

MEETING OUR RESPONSIBILITIES

Romans 14:12

I. INTRODUCTION: I

1. **2** Several weeks ago we began a series of lessons with the general theme of “grow[ing] in the grace and knowledge of the Lord.” (2 Pet. 3:18)
 - A. These lessons are designed to help Christians grow and be strong in the Lord (1 Pet. 2:2).
 - B. We cannot remain “babes” in Christ (1 Cor. 14:20); and even if we’ve been Christians for many years, we need to be reminded of these first principles (2 Pet. 3:1)
 - (1) **Lesson #1: ALL** Christians must put “first things first” (Matt. 6:33).
 - (2) **Lesson #2: ALL** Christians must diligently strive for spiritual maturity (2 Pet. 1:5-11).
 - (3) **Lesson #3: ALL** Christians must turn away from “worldliness” and “keep oneself unspotted from the world” (Jas. 1:27).
 - (4) **Lesson #4: ALL** Christians must remain faithful after baptism (Rev. 2:10; e.g., worshiping, moral purity, and bearing fruit).
 - (5) **Lesson #5: ALL** Christians must be diligent students of God’s Word! (2 Tim. 2:15; Hos. 4:6)
2. **3** Today in our society precious few want to accept responsibility: e.g.,
 - A. Just ask any employer about the average “work ethic” of today’s typical employee.
 - B. People won’t accept responsibility for sin: Sin is no longer sin: e.g., alcoholism is not a sin, it’s a “condition”; adultery is no longer adultery, it’s “consensual non-monogamy”; homosexuality is not a perversion, it is genetically determined, it’s an “alternative lifestyle.”
 - C. Business and political scandals are the norm.
 - D. Misbehaving children are no longer due to poor parenting (ADHD, poor schools, etc.).
 - E. But the Bible teaches much differently!
 - (1) We are accountable, we are answerable for how we live our lives!
 - (2) We must consider seriously what the Bible teaches about our responsibilities and never be guilty of taking them lightly (**Rom. 14:12**: “So then each of us shall give account of himself to God.”).
3. **4** Objective of **Lesson #6**: review some of our God-given responsibilities.

II. DISCUSSION:**As we consider our responsibilities, our most important responsibility is...**

1. **5** To God:
 - A. ****** We all stand accountable (answerable) to God (Rom. 14:12; **2 Cor. 5:10**: “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.”).
 - B. We are accountable to God in at least four major ways:
 - (1) ****** Must know God: Heb. 11:6; **1 Jn. 2:3-6**: “Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. 4 He who says, ‘I know Him,’ and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. 5 But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. 6 He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.”

- (2) **** Must fear God: Eccl. 12:13-14:** “Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. 14 For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.” (KJV)

Acts 10:34-35: “Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, ‘Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: 35 But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.’” (KJV)

Matt. 10:28: “And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.” (KJV)

Heb. 12:28-29: “Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: 29 For our God is a consuming fire.”; cf. Heb. 10:31

- (3) **** Must keep God’s commandments: Eccl. 12:13-14; Jn. 14:15, 23:** “If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.”; Lk. 6:46

Matt. 7:21-23: “Not every one that saith unto me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. 22 Many will say to me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?’ 23 And then will I profess unto them, ‘I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.’” (KJV)

Rev. 22:14: “Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.” (KJV)

- (4) **** Must love God: Matt. 22:37-38:** “Jesus said unto him, ‘Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. 38 This is the first and great commandment.’” (KJV)

(a) We love God because He first loved us (1 Jn. 4:19; Jn. 3:16; Rom. 5:8).

(b) The magnitude of God’s love was manifested in the sending of His Son. How do we show our love to God?

Jn. 14:21: “He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him.”

Jn. 15:10: “If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father’s commandments and abide in His love.”

As we consider our responsibilities, we also have important responsibility...

2. **6 To others:**

- A. Sometimes we all fail in our responsibilities to others. Why? 1^o reason: self-centeredness!
- B. **** We must never be self-centered but must always seriously consider how we are accountable to others (Phil. 2:3-4:** “Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. 4 Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.”).
- C. How are we responsible to others? We are responsible to others in at least eight ways:
- (1) **** Teach the lost:** Teaching others the truth is the greatest thing we can ever do for someone (Matt. 16:26): Everyone we meet should be considered a prospect!

2 Tim. 2:2: “And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.”; Heb. 5:12-14 (**our tract rack**)

Matt. 11:28-30: “Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. 29 Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”; Matt. 13:45-46

