

Responsibility for Oneself

Responsibility and Accountability is a subject often avoided by many individuals of our society. The idea of being accountable for thoughts, words, and deeds is often a foreign concept. Jesus said, “The good man out of his good treasure bringeth forth good things: and the evil man out of his evil treasure bringeth forth evil things. And I say unto you, that every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned” (Matt. 12:35-37).

With the understanding that “we must all be made manifest before the judgment-seat of Christ; that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad” (2 Cor. 5:10), then it is reasonable to believe that attention would be given to Responsibility, and to whom Accountability will be given. The apostle Paul understood the significance of the accountability to the degree, he says, “Wherefore also we make it our aim, whether at home or absent, to be well-pleasing unto him” (2 Cor. 5:9). The “him,” as stated in verse 10, is Christ.

Previous articles focused on man’s Responsibility to God and man’s Responsibility to Others. With two factors established, i.e., Responsibility and Accountability it follows that man has a responsibility outside of oneself and that each man has a Responsibility for self.

Physically, a man has a responsibility to labor and provide for self: “the laborer is worthy of his hire” (Lk. 10:7). Thus, God’s system is to “let him labor, working with his hands the thing that is good, that he may have whereof to give to him that hath need” (Eph. 4:28). The system, in short, “If any will not work, neither let him eat” (2 Thess. 3:10).

Spiritually, a man is responsible for his spiritual obedience: When the gospel was first preached by the apostles, Peter instructed his hearers to “Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:38), “And with many other words he testified, and exhorted them, saying, Save yourselves from this crooked generation” (Vs. 40). This responsibility was further emphasized, when Paul said to Timothy, “And the Lord's servant must not strive, but be gentle towards all, apt to teach, forbearing, in meekness correcting them that oppose themselves; *if peradventure God may give them repentance unto the knowledge of the truth, and they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, having been taken captive by him unto his will*” (2 Tim. 2:24-26).

The Law of Moses hinged on two points that involve three entities: “The first is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God, the Lord is one: and *thou* shalt love the Lord thy *God* with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. The second is this, Thou shalt love *thy neighbor* as *thyself*. There is none other commandment greater than these” (Mk. 12:29-31): God, neighbor and thyself.