

ISSUE

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BULLETIN OF
THE OLSEN
PARK CHURCH
OF CHRIST

Faithful Sayings

September 30,
2018

Services

Sunday: 9:00 AM

10:00 AM

11:00 AM

Wednesday: 7:00 PM

Elders:

Pat Ledbetter
Brady McAlister
Jeff Nunn

Deacons:

Steve Dixon
Ryan Ferguson
Ben Hight
Blake McAlister
Walker McAnear
Ryan Matney
Sam Nunn
Lance Purcell
Justin Smiley
Kevin Wise
Trevor Yontz

Evangelist:

Kyle Pope



Responsibility

By Mark Mayberry

“The price of greatness is responsibility.”—Winston Churchill

“Enlightened people seldom or never possess a sense of responsibility.”—
George Orwell

During World War II, Winston Churchill shouldered the burden of opposing fascism, and afterward, resisted the encroachments of communism. George Orwell (the English novelist, essayist, and journalist) warned against the dangers of totalitarian systems of government.

Defined

Merriam-Webster defines “responsibility” as “(1) the quality or state of being responsible: as (a) moral, legal, or mental accountability, (b) reliability, trustworthiness; (2) something for which one is responsible: burden.”

The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language defines “responsibility” as “(1) the state, quality, or fact of being responsible; (2) something for which one is responsible; a duty, obligation, or burden.”

Illustrated

The Kohathites, descendants of Kohath, a son of Levi, were responsible for the care and transportation of the ark of the covenant: “Now their duties involved the ark, the table, the lampstand, the altars, and the utensils of the sanctuary with which they minister, and the screen,

and all the service concerning them” (Num. 3:28- 32; cf. 4:1-15). Furthermore, Eleazar, the son of Aaron, had responsibility for “the oil for the light and the fragrant incense and the continual grain offering and the anointing oil” (Num. 4:16).

Personal Responsibility

Each of us must manifest personal responsibility. I am responsible for my actions, just as you are accountable for your behavior. This reality calls for honest self-examination (2 Cor. 13:5). Each one must bear his own load (Gal. 6:3-5). As the Lord of the harvest, God mandates that we reap as we have sown (Gal. 6:7-8).

If we sow to the wind, we will reap the whirlwind (Hos. 8:7). If we sow sparingly, we will also reap sparingly; if we sow bountifully, we will reap bountifully (2 Cor. 9:6).

If we are wise, we enjoy the blessings and benefits of wisdom; however, “if you scoff, you alone will bear it” (Prov. 9:12). Each one of us will give an account of himself to God (Rom. 14:12). Each will receive his own reward according to his own labor (1 Cor. 3:8).

Shared Responsibility

Sometimes, we stumble under the burdens of life. As Simon of Cyrene carried the cross of Jesus (Matt. 27:32; Mark 15:21; Luke 23:26; John 19:17), in trying circumstances, we should bear one another’s burdens (Gal. 6:1-2). Through love, we must serve one another (Gal. 5:13-15). Shared responsibility means that each one bears his own load, doing his job to the best of his ability. We must also help our brethren, lending a hand, lightening their load.

In the home, husbands and wives have their respective responsibilities. Since the husband is the head of the wife, he cannot neglect his responsibility or shift it to her shoulders. He must bear the burden of leadership; yet, she serves as a “*help-meet*” (Gen. 2:18, KJV), i.e., “*a helper suitable for him*” (NASB). As he helps her and she helps him, they face the trials of life together.

In the same manner, spiritual leaders must fulfill their responsibility. In fighting against Amalek, Joshua led the nation of Israel in battle, while Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. It came about when Moses held his hands up, Israel prevailed, but when he let his hands down, Amalek prevailed. When Moses’ hands became heavy, Aaron and Hur supported his hands, one on one side and one on the other. Thus, his hands were steady until the sun set. So, Joshua overwhelmed Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword (Exod. 17:8-13).



Ezra, the priest, had the responsibility of teaching and applying the law of Moses, particularly when sin and shortcomings existed, but faithful Israelites were supportive of his efforts: “Arise! For this matter is your responsibility, but we will be with you; be courageous and act” (Ezra 10:1-4, esp. v. 4).

As parents lovingly provide for their children, spiritual leaders fulfill their responsibilities toward those entrusted to their care. Paul manifested this attitude in his preaching (2 Cor. 12:14-19; 1 Thess. 2:9-12). In like manner, elders watch over the flock, i.e., the local congregation of which they are members (Acts 20:28; Heb. 13:17; 1 Pet. 5:1-3).

Shifted Responsibility

Consider the example of Adam and Eve. God gave them clear instructions regarding the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Gen. 2:15-17). Yet, both sinned. Yielding to temptation, the woman took from its fruit and ate; and she also gave to her husband with her, and he ate. Eve was deceived, but Adam sinned in full awareness of his transgression. When questioned by God, both shifted the responsibility, Adam blaming the woman, and Eve blaming the serpent (Gen. 3:1-13; 1 Tim. 2:12-15).

Consider the example of King Saul. God commanded, “Now go and strike Amalek and utterly destroy all that he has, and do not spare him; but put to death both man and woman, child and infant, ox and sheep, camel and donkey” (1 Sam. 15:3). Afterwards, Saul boasted to Samuel, “I have carried out the command of the Lord.” When the prophet asked, “What then is this bleating of the sheep in my ears, and the lowing of the oxen which I hear?” Shifting the blame and attempting to spin his failure favorably, Saul said, “The people spared the best of the sheep and

oxen, to sacrifice to the Lord your God” (1 Sam. 15:10-23).

Consider also the ancient (unscriptural) proverb about eating sour grapes (Jer. 31:27-30; Ezek. 18:1-4). Jeremiah’s prohibition of this proverb occurs in the context of a Messianic prophecy: “In those days they will not say again, ‘The fathers have eaten sour grapes, And the children’s teeth are set on edge.’ But everyone will die for his own iniquity; each man who eats the sour grapes, his teeth will be set on edge” (Jer. 31:27-34, esp. vv. 29-30). Unlike the Mosaic covenant, which was based on physical birth, the new and better Christian covenant is contingent upon hearing, learning and obeying the will of God—which involves accepting responsibility for one’s actions.

The 18th chapter of Ezekiel helps us appreciate the goodness and severity of God: He deals justly with individuals. “Behold, all souls are Mine,” saith the Lord, “the soul of the father as well as the



soul of the son is Mine. The soul who sins will die” (1-4; cf. v. 20). The righteous man shall live (vv. 5-9). The wicked man shall die (vv. 10-13). The righteous son of a wicked man shall live while the father shall die (vv. 14-18). The principle of personal accountability is again proclaimed (vv. 19-20). The formerly wicked man who repents and turns to God shall live (vv. 21-23). The formerly righteous man who turns aside to evil

shall die (vv. 24-29). As the chapter concludes, the principle of personal accountability is again reiterated— repentance and a reorientation of one’s life are required (vv. 30-32).

Let us avoid shifting the responsibility of the home to the church. If God gives certain responsibilities to the home, we should not shift that burden to government or the church, such as social and recreational activities (1 Cor. 11:17-22), or the care of aged relatives (1 Tim. 5:3-16).

Conclusion

Those with an entitlement mentality refuse to accept that the problems are of their making. All such efforts to shift responsibility are doomed to failure (Prov. 1:29-31). Those who trust in the Lord have One who will help bear their burdens, but the wicked will face the disastrous consequences of their sinful choices (Ps. 55:22-23).

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Please come again.**

● **Let us know if you have any questions.**