

# Accountability Questions for Mentoring

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As you know, I have pushed accountability hard. I believe that many leaders live fairly private lives and therefore are prone to the problems that often come with isolation - depression, temptation, disappointment, and fear. We all need spiritual friends that will listen to us, be honest with us, and help us deal with the pressures of ministry.

I have written lists of accountability questions that can be used in such friendships, as have many others. But I find myself reticent to use these lists and I suspect that most of us are the same. There are some possible reasons for this:

1. We don't have any friendships that reach such depth.
2. We like to be flexible in our relationships and not stuck with set questions.

But I wonder if it could also be the nature of the questions themselves. I think most accountability-type questions (including the ones I have written) inspire guilt. Who wants to feel more guilty? Let me give you some examples from a random list:

1. Are you walking in total obedience to God and doing His will?
2. Is your thought-life completely pure and God-honouring?
3. Are you spending enough regular, quality time alone with God?

These are good questions, but to be honest they make me feel guilty and lead me towards self-justification. It may be just me, but I wouldn't be keen to tackle questions like this all the time with my close friends. By the way, if you are doing this, I think that you're incredibly brave, and I'm sure God will grow you.

So is it possible to make the questions more encouraging without losing the cutting edge of accountability? Maybe not, but here's a try with a few issues. These are questions I think I would be happy to talk about with my spiritual friends. See what you think. Maybe have a go at them yourself. If they're useful, I could write a more complete list.

## 1. RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

How's your relationship with God? Where have you seen God at work recently (in your life or others)? What helps you love God? What would help the future growth of your relationship with God?

## 2. JOY AND SATISFACTION

What are you really enjoying at the moment? What are you doing that energises you? What makes you feel excited? What do you look forward to? What do you look back on with satisfaction? What would you hate to lose? Can you do anything to find greater satisfaction in your ministry?

## 3. PRESSURE

What makes life hard for you? How do you handle things when you are faced with these issues or pressures? Are you doing okay at the moment? How do you know? What is God saying to you?

## 4. DREAMS AND PURPOSE

Do you have any dreams for the future? What promises has God given you? What are you working towards? What would you do for God if you had no restrictions?

## 5. TEMPTATION (Here's a challenge)

What have been your weakest spots, where you are most vulnerable to failure? How has God helped you in these areas? Where are you feeling most vulnerable at the moment? How can I help support you in this area? How can I pray for you?