

Accountability Questions: A Sampler

The following 11 lists of questions were published in *Cultivating a Life for God*, by Neil Cole, Church Smart Resources 1999 pp.125-131.

A. John Wesley's Small Group Questions:

1. Am I consciously or unconsciously creating the impression that I am better than I am? In other words, am I a hypocrite?
2. Am I honest in all my acts and words, or do I exaggerate?
3. Do I confidentially pass onto another what was told me in confidence?
4. Am I a slave to dress, friends, work , or habits?
5. Am I self-conscious, self-pitying, or self-justifying?
6. Did the Bible live in me today?
7. Do I give it time to speak to me everyday?
8. Am I enjoying prayer?
9. When did I last speak to someone about my faith?
10. Do I pray about the money I spend?
11. Do I get to bed on time and get up on time?
12. Do I disobey God in anything?
13. Do I insist upon doing something about which my conscience is uneasy?
14. Am I defeated in any part of my life?
15. Am I jealous, impure, critical, irritable, touchy or distrustful?
16. How do I spend my spare time?
17. Am I proud?
18. Do I thank God that I am not as other people, especially as the Pharisee who despised the publican?
19. Is there anyone whom I fear, dislike, disown, criticize, hold resentment toward or disregard? If so, what am I going to do about it?
20. Do I grumble and complain constantly?
21. Is Christ real to me?

B. Wesley's Band Meeting Questions:

1. What known sins have you committed since our last meeting?
2. What temptations have you met with?
3. How were you delivered?
4. What have you thought, said, or done, of which you doubt whether it be sin or not?
5. Have you nothing you desire to keep secret?

Reference: John Wesley's Class Meetings: a Model for Making Disciples, by D. Michael Henderson, Evangel Publishing House, 1997, pp. 118-9

C. Chuck Swindoll's Pastoral Accountability Questions:

1. Have you been with a woman anywhere this past week that might be seen as compromising?
2. Have any of your financial dealings lacked integrity?
3. Have you exposed yourself to any sexually explicit material?
4. Have you spent adequate time in Bible study and prayer?
5. Have you given priority time to your family?
6. Have you fulfilled the mandates of your calling?
7. Have you just lied to me?

Reference: In his book, The Body, Chuck Colson lists seven questions used by Chuck Swindoll and a small group of pastors.

D. Renovare Questions:

1. In what ways did God make his presence known to you since our last meeting? What experiences of prayer, meditation and spiritual reading has God given you? What difficulties or frustrations did you encounter? What joys or delights?
2. What temptations did you face since our last meeting? how did you respond? Which spiritual disciplines did God use to lead you further into holiness of heart and life?
3. Have you sensed any influence or work of the Holy Spirit since our last meeting? What spiritual gifts did the Spirit enable you to exercise? What was the outcome? What fruit of the Spirit would you like to see increase in your life? What disciplines might be useful in this effort?
4. What opportunities did God give you to serve others since our last meeting? How did you respond? Did you encounter injustice to our oppression of others? Were you able to work for justice and shalom?
5. In what ways did you encounter Christ in your reading of the Scripture since our last meeting? How has the Bible shaped the way you think and live? Did God provide an opportunity for you to share your faith with someone? How did you respond?

Reference: James Bryan Smith and Richard Foster have compiled a list of questions for accountability to spiritual disciplines which is one of the Renovare resources.

E. Phil Helfer's "Five Basic Questions" (pastor, Los Alto Brethren Church):

1. How have you experienced God in your life this week?
2. What is God teaching you?
3. How are you responding to His prompting?
4. Do you have a need to confess any sin?
5. How did you do with your reading this week?

F. The Highway Community in Palo Alto, CA has adapted the questions in the following way:

1. Did I invest the proper quality/quantity of time in my most important relationships?
2. Did my life reflect verbal integrity?
3. Did I express a forgiving attitude toward others?
4. Did I practice undisciplined or addictive behavior?
5. Was I honorable in my financial dealings?
6. Was I sexually pure?
7. Did I spend time with the Lord this week, completing the Bible reading for the week?
8. Did I pray for my pre-Christian friends? Did I talk with someone about Christ?

G. Florent Varak, a French pastor in Lyon, has developed these questions:

1. What have the Scriptures revealed in your life this week:
 - a. In terms of specific sinful behavior?
 - b. In terms of specific sinful thoughts?
 - c. In terms of specific sinful words?
2. What errors or lies that you once believed have now been corrected by your reading of the Scriptures?
3. What encouragement have the Scriptures given you in your daily walk?
4. What do you need to ask the Spirit of God to reveal to you that you have not yet understood?

H. Neil Cole developed a list of less specific questions:

1. What is the condition of your soul?
2. What sin do you need to confess?
3. What have you held back from God that you need to surrender?
4. Is there anything that has dampened your zeal for Christ?
5. Who have you talked with about Christ this week?

I. Dave Guiles, director of Grace Brethren International Missions developed these questions:

1. How have you sensed God's presence in your life during this past week?
2. Have you received a specific answer to your prayers? What was it?
3. Have you spoken with a non-believer about your faith in Jesus Christ? With whom?
4. To whom have you shown God's love during this past week?
5. What have you learned about God in your personal Bible reading this past week?
6. As a result of your Bible reading this past week, how have you determined to better obey God?
7. Specifically, what area of your life do you feel that God most wants to change? Have you taken specific steps to make those changes?
8. What good habit do you feel God wants to form in your life? Have you taken specific steps to develop that habit?

J. Paul Klawitter, a church planting missionary in France has developed the following questions:

1. What worries or other issues are you currently facing?
2. Is there an area that God is working on in your life or any sin that you would like to pray about?
3. For what non-Christian friends can we pray?
4. In your reading of the Bible: Who is God? What does Jesus expect of you? What do you think he is saying to you? How do you think you should respond?

K. The most simple, basic questions Neil Cole has found:

1. What is God telling you to do?
2. What are you going to do about it?