

“But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.” (Heb 3:13)

“Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried,



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Accountability

I want to focus on a particular subject that I believe is often overlooked in the Lord's body. I'm talking about accountability. There are several passages and examples that we can use concerning the topic of holding yourself accountable. However, in this article we aren't going to focus on keeping ourselves (**John 12:48; Romans 2:6, 1 Timothy 5:22**), but the keeping of others. If you will recall in **Genesis 4:9**, Cain asked God, "Am I my brother's keeper?" What Cain was actually asking in this particular question was, "Is it my responsibility to watch out for and care for my brother Abel?" What about me? What about you? Do we have a responsibility to watch out for and care for one another? I believe Cain did have that responsibility and according to the

New Testament, so do we! It is true that every person makes his or her own decisions in life and will ultimately answer for those decisions. Yet, are we as friends, family, and especially brothers and sisters in Christ suppose to just sit back and watch as our friends, family, and especially brothers and sisters in Christ, go down the path of sin and darkness? Are we to have an attitude of, "Well, that's their business what they do"? Let me put it this way: If you are walking along the shore of a river and you notice a person in a boat heading for a dangerous waterfall and they can't control their boat because the current is so strong and there is no way of saving themselves from this rough current and you know that if you don't

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The Necessity of Repentance

Having examined the meaning of repentance and some of the reasons, or rather, some of the inducements, for man's repentance, we want to turn our attention to the subject of the necessity of repentance. We have already mentioned the primary reason, for salvation itself. Man cannot be saved without repenting of sin. But what else makes it necessary for man to repent of his sins and turn to God?

First, let us suggest repentance is necessary simply because God commands it. He is the creator of all things (**Act 17:24**) and as such He has the right to command us. Paul related to the Athenians on Mars Hill that once, God winked at their ignorance but no longer, now God, "commandeth all men every where to repent" (**Act 17:30**). He commands it to be done, which means if we love Him, we will do what is asked (**1 Jn. 5:3**). No wonder Jesus came to "call ... sinners to repentance" (**Luke 5:32**). Will you heed God's call to repent?

Second, we find that repentance is necessary because of

sin. As we have noted, salvation isn't possible without repentance. Jesus said, "except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (**Lk. 13:3**). Peter commanded those on Pentecost who wanted to know what they must do, after learning they had killed the Messiah, to repent and be baptized for the remission of their sins (**Act 2:38**). Thus without repentance we have no chance for forgiveness of sin. This is true for the alien sinner who is outside of Christ (**Act 2:22-23; 36-38**), and likewise it is true for the saint who stumbles in sin (**Act 8:22-23**). The consequence of sin demands repentance.

Finally, we find that repentance is necessary because of the final judgment each of us will face (**2 Corinthians 5:10**). The looming certainty of the final judgment is a warning to all to turn away from sin to God. Each passing day we live on this earth brings eternity ever nearer and with each passing day another opportunity to repent is lost for far too many. The Bible assures us that once we

die it is too late (**Hebrews 9:27**). Repentance will surely make the judgment more tolerable than for those who refuse to repent (**Matthew 11:21-22**). Judgment is certain and for the one who hasn't repented and obeyed the gospel it will be severe (**2 Peter 3:8-13; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10**). The impending judgment demands repentance.

Why is repentance necessary? Repentance is necessary because God commands it. It is necessary because of sin; forgiveness requires repentance. It is necessary because the judgment warns every soul to repent. If you haven't repented you cannot be saved; whether you are an alien sinner outside of Christ or an erring Christian, "except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (**Lk. 13:3**). Now is the time for you to repent (**2 Cor. 6:2**)! – Phillip Stuckey