- (2) **** Love all men:** (1 Jn. 4:7-11; Matt. 22:39; Jn. 15:12: “This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.”).
- (a) Love is not just an impulse from our feelings (**Matt. 5:44-46:** “But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, 45 that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. 46 For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?”).
 - (b) Love seeks the welfare of all and works no ill to anyone (1 Pet. 3:8-9: “Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous; 9 not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing.”).
 - (c) Love also seeks opportunity to do good (Gal. 6:10).
- (3) **** Restore the fallen:** **Gal. 6:1:** “Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted.”
- (a) There is a great need in the church today for the spiritual to restore those overtaken in faults and we must prepare ourselves for this great work (Matt. 7:1-5).
 - (b) Those who have fallen away stand in great danger (2 Pet. 2:20-22).
 - (c) The work of restoring the erring is perhaps the greatest work we can do (**Jas. 5:19-20:** “Brethren, if anyone among you wanders from the truth, and someone turns him back, 20 let him know that he who turns a sinner from the error of his way will save a soul from death and cover a multitude of sins.”).
 - (d) Those that have fallen away must be warned, encouraged, and reminded of their responsibilities to God.
- 1 Thess. 5:14:** “Now we exhort you, brethren, warn those who are unruly, comfort the fainthearted, uphold the weak, be patient with all.”
- Acts 20:35a:** “that you must support the weak.”
- 2 Pet. 1:12-15:** “For this reason I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things, though you know and are established in the present truth. 13 Yes, I think it is right, as long as I am in this tent, to stir you up by reminding you, 14 knowing that shortly I must put off my tent, just as our Lord Jesus Christ showed me. 15 Moreover I will be careful to ensure that you always have a reminder of these things after my decease.”
- (4) **** Visit and care for others:** Matt. 25:31-46
- (a) Recall the definition of “pure and undefiled religion”? (Jas. 1:27; go see and care for).
 - (b) Christians should always be concerned about the needs of others (**Jas. 2:15-17:** “If a brother or sister is naked and destitute of daily food, 16 and one of you says to them, ‘Depart in peace, be warmed and filled,’ but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit?”; Gal. 6:10).

- (5) **** Exhort and encourage others:** **Heb. 10:24-25:** “And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, 25 not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.”

Heb. 3:12-13: “Beware, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God; 13 but exhort one another daily, while it is called ‘Today,’ lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.”

- (a) The word “encourage” means to inspire with courage or confidence (e.g., being good examples to our children).
 - (b) Brethren often become weary in well doing because of a lack of encouragement! (**Gal. 6:9:** “And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.”; **Heb. 12:13:** “Therefore strengthen the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees.”; Matt. 18:6).
- (6) **** Practice hospitality:** **Rom. 12:13:** “distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality.”; “given” basic meaning in Greek is to “persecute”! In order to persecute something, we must have an intense “passion” or “desire”!).
- (a) Hospitality is a very prominent theme in the Bible:
 - (i) Consider: **Heb. 13:1-2:** “Let brotherly love continue. 2 Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some have unwittingly entertained angels.” (recall Abraham, Gen. 18:2-10; Lot, Gen. 19:1-3; Job, Job 31:32; Lev. 19:34).
 - (ii) It’s a qualification for an elder (1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:8).
 - (iii) It’s a qualification for a “widow indeed” (1 Tim. 5:10).
 - (b) Notice how we are to show hospitality (**1 Pet. 4:9:** “Be hospitable to one another without grumbling.”).
 - (c) We should exercise hospitality regularly toward one another without murmuring, and not for recompense! Rom. 12:10; 2 Pet. 1:1
- (7) **** Obey civil government:** **1 Pet. 2:13-15a:** “Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; 14 Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. 15 For so is the will of God...” (KJV); **Rom. 12:13:** “Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.” (KJV); Acts 5:29
- (8) **** Practice church discipline:** **2 Thess. 3:6:** “But we **command** you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you withdraw from every brother who walks disorderly and not according to the tradition which he received from us.”
- (a) The Lord expects us to keep the church pure (1 Cor. 5:1-7: “a little leaven leavens the whole lump”).
 - (b) The Lord expects the entire church to be united in taking such drastic, but sometimes needed, action (Matt. 18:15-17).
 - (c) Whenever such action is needed, we must remember its purpose is also for the good of the one unrepentant of sin (**2 Thess. 3:14-15:** “And if anyone does not obey our word in this epistle, note that person and do not keep company with him, that he may be ashamed. 15 Yet do not count him as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.”; **1 Cor.**

5:5: “deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.”).

Finally, as we consider our responsibilities, we also have important responsibility...

3. 8 To self:

A. There are some very important responsibilities we have toward ourselves.

B. I want to suggest four areas in which we are responsible to ourselves.

- (1) **** Take heed to self:** (1 Tim. 4:16: “Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.”). Keeping one’s self right in the doctrine of Christ is important! 2 Jn. 9-11
- (2) **** Examine self:** 2 Cor. 13:5
 - (a) Besides God Himself, we are the only one who can truly know our own heart.
 - (b) We need to constantly be looking into the mirror of God’s word to see what changes we need to make (Jas. 1:22-25).
- (3) **** Keep yourself pure:** (1 Tim. 5:22; 1 Thess. 4:3-5: “For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you should abstain from sexual immorality; 4 that each of you should know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, 5 not in passion of lust, like the Gentiles who do not know God;”). No one can do this for us! 1 Cor. 6:18
- (4) **** Save yourself:** (1 Tim. 4:16: “Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.”).
 - (a) Certainly, there is a sense in which only God can save us (Eph. 2:8-9: “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast.”).
 - (b) But, in a very real way we do “save ourselves” in the sense that “by grace you have been saved through faith” (Eph. 2:8). Grace is God’s part, but “faith” is our response to God’s grace (Rom. 10:17).
 - (c) Note what Peter and Paul said (Acts 2:40; Phil. 2:12).
 - (d) We save ourselves simply by doing the things the Lord has required that we do (Eph. 2:10: “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.”; Matt. 7:24-27).

III. CONCLUSION: 9

1. How one meets his responsibilities to God, to others, and to himself will determine where he spends eternity.
2. How about you? Are you meeting your responsibilities to God, to others and to yourself? If not, why not change by doing whatever you need to do?

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