

## 505 To Whom Am I Accountable?

by Phil Sanders

Hello I'm Phil Sanders and welcome to God's Answers to Life's Questions, where we are seeking the wisdom of God in some of the perplexing questions of life. Today we're asking the question, "To What Am I Accountable?"

Daniel Webster said, "My greatest thought is my accountability to God." This is quite different from many today, who don't believe in God and feel no accountability to anything but themselves.

It was Nietzsche who said, "God is dead." But without God men become adrift on a sea of uncertainty morally and religiously.

Nietzsche himself died relatively young of venereal disease in an asylum, after becoming a madman. God is not dead; but when God dies in the life of people, they find life most miserable.

### **We are accountable to God:**

Heb. 9:27 And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this *comes* judgment. John 12:48 "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 Cor. 5:10 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.

Rev. 20:11-12 "Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is *the book* of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds." Everyone will be there, no exceptions. Everyone will be judged by his actions. There is a standard of judgment—the books.

### **By what will we be judged?**

*By our words* Matt. 12:36-37 "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." Words matter to God, we'll give account for lies, gossip, speaking evil of others, speaking evil of God, and profanity.

Eph. 5:4 "and *there must be no* filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks."

*By our thoughts* Matt. 5:21-22 "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" Matt. 5:28 "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." Jer. 17:10 "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.

*By our actions* Prov. 15:3 The eyes of the LORD are in every place, Watching the evil and the good. Rom. 2:6-11 [God] 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.

Matt. 25:31-46 "But when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne. "All the nations will be gathered before Him; and He will separate them from one another, as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats; and He will put the sheep on His right, and the goats on the left. Gal. 6:7,8 Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap. <sup>8</sup>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. Matt. 16:24-27 Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, he must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and will then repay every man according to his deeds.

*By our secrets* Rom. 2:16 speaks of "the day when, according to my gospel, God will judge the secrets of men through Christ Jesus."

1 Cor. 4:5 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.

Mk. 4:22 "For nothing is hidden, except to be revealed; nor has *anything* been secret, but that it would come to light."

*By sins of omission* James 4:13-17 Come now, you who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to such and

such a city, and spend a year there and engage in business and make a profit.” Yet you do not know what your life will be like tomorrow. You are *just* a vapor that appears for a little while and then vanishes away. Instead, *you ought* to say, “If the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that.” But as it is, you boast in your arrogance; all such boasting is evil. Therefore, to one who knows *the* right thing to do and does not do it, to him it is sin.

I hear people say, “Jesus never judged anybody.” It is true that Jesus loved sinners and welcomed them. Jesus did say in Matt. 7:1 “Do not judge so that you will not be judged.” But Jesus was trying to prohibit the unrighteous judging of the Pharisees. He also says in 7:2-5 “For in the way you judge, you will be judged; and by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you. Why do you look at the speck that is in your brother’s eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ and behold, the log is in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother’s eye.”

John 7:24 “Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment.” It is funny that we are told repeatedly to make wise decisions on products we buy, how we eat, and how we treat others; but we should never make decisions on morals???

Of course, the idea is that we should never hurt anyone’s feelings or make them feel bad about themselves. But if we never make any judgments about morals, we will become an amoral society, where anything goes.

Jesus was full of grace, but He also preached repentance to everyone. He didn’t condemn to stoning the woman caught in adultery, but He did say, “Go and sin no more.” The Bible teaches forgiveness but never without calling people to repent. Luke 13:1-3 Now ... there were some present who reported to Him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices. And Jesus said to them, “Do you suppose that these Galileans were *greater* sinners than all *other* Galileans because they suffered this *fate*? I tell you, no, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.” 2 Peter 3:9 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.

Jesus did not come to the earth to leave us where He found us, but to give us an abundant life through His grace and through showing us a better life. Repentance is God’s way of saying to us that we can and should change to a real life of love, of good works, of blessing. Romans 5:6-8 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.

Jesus didn’t come to excuse our sin, or to tell us sin doesn’t matter; our sins mattered so much He died for us, while we were sinners to lead us to a better life. He bore the sin penalty that we should have borne. 1 Peter 2:24 and He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed. Sin—God hates it; but He loves you. He hated sin enough to send His Son to die for you, to pay for your sins, so that you could be washed from sin and could live blamelessly with Him in heaven for eternity. We owe God so much for what He did for us. What a sad thing it would be, knowing what God has done for us, to turn our backs on Him and treat Him as if He didn’t matter! Yet that is what is happening in our country. How badly we need to wake up and see what a great God we have and turn our hearts toward Him!

*God isn’t dead; He isn’t even sick! His love is as great as ever!* Let’s turn to Him and follow Him if we wish to live lives full of joy and love.

God made each of us free moral agents. Freedom is indeed a precious commodity. But our freedom has limits. The fact is we are accountable. We are ultimately answerable to God. We are not permitted to do everything we want. Eccl. 11:9-10 There is a God who is altogether holy, who is perfectly just, and who declares that he is going to judge the world and hold every human being accountable for their life. We will one day face God either with the help of Christ or without it. Rom. 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

If we do not accept the gift of Christ, we will have to pay the wages of sin ourselves. It is so much better to have a loving relationship with Christ.

If you are not a Christian, I pray you’ll become one.

Believe with your heart,

repent of your sins,

Confess the name of Jesus,

and be baptized in the name of the Lord.

Your sins will be forgiven and you’ll become a child of God.

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