what is right and to love serving You. In Jesus name we pray, Amen.

The Scripture undeniably teaches that we are accountable to God our creator and our judge. Hebrews 9:27 says, "it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment." The Lord Jesus said in John 12:48 that, "He who rejects Me and does not receive My sayings, has one who judges him;

the word I spoke is what will judge him at the last day.” 2 Corinthians 5 and verse 10 simply says, “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.” We will indeed give an account for ourselves to God.

By what will we be judged? That might be a question. Well first, we’ll be judged by what we say. The Lord said in Matthew 12:36 to 37, “But I tell you that every careless word that people speak, they shall give an accounting for it in the day of judgment. For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.” Our words matter to God. We’ll give account for lies, gossip, speaking evil of others, using God’s name in vain, and for dirty jokes, yes. Ephesians 5 and verse 4 says, “Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving.” We should use our voices to bless others. Ephesians 4:29 says, “Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.” Don’t be fooled. You will give an account for your words.

Second, we’ll be judged by how we think. The Lord said in Matt. 5:21 to 22, “You have heard that the ancients were told, ‘You shall not commit murder’ and ‘Whoever commits murder shall be liable to the court.’ But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be guilty before the court.” Again, the Lord said in Matt. 5:27 to 28, “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery’; but I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.” Evil thoughts lead to evil deeds, and what is in your heart matters to God. God said in Jeremiah 17: and verse 10, “I, the LORD, search the heart, I test the mind, Even to give to each man according to his ways, According to the results of his deeds.” Yes, God knows what’s in your heart and He will judge you for ways.

Third, we’ll be judged by how we act. Proverbs 15:3 says that, “The eyes of the LORD are in every place, watching the evil and the good.” As we’ve noted from Rom. 2:6 to 11 says God “will render to each person according to his deeds: (now) to those who by perseverance in doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life; but to those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, (they’ll have) wrath and indignation. There will be tribulation and distress for every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek, but glory and honor and peace to everyone who does good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For there is no partiality with God.” He treats everybody alike.

Many people think they can live as they please and escape judgment; but what we do affects other people. How we act matters to God. Galatians 6 verses 7 to 8 says, “Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. For the one who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption, but the one who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life.” If you were to take stock of how you act, would you be living to please yourself or living to please God?

Fourth, we’ll be judged by our secrets. In Romans 2:16 Paul speaks of “the day when, according to my gospel, God will judge the secrets of men through Christ Jesus.” Now we may be able to hide our actions from others, but we can’t hide them from God. God always knows. 1 Corinthians 4 verse 5 says, “Therefore do not go on passing judgment before the time, but wait until the Lord comes who will both bring to light the things hidden in the darkness and disclose the motives of men’s hearts; and then each man’s praise will come to him from God.” The Lord Jesus said in Mk. 4 verse 22, “For nothing is hidden, except to be revealed; nor has anything been secret, but that it would come to light.”

Fifth, we'll be judged for failing to do what is right. James 4 verse 17 says, "Therefore, to one who knows the right thing to do and does not do it, to him it is sin." If we fail to believe, we can be lost. The Lord said in John 3:18 that, "Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God." If we fail to repent, and yes repentance is necessary, we can be lost. Again, the Lord said in Luke 13:3, "I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish." The Lord also said in John 3 and verse 5, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of (Heaven) God." Oh this is a reference to baptism. Finally, we must remain devoted and faithful to the Lord. Because Jesus said in Matthew 10:22, "But the one who endures to the end will be saved." You see the Lord expects us to be fully committed to Him for a lifetime!

Sixth, we'll be judged if we leave God's teaching for man's teaching. Paul warned in Colossians 2 and verse 8, "See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ." Paul knew people would not always want the truth but would rather hear a convenient falsehood. He said in 2 Timothy 4:3 to 4, "For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, (healthy teaching) but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths."

You can't draw close to God unless you're willing to listen and follow Him. You can't expect to be saved if you follow false doctrines. 2 John 9 says that, "Everyone who goes on ahead and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God. Whoever abides in the teaching has both the Father and the Son." Now preaching a false doctrine leads people to believe a lie and have false hope. I tell you that's cruel and that's wicked.

Some loudly reply well, "Jesus never judged anybody." Well, Jesus certainly loved sinners. He said in Matthew 7 and verse 1, "Do not judge so that you will not be judged." But Jesus was in this passage condemning the unfair judging of the Pharisees. The Lord Jesus also said in John 7:24, "Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment." We all make judgments everyday about many things. We expect people to obey the laws and criticize those that don't. We don't like being deceived and we don't like being cheated. Society judges everything except morality and religion. But we excuse immorality and heresy, because we think God won't judge them. We couldn't be more wrong.

Jesus was full of grace, but He preached repentance. He didn't stone the woman caught in adultery but told her, "Go and sin no more." The Bible teaches forgiveness but never without calling people to repent. 2 Peter 3 and verse 9 says, "The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance." Now repentance implies that we cease the wrong and do what's right.

