



**WELLSPRING MEN'S FIRETEAMS**





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## FIRETEAM RESOURCES

*EVENT ACTION LOGS (EAL)*





## THEME PASSAGES

### *2 Timothy 2:1-7:*

You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. <sup>2</sup> And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others. <sup>3</sup> Join with me in suffering, like a good soldier of Christ Jesus. <sup>4</sup> No one serving as a soldier gets entangled in civilian affairs, but rather tries to please his commanding officer. <sup>5</sup> Similarly, anyone who competes as an athlete does not receive the victor's crown except by competing according to the rules. <sup>6</sup> The hardworking farmer should be the first to receive a share of the crops. <sup>7</sup> Reflect on what I am saying, for the Lord will give you insight into all this.

### *Ephesians 6:10-18:*

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. <sup>11</sup> Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. <sup>12</sup> For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. <sup>13</sup> Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. <sup>14</sup> Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, <sup>15</sup> and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. <sup>16</sup> In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. <sup>17</sup> Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. <sup>18</sup> And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.





### **WHAT IS A MILITARY FIRETEAM?**

A military fireteam is the smallest unit of troops for military infantry. This smaller unit gives troops the freedom to make autonomous decisions in real time based on the needs of an ever-developing situation while always keeping in mind the overall mission at hand. Each fireteam has a fireteam leader. Multiple fireteams group to form a squad with a squad leader.

### **WHAT ARE MEN'S FIRETEAMS AT WELLSPRING?**

A fireteam is a small group of men (about 3-6) who meet regularly (1 or more times a month) for mutual accountability, confession, prayer, and encouragement toward godly living.

### **WHAT IS A FIRETEAM NOT?**

It is not a Bible study, which emphasizes growth in biblical knowledge and understanding.

It is not a Life Group, which emphasizes doing life together holistically.

It is not a replacement for serving in the church.

It is not a replacement for weekend worship gatherings.

### **SO, HOW DO FIRETEAMS WORK TOGETHER WITH OTHER DISCIPLE-MAKING MINISTRIES AT WELLSPRING?**

Fireteams can meet the need for more specific accountability and confession between men as it pertains to pursuing a life of godliness. It is not meant to replace the importance of Life Groups or Bible studies or serving or weekend worship gatherings; on the contrary, it can easily be a supplement to them.

At the same time, for those who are unable to be a part of other ministries above—for whatever reason(s)—can start or join a fireteam.





## 5 CORE ELEMENTS OF FIRETEAM TIME TOGETHER

### 1) Bible Reading Accountability

2 questions every man answers every time:

- What have you learned in the Bible since the last time we met?
- Did you meditate on Scripture daily since the last time we met?
  - If not, what can you change so that you can meditate on Scripture daily moving forward?
- This format allows for men to not add another book or another reading plan to what they are already doing at church or through a Bible reading plan. It assumes they are studying God's Word somehow and forces them to communicate what they are already learning to the group.

### 2) Specific Accountability Questions and Confession

- This would be based off the specific struggles/sin patterns of the individuals of the group. Let the focus be on only one or two major areas of focus for each group member.
- So, each man would have 1-2 primary accountability questions *he forms based on his own particular struggles* and then shares the answer(s) to the question(s) in the presence of the fireteam each time they get together. (*Use Accountability Cards provided*)
- Whenever a man has overcome a particular sin battle, he celebrates with the group and then starts a new question or pair of questions.

#### Examples:

- If a man struggles with looking at pornography, a specific question can be, "Did you intentionally look at any pornographic images or videos since we last met?"
- If a man struggles with speaking harshly to his family, a specific question can be, "Would your wife or kids consider any words to them as harsh since we last met?"



**3) General Q: Are there any other sins you need to confess from since last time we saw each other?**

- This allows no “wobble room” for someone not to confess what they need to just because it is not in the specific area they are focusing on in a particular season.

**4) Discipleship Q: How can we (the men in your group) help you follow Jesus before we meet again?**

- This is where we try and find a way to stay engaged with each other throughout the weeks and months to stay focused and intentional in our pursuit of Christ.

**5) Pray Together**

- Everyone prays for another person in the group to end the time together.

## **MISCELLANEOUS NOTES**

- Ideally, the men who are in a fireteam together are also overlapping in other areas of life or ministry. For example, they can all serve in the same ministry at church. Or, they can all be in the same Life Group. But this element is not essential.
- These groups can add more elements to their group if they want, but cannot take away from these core five above. For example, if a group of men struggle with money management, they can decide to read a book together on the topic.
- This document serves as a basic guide with foundational ideas to keep these groups focused on the main purpose of accountability and encouragement. However, these groups can use their own creativity to build upon these essential components.

