

There really is a God.
God is real.
God is the God of reality.

These last couple of years have really opened my eyes to some of the thinking, the motivations, people develop for their lives and it was shocking to actually see, to actually hear being told in no uncertain terms, of a particularly popular motive. It suddenly made many things clear to me as to why certain activities, the wherefores for life's pursuits, were chosen. The thinking goes something like this: "I can't be held accountable for, something I have never claimed any responsibility for!"

I was actually told that, over a minor household routine that I thought was worth a reminder of house protocol. To be told that it was not the user's responsibility and therefore they were not accountable shocked me. They wanted the perks of total access to the house but denied any accountability for the house as they denied any responsibility for how the house was run. That explained a whole lot of other actions by other people. Unfortunately the younger grandkids have taken the prevailing social views of denying any responsibility for a relationship and therefore no accountability for a failure by not entering into marriage and just, well, as we used to say, "shacking up."

Christ devoted a lot of His teaching to the problem of denial of accountability through the lack of taking responsibility. The end of the 24th chapter of Matthew, starting with verse 42, has Christ delivering 5 parables accountings for responsibilities. The first is 42 through 44 about the man knowing of a break-in to his house will be ready and not allow it.

The second is about the slave/servant who has charge of a household. When that slave decides that he is not watched and therefore has no responsibility to do his business and treats other servants harshly, getting drunk and abusing his position, is surprised by the masters appearance. He is held accountable. Matt 24: 54 tells us that the master, "Will cut him in pieces and assign him a place with the hypocrites; in that place there will be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth."

The third is the "Parable of Ten Virgins." We know this well as a stand alone parable but it was delivered in context with four other parables of responsibility and accountability. The ten all take on the responsibility of attending a bridegroom's reception. As we know, five did everything to be sure there were no glitches in being at the reception. Five weren't so smart and were miffed that they didn't have the socially acceptable accoutrements to keep up their social appearance. These five suddenly felt the need to be responsible for their own pleasures and left to get what they lacked. They seem to be genuinely surprised that they were then held accountable for not

being there for the reception! "Lord, lord, open up for us." (As an aside, can you imagine someone, anyone accusing those in charge of being unfair for not bending the rules to accommodate them!?!) Their focus changed and their accountability was certain.

The fourth is the well known "Parable of the Talents." This focuses on the one servant who had received a sum of money, a talent, to do something with. He instantly concluded that he did not want to be accountable for it so he denied any responsibility for it. He put it away, hid it, and went about his business. When called into accounting he brought it to his master and said, "Here it is." The master's response was (Matt 25:26) "You wicked, lazy slave, you knew that I reap where I did not sow and gather where I scattered no seed." Then verse 30, "Throw out the worthless slave into the outer darkness; in that place there will be weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth."

The fifth is the grand summary of humanity's surprise that they have any accountability when they did not believe that they took on any responsibility. Christ comes right out and tells us that He will sit in judgement of everyone. Separating everyone into the "Sheep" on the right and the "Goats" on His left. The sheep enter into the Kingdom of heaven and the goats will be cast out. "How are we accountable for this judgement?" the goats demand. Christ answers that they treated Him poorly and/or abusively. They did not treat Him as a worthy person. Matt 25:45-46 "Then He will answer them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me. These will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.'"

Those here have responded to the call of the Gospel of entering into the Kingdom of God and being a part of that Kingdom. We have taken on certain responsibilities for how the affairs of the Kingdom are conducted. The Body of Christ is His Church and we have a table set for the edification of the Body. I personally fear the consequences of being part of those who say we don't need a table or a "Lord's Supper" and I have been with and talked to those who feel that way. I see where they might think that denial of responsibility does away with accountability.

But this is a sure thing. We know for sure that this is the one thing that Christ commanded that we do. "Do this in remembrance of Me." As the 23rd Psalm puts it, "A table set in the presence of enemies." All are invited. There needs be no enemies. Let us now be thankful that God has worked out our salvation by His grace and we do have a place at His table in His Kingdom.

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