Jesus didn't come to earth to leave us where He found us. He came to give us an abundant life and to show us a better life. Repentance is God's way of saying to us that we can and must change to a life of love, of good works, of blessing. Romans 5:6 to 8 says, "For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Now if the Lord Jesus was willing to die for us, shouldn't we turn from sin.

Jesus didn't come to excuse our sin, or to tell us sin doesn't matter. He wanted something better for us! He bore the sin penalty that we should have borne. Isaiah 53:5 to 6 says, "But he was

pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned—every one—to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him (on Jesus) the iniquity of us all.” Now Jesus didn’t excuse our sins; He knew sin would destroy us. He went to the cross to forgive our sins, so that we could live righteous lives. He wanted us to rise above our sins.

When sin is your enemy, you must take a stand against it. When you do, you’re actually showing love toward those in sin. Because Jesus loved sinners, and He spoke against their sin and offered them forgiveness. Jesus spoke against anger, lying, sexual immorality, greed, false doctrines, and laziness. Jesus condemned disbelief, hypocrisy, slander, and betrayal. The Lord who loved us enough to die for us spoke against these things, because He cared for our souls. The Lord Jesus stood so strongly against sin that He said in Matthew 5:29 to 30, “If your right eye causes you to sin, tear it out and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body be thrown into hell. And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. For it is better that you lose one of your members than that your whole body go into hell.” Now if you love the Lord and love people, you’ll warn your friends not to live in sin. You’ll speak about the harmful nature of sin. You’ll not only refuse to participate in sin, you’ll expose sin for what it is—an enemy of God. Yes.

Now God hates sin. And He hates sin because He loves you. I think we need to know that aspect. God’s love for you means that He doesn’t want the things that will hurt you and harm you. And sin is your enemy and it will destroy you. And that’s why He gave us the right direction, why Jesus died on the cross and why we have the opportunity to turn away from the sin. God sent His Son to die for you, to atone for your sins, and mine as well, so you could be washed from sin and live with Him eternally. We owe God so much. And it would be tragic to treat Him as if He didn’t matter at all! When we excuse sin, or act like it doesn’t matter, what we’re saying to God is that we don’t care if sin offends Him or not. And it doesn’t matter to us that Jesus died for us. We need to wake up and see how we’re destroying and condemning ourselves by thinking that sin is obsolete and God won’t judge us for it.

Isaiah 1:18 to 20 says, “Come now, let us reason together, says the LORD: though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall become like wool. If you’re willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land; but if you refuse and rebel, you shall be eaten by the sword; for the mouth of the LORD has spoken.” Don’t suppose that God will overlook you at the end of time. Get right with God.

Let’s pray together. Heavenly Father we’re thankful that You have taught us Your word so that we might know right from wrong. Help us to have penitent hearts. Father break our spirit and help us to be contrite about our sins so that we’ll turn from what is wrong to what is right. And to love You with all our hearts. In Jesus name we pray, Amen.

God isn’t blind or deaf; He sees all our immorality and wickedness. Acts 17:30 to 31 says that, “The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent, because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.” God will hold us accountable for what we do and think and say. Hebrews 10:26 to 27 says, “For if we go on sinning (willfully or) deliberately after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, but a fearful expectation of judgment, and a fury of fire that will consume the adversaries.” My friend, “it is a terrifying thing to fall into the hands of the living God” (Hebrews 10 verse 31).

Now we are answerable to God. We’ll face God one day either with or without the help of Christ. Romans 6:23 says that, “the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ

Jesus our Lord.” If we refuse the grace of Christ, we’ll have to suffer the wages of sin ourselves. If we come humbly, lovingly, and obediently to the Lord, His blood will wash us, make us holy, and justify us. Oh if you are not a Christian, become one. Believe with your heart, repent of all your sins, confess Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. When you’re baptized, the Lord will forgive your sins, cause you to be born again, and make you God’s child. Galatians 3:26 to 27 says, “for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.” To be saved, you must be in Christ. And by faith we are baptized into Christ. So get right today.

We hope today’s study about accountability has stirred you to consider your soul. Think about what God says. If you live in the United States and want a free printed copy of this message, mail your request to In Search of the Lord’s Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to searchtv@searchtv.org. Or, call the Search office toll-free at 1-800-321-8633. Now if you live outside the United States you can download our material or watch the program online at our website: www.searchtv.org. or on YouTube. We also offer free Bible Correspondence courses and Bible studies. So don’t worry, if you write to us, we won’t ask you for money or put you on a list.

Do get involved with a church of Christ. You need a church home and you need to worship faithfully as a member. Well we’ll be back next week and we hope that you will tell a friend about this program. And as always we say, God bless you and we love you from all of us at In Search of the Lord’s Way.