## **SUMMARY**

A fireteam is a small group of men who are desiring to grow as disciple-making disciples of Jesus and are willing, therefore, to open their lives up for encouragement, challenge, and accountability with other like-minded men.



## THE NEED TO HAVE INTENTIONAL AND CONSISTENT ACCOUNTABILITY

Michael Swindell

*“And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds.”*

*Hebrews 10:24*

Sometimes after the kids go to bed, I want to binge eat every delicious chip in the house or stuff my face with whatever sweets are still lying around from the last holiday. Sometimes I want to spend an hour watching hilarious or fascinating Instagram Reels until I'm emotionally numbed from the day. Sometimes I want to yell at my kids, because the flesh inside of me rages against their disrespect. Sometimes I want to be harsh and sarcastic to my wife because she isn't perfectly doing something I want her to do. Sometimes I want to sleep in and not pursue time in God's Word or in prayer. And if I am honest, there are times when I abstain from these things in the moment not because I love God so much, but because *I'd rather not feel embarrassed as I confess my sin* to the men in my life who help hold me accountable. **This is the core value of accountability: it motivates us live the way we need to live at the moments we don't want to.** If I didn't have men in my life holding me accountable, I would sin more, pursue God less, and fail to reach my God-given potential. It's really that simple.

Accountability, that is confessing to others the honest truth about whether or not we are living in alignment with the way we say we will, is a necessary support considering the inherent moral weaknesses of every person. There is no man on earth who can, by himself, grow into the man God has called him to be. Without some form of intentional and consistent accountability in his life, his growth will be slow and stunted at best. It's not that weak men need accountability and strong men don't; instead, all men are weak in different areas of their life and need accountability to help them grow in those areas. Let me be direct: *you cannot become fully the man God has designed and called you to be without some form of intentional and consistent accountability.* If you want to live the life God has



called you to live—a life of holiness, passion, purpose, and power—you will need to find some way to incorporate accountability consistently into your life.

Think about the men in the NFL. These men are some of the most athletically gifted men on planet earth. Yet, each one of them has the accountability of at least the following: their agent, the NFL players association, their general manager, the team owner, their head coach, their offensive or defensive coordinator, their position coach, the team captain, other players on the team, and their team’s fans who will adore them for great performance and criticize them for poor performance. There is no man in the NFL who succeeds without enormous pressures of accountability spurring him on toward excellence in his craft.

Now consider: if some of the most athletically gifted men in the world need such high levels of accountability *to play a sport that they already love playing*, then why should we think we don’t need accountability to grow in godliness? If millions of dollars of accountability are needed for these athletes to thrive, then what makes us think that we don’t need to focus on developing relationships that help us stay accountable to the purposes of God in our life? The truth is that all people are hard-wired with the need for other people to help them become all that God has designed and called them to become. God has designed a world in which no man reaches his full moral, relational, or professional potential without having others hold him accountable to growth in various areas. It’s not a matter of whether we like the way God has set up things in the universe; it’s whether we are willing to acknowledge our need and do whatever it takes to receive the feedback and accountability we need. Are we? Are you?

As Christians, God has given us the wonderful gift of other brothers in Christ who call help “spur us on” to living the way God desires for us to live. Yet, if we fail to take advantage of the gift of our spiritual brothers, then we are like a man who would prefer to wage a war on his own. That’s not heroism, that’s foolishness. So instead of missing out on the gift of Christian accountability, and in so doing miss out on the fullness of life that God designed us to live, let us pursue and practice intentional and consistent accountability for the glory of God. Let’s live the life of godliness we are meant to, and let’s do it alongside of others who are committed to the same journey.





## HOW TO CRAFT EXCELLENT ACCOUNTABILITY QUESTIONS THAT WORK

*Michael Swindell*

*Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed.*

*The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.*

**James 5:16**

I have been a part of various accountability groups for much of the last twenty years. Some of these groups have been more effective than others, and the biggest difference between the effective ones and the ineffective ones is the passion and the consistency of the men who have been a part of them. Without commitment and passion, accountability groups deform into lifeless meetings and eventually cease. Yet, at the same time, there is another factor in the effectiveness of a group, but it is rarely ever discussed from my experience. In fact, I cannot actually remember a time that anyone has ever talked about this issue, at least in the way I seek to in this article. What is the issue? *The quality of our accountability questions in large part determines the effectiveness of our accountability group to produce growth in our lives.* Go ahead and slowly read that sentence again. In other words, if we are asking unhelpful questions, we will give unhelpful answers. If we do not know exactly what we are being held accountable to, then are we really being held accountable? And if we're not really being held accountable, then how can we expect to grow?

