

Accountability:

Submitting to the Christ-centered admonition of another.



Marriage is the closest, most intimate relationship a person can have with another person. Married couples see more of each other and know more about each other (in most instances) than anyone else. Accountability *should* be an integral part of the marriage relationship. As one author wrote, ‘mutual accountability shows the desire to consult and involve your spouse in all things important to the relationship.’ Accountability between husband and wife provides enormous benefits to each spouse, the marriage relationship, and the family. It does a lot to help us grow in our walk with the Lord and a lack of accountability generally leads nowhere good.

Paul wrote that Christians are to submit one to another out of a fear of God (Ephesians 5:21). Because this verse immediately precedes the verses about husbands and wives, some say that there is to be a mutual *submission* between husbands and wives. This does not fit with God’s order and theologians agree that Ephesians 5:21 concerns our interaction with other Christians. Of course, our spouse *is* one of those *other Christians*. This verse is not about who submits to who, but about *accountability*. It is the submitting to the *Christ-centered admonition of another*. It is a matter of responding positively when our spouse points out a sin or some inappropriate behavior rather than getting defensive or trying to justify ourselves.

I think of Proverbs 27:17: “As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.” We tend to use this passage in men’s ministry, but what about the marriage relationship? Who sees more of us and more of our flaws and anyone else? Most of the time, it is our spouse. When we submit to that admonition of our poor behavior and take it to the Lord, we can improve our walk with the Lord and be a better testimony for Him. I am a better person because of the Lord using my wife in my life and she will tell you the same about me. Friends, we must be accountable to our spouse! Yet, we also don’t want to be the Holy Spirit and consider it our job to change our spouse. We don’t need to point out every little flaw in our spouse.

Do you submit to the *Christ-centered admonition* of your spouse? Do you listen and really hear what he or she says when they point out a misbehavior or something you’ve done wrong? Prayerfully, consider what your spouse has to say - validate them and then change your behavior! Be actively accountable to each other and grow in your marriage, other relationships, and your walk with the Lord through that mutual accountability.

Helpful Resources: *Fortified Marriages Resource page:* www.fortifiedmarriages.com

The Fortified Marriages Manual & Workbook is a great resource helping couples experience peace in their marriage relationships. Also see:

Articles to check out: *Mutual Accountability in Marriage* by Kirk VanOoteghem

Accountability With Your Spouse by Dennis Rainey