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help then they will ultimately go over this waterfall and plunge to their death. Would you help them? Would you do everything in your power to save this person from going over the waterfall and dying? I know I would. I trust everyone reading this would. It's human nature. See someone in trouble, help. Well, then reader, what's the difference in someone going over a dangerous waterfall and someone going down a dangerous path of sin? Which death do you think would be greater? The physical one? We are told in the Bible that spiritual death is far greater than any physical death that we can experience. When we are spiritually separated from God because of our sins (**Isaiah 59:2**), we will be placed "in the lake that burns with fire and sulfur, which is the second death" (**Revelation 21:8**). Sure, the physical death can be great, but it doesn't even compare to the suffering one will

have if they aren't found righteous in the end. Again, do we have a responsibility to each other? If you look to the scriptures you will see that we are to "love one another". Jesus commanded this kind of love (**John 13:34-35; 15:12, 17**). In fact, according to John 13:35, all will know that we are His disciples if we love one another. We also see examples from Paul (**Romans 13:8; 1 Thessalonians 4:9**), Peter (**1 Peter 1:22**), and John (**1 John 3:11, 23; 4:7, 11-12; 2 John 5**). Notice verse 12 of 1 John chapter three, "We should not be like Cain...", instead we should love one another! So let's apply this to a brother or sister who may be in sin. This sin can be open or public, or maybe it's private and only one or two people know about it. What do you do about this? Even though this brother or sister isn't physically caught in a strong current about to be tossed over a rocky water-

fall and plunge to their death, this brother or sister doesn't know the time when the Lord will return either, so really what's the difference? When a brother or sister is in sin and we know about it, what do we do about it? Do we just think about them? "Well, I'll pray that this person realizes they're in sin and hopefully they will come to the realization that they are separated from God spiritually and they will come forward on Sunday and repent of their sins and everything will be just fine; I'm doing my duty as a Christian!" Or do we just say, "It's really none of my business, if they want to continue doing what they're doing, that's between them and God, I'm just going to stay out of that!" Or maybe we're afraid and think, "Well, I don't want to lose their friendship, and we got a good thing going on here, I'll just leave it alone and maybe, just maybe one

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day they will change”. Reader, how is this loving one another? This person is going down a dangerous rocky waterfall of sin and are we not even considering them? **Hebrews 10:24** says, “And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works”. This person is drifting away from God, are we not even making the effort to reach out to them and save them? How are we bearing their burdens? **Galatians 6:1-2** states, “Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.” Are we helping them overcome their sin and become stronger in their faith? Or should we rather not be bothered? This person is drifting away from God, are we exhorting them? **Hebrews 3:12-13** reads, “Take care, brothers, lest there be in any of you an evil, unbelieving heart, leading you to fall away from the living God. But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called "today," that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin”. Are we helping their spiritual life? Or are we afraid to confront them because we don't want them running away. As long as we confront them in love, as the scriptures teach, and they run away, they're not running away from you, or me, or the church, but from God. There are times when the person in the boat can't be saved; the current is just too strong. Don't wait to save your brother or sister from their sins. The current they're in right now becomes stronger as the days goes on. Love them as we are commanded. And if you are able to save them, be quick to forgive them (**Ephesians 4:32**). Accept them with open arms and by doing so you will edify them (**Romans 14:19**) and you will cover a multitude of sins (**1 Peter 4:8**). Are you fulfilling your responsibility to be your brother's keeper? – Bryan Garlock

Something To Consider...

Men do not reject the Bible because it contradicts itself, but because it contradicts them. Men are consumed by human reasoning and justification. But, is this what the bible teaches? **Isaiah 55:8-9** teaches otherwise. Many believe that through their own wisdom they can determine right and wrong. If it makes sense to them, they believe it must be true. If it doesn't make sense, they won't accept it. They may also go by whatever “feels right”. Yet, the Bible declares the danger of trusting in "feelings". **Proverbs 14:12** reads, “There is a way which seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death.” We also know from **Proverbs 28:26** that he who trusts in his own heart is a fool. Appeal to human reason or feelings to justify a certain practice and it will contradict the Bible, not the other way around! – Bryan Garlock

BONAIRE CHURCH OF CHRIST

459 GA HWY 247 South

Bonaire, GA 31005

Phone: (478) 929-1245

E-mail: contactus@bonairecoc.org

Web: <http://www.bonairecoc.org>

What Must One Do To Be Saved?

Hear – **Matthew 17:5; Romans 10:17**

Believe – **John 8:24; Romans 10:9**

Repent – **Luke 13.3; Acts 2.38**

Confess– **Romans 10:9-10; Acts 8:37**

Baptized– **Mark 16.16; Acts 2:38**