



BIBLICAL FOUNDATIONS OF REPORTING AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Biblical Concepts behind Reporting and Accountability

Stewardship | We are stewards of everything that God has given us. Psalm 24:1 states, "The earth is the LORD'S, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it." All our time, talent, and treasure belong to God. The parable of the talents (Matthew 25:14-30) teaches us that when the Lord returns, he will ask us to account for the ways we've used what we've been given for the kingdom of God. Reporting and accountability help us manage God's resources wisely.

The Body of Christ | The church is the body of Christ. The work of planting churches can at times be very isolating, lonely, and difficult. Reporting and accountability help connect church planters to the rest of the church, reminding them that they are not alone in the task. We must remember that accountability is mutual; the church must provide church planters with the support that they need to carry out their work.

And what is the purpose of this body, the church? 1 Peter 2:9 states it this way: "...that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light." Our goal in reporting should not be to show how we as individuals have been successful; rather, it should be to praise God for what he has done and is doing through his Church. God's glory is the goal.

Reporting and Accountability in the New Testament Church | The book of Acts gives us several examples of reporting and accountability. Peter gave a detailed report to the church in Jerusalem after his encounter with Cornelius (Acts 11:1-18). After Paul and Barnabas' first missionary journey, they reported to the church in Antioch (Acts 14:27), to the church in Jerusalem (Acts 15:4), and to the assembly of apostles and elders in Jerusalem (Acts 15:12). Later in the book, we read that Paul again "reported in detail what God had done among the Gentiles through his ministry" (Acts 21:19).

What can we learn from these examples? What were the results of these reports and the accountability of those first leaders in the church?

- Reporting brought joy to believers in Christ (Acts 15:3).
- Reporting testified to God's work (Acts 15:12).
- Reporting was essential for the church to deal with conflicts and clear up misunderstandings (Acts 11:1-18; 15:1-34).
- Reporting enabled the church leaders to make wise decisions (Acts 15:13-35).
- Reporting brought glory to God (Acts 11:18, 21:20).

We can see that reporting was important in the life of the New Testament church. As we seek to plant new and healthy churches, it is just as important for us. May God help us as we seek to do this work for his glory.