

“Growing Together in Accountability”
1 Thessalonians 5:12-14

Accountability toward Leadership (vv. 12-13)

- Elders have a weighty responsibility before the church.
 - Elders are called to labor for the church.

In all things I have shown you that by working hard in this way we must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, “It is more blessed to give than to receive.” (Acts 20:35)

- Elders are called to rule over the church.
 - This rule is exercised only “in the Lord.”
 - This rule is described clearly by the Lord.

You know that those who are considered rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. ⁴³ But it shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant, ⁴⁴ and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. ⁴⁵ For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” (Mark 10:42-45)

Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you. (Hebrews 13:17)

- Elders are called to instruct in the church. (see also Titus 1:9)
- The church owes a great debt of love to their elders.

They are neither to despise them, as if they were dispensable, nor to flatter or fawn on them as if they were popes or princes, but rather to respect them, and to hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work. (John Stott)

- Be prayerful.
- Be supportive.

The church cannot be expected to do its work effectively if their followers are not loyally supporting the leaders. We're often slow to realize that effective leadership in the church of Christ demands effective following. If we're continually critical of them that are set over us, small wonder if they're unable to perform the miracles that we demand of them. If we bear in mind the work's sake, we may be more inclined to esteem them very highly in love. (Leon Morris)

- Be gracious.

Accountability with One Another (v. 14)

- We are all called:

- To warn one another.
- To encourage one another.

A bruised reed he will not break, and a faintly burning wick he will not quench. (Isaiah 42:1-3)

- To help one another.

Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. (Galatians 6:1)

- So, ask yourself:
 - Am I in relational and spiritual proximity to others?

There is no more important means of discipleship than deep involvement in the life of the church. (Tim Keller)

- Am I in intentional pursuit of others' holiness?

- And we are called to do this over time.

Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant⁵ or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful;⁶ it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth.⁷ Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. (1 Corinthians 13:4-7)