

## WHAT IS “ACCOUNTABILITY”?

***“I am accountable not only  
to other leaders but also to God”***

**GOAL:** Every Junior Leader should leave the meeting with a clear understanding of what is and what is not expected of them as accountability partners for another junior leader.

### **James 5:16**

*<sup>16</sup> Therefore confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective.*

### **Hebrews 10:24-25**

*<sup>24</sup> And let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds,  
<sup>25</sup> not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some,  
but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day approaching.*

### **Opening Activity: Accountability Scripts**

Select three people from the group to act out accountability groups in action. The same basic scene is written out three times with different reactions based on the three natural tendencies of accountability groups. Handout the scripts.

### **Discussion—The Three Tendencies of Accountability Groups**

#### **Tendency #1—“I’m not okay and you’re not okay and that’s okay groups”**

- *AKA “You tell me your junk, I’ll tell you my junk, and we’ll agree it’s junk”*
- This is the most common model of accountability groups; people sitting around talking about the garbage in their lives
- It might be heart-felt and feel refreshing, but it usually does little to help someone
- This model should be called acceptability or agreement; not accountability
- No one knows what to do, but everyone agrees that we have struggles, so we pray
- Prayer is usually tacked on

#### **Tendency #2—Co-dependent/Wonder-Twin Power Groups:**

- *AKA “You tell me your junk, I’ll tell you my junk, and then we’ll make the each other responsible for it.”*
- Leads group members to believe that they can’t function without each other.
- Leads to a need to be needed; others can’t survive without me; I need to rescue them; I have to manage their lives.
- Youthworkers are often guilty of this; run to us and trust our power instead of God’s
- Leads groups to believe that they are invincible together

- Leads people who don't struggle to think that they have a spiritual edge
- Leads groups to think that they just have to buck up so that they can "take that hill"

**Tendency #3—Strong-arm/Secret Police/Bondage Groups**

- *AKA You tell me your junk and then I'll whack you!*
- Being righteous or correct becomes more important than grace
- Often people are afraid to share real-life issues because they are afraid of the judgment and consequences; so they share how they struggle with quiet times, lustful thoughts, attitudes, etc—stuff they can't really get whacked for—because who in their right mind would share something they could really get busted for?
- Very pharisaical—but with Jesus-y language tacked on

**THE ALTERNATIVE—GRACE GROUPS**

- Grace often has a cost; but real sinners need a place they can come and find safety
- Grace groups don't focus on sin but rather on

**Counter-measure #1—Grace Groups recognize that accountability must be proactive for spiritual growth**

- We are encouraged to meet together regularly and encourage ("spur", literally aggravate) each other into being more loving and doing good things
- This proactive approach can push sinful habits out by replacing them with positive action

**Counter-measure #2—Grace groups recognize that accountability doesn't eliminate sin; Christ does.**

- We forget that we stand righteous—not because of who we are or what we've done or not done, but rather—because of Jesus' sacrifice
- We forget that we have the Holy Spirit in our lives to empower us to live righteously; not our accountability partners or groups

**Counter-measure #3—Grace Groups offer grace not bondage**

- Grace groups recognize that their meetings of accountability need to focus on the person and work of Christ
- Usually sin becomes the focal point; we become so consumed by the sin we must eliminate, that we fail to fix our eyes on God
- Any time sin becomes the consuming focal point of a Christian's life, we exchange freedom for bondage.
- Let's hold each other accountable to live in freedom—true freedom
- Rather than offering punishment, grace groups encourage one another to focus on the love and grace offered to us through Jesus Christ; they encourage one another to focus on Christ's way of life.

# THE THREE TENDENCIES OF ACCOUNTABILITY GROUPS

## SCRIPT #1

### I'm not okay, you're not okay and "That's okay!" Groups

- Member 1 I'm really glad we have this accountability group. I'm glad we can be real here.
- Member 2 Me too, because I really need to talk about something; this week I've been struggling with Internet porn again.
- Member 3 How is that possible? Didn't your parents install that "Net Nanny Accountability Software" on your computer?
- Member 2 Yeah, I know, but... we can be real here can't we... there are ways to get around that and sometimes the temptation is so great that I just give in.
- Member 1 I know what you mean. I have the same problem.
- Member 2 Well, we all know what should be done.
- Member 3 Yep, but sometimes it gets too difficult to deal with; and then I fall.
- Member 1 I'm glad I can talk about this. It's a real weight off me, but we have to agree to stop doing these bad things. Everyone agree?
- Member 2 Yep
- Member 3 Yep
- Member 1 Good!

# THE THREE TENDENCIES OF ACCOUNTABILITY GROUPS

## SCRIPT #2

### Co-dependency and Wonder-Twin Power Groups

- Member 1 I'm really glad we have this accountability group. I'm glad we can be real here.
- Member 2 Me too, because I really need to talk about something; this week I've been struggling with Internet porn again.
- Member 3 How is that possible? Didn't your parents install that "Net Nanny Accountability Software" on your computer?
- Member 2 Yeah, I know, but... we can be real here can't we... there are ways to get around that and sometimes the temptation is so great that I just give in.
- Member 1 Dude, when the temptation gets great you need to call us; we're there for you.
- Member 3 Yeah, I'm glad you told us. I'm going to commit to call you every night and ask you hard questions like, "Did you look at porn today?"
- Member 1 Yeah, dude—Satan wants you to think you're all alone, but you're not. We have your back.
- Member 2 I'm glad I can talk about this. It's a real weight off me.

# THE THREE TENDENCIES OF ACCOUNTABILITY GROUPS

## SCRIPT #3

### “Strong-arm/Secret Police/Bondage” Groups

- Member 1 I'm really glad we have this accountability group. I'm glad we can be real here.
- Member 2 Me too, because I really need to talk about something; this week I've been struggling with something that I need to be held accountable for
- Member 3 Okay, that's good; God says that we should confess to each other.
- Member 2 Yeah, I know, but its embarrassing... I've been struggling with porn
- Member 1 Dude! How can you call yourself a Junior Leader? You need to step down from Junior Leadership.
- Member 3 Yeah, you've got to get this fixed. We need to tell Pastor Brent and the Session about this.
- Member 1 I'm glad you told us; it must be a great weight off of you.