Let's start here: "What is an accountability question?" *An accountability question is the question that you answer in front of others in order to stay accountable to living the way you said you would.* This is your question. You answer it. We answer these questions all the time in our everyday life:

**"Honey, did you take out the trash?"**

**"Hey Steve, did you send that email?"**

**"Does anyone around here know if Ryan actually filed his paperwork?"**

**"Kids, did you do what your mom told you to do?"**



An accountability question really is a simple thing and we are pretty good at it when we are not thinking about it, but in my experience we tend to craft unhelpful accountability questions when it comes to accountability groups. What do I mean? I mean that most people who craft accountability questions do not actually craft them in such a way to help them share *what is really going on with them*. And the core issue is this: *we tend to craft vague, ambiguous questions so that we can give vague, ambiguous answers. And we tend to do this so we don't have to be really honest about what is really going on in our lives.* Let's look at some examples of some vague and ambiguous (and unhelpful) accountability questions:

“So, Nick, how are you doing with lust these days?”

“Caleb, have you been reading your Bible consistently?”

“Kent, how's the prayer life going?”

“Peter, how's parenting?”

Notice the similarity between all of these questions: *they can all be answered in such a way to hide what is really going on*. Let's take each one of them and look at how a man could answer in such a way to hide what is really happening.

Q: “So, Nick, how are you doing with lust these days?”

A: “Yeah, I mean I think I'm doing better for sure. It's still a struggle, but I'm winning more thanks to this group.”

#### **What is really happening?**

*Nick looked at porn twice this past week instead of three times the week before. That might be improvement, but he intentionally is hiding some facts to not feel embarrassed by his sin.*

Q: “Caleb, have you been reading your Bible consistently?”

A: “It's not perfect, but it's definitely improving.”

#### **What is really happening?**

*Caleb read the Bible for five minutes once this last week, but he read a few more verses on Facebook and Twitter. This is better, but not really sufficient for consistent growth.*







Q: “Kent, how’s the prayer life going?”

A: “It’s a bit of a struggle right now, to be honest.”

### **What is really happening?**

*Kent hasn’t spent focused time praying for a month. That can be defined as a “struggle,” but the truth is Kent isn’t praying at all.*

Q: “Peter, how’s parenting?”

A: “It’s a handful, that’s for sure. Logan is not being very obedient right now, but—I mean—he’s three so that’s expected.”

### **What is really happening?**

*Peter has no idea how to parent his kids, because his dad was an alcoholic and didn’t teach him what healthy parenting looked like. So, Peter vacillates between yelling at his kids and just ignoring their disobedience.*

I could multiply example after example. But, we get the point. **So, if asking vague and ambiguous accountability questions is the problem, then what is the solution? Specific accountability questions that require specific answers.** If we want to be held accountable to something, we must get specific about what we actually want to be held accountable to. In contrast to the questions above, let’s look at some more specific questions that will be more effective.

“Nick, did you intentionally look at any porn since last time we met? If so, how much?”

“Caleb, did you read your Bible every day since we last met? If not, what days did you miss?”

“Kent, are you praying for 10 concentrated minutes every day like you said you would? If not, how many days have you missed?”

“Peter, did you yell at your kids since we last met? If so, what times did you?”

Can you see how these questions are specific and demand specific answers? In other words, a man can answer these or not answer these, but he cannot give vague, half-revealing answers. These are the types of accountability questions that are needed if we hope to actually grow in the areas we are weak.

Imagine a boss asking his sales team, “Hey guys, how are the sales this week?” And they answer, “Okay, but they could be better.” Do you think that boss is

okay with that answer? No! He wants to know exactly what the sales have been. Why? Because that's the whole point of the question! If the sales team does not have specific accountability to reach specific numbers, their motivation for growing as salesmen flies right out the window (especially if they are salaried and don't have commission)! The same is true in any area of life that we want to develop and get better. This, of course, includes growing in godliness.

So, what are some principles for crafting excellent accountability questions that help you and your accountability partners *increase your motivation to actually grow*? Here are three:

- 1. Craft a question that forces you to answer specifics.** Can you answer the question with a simple "Yes" or "No"? If so, that's a good question.
- 2. Craft a question that is reasonable.** If you pray 10 minutes a day for about two days a week right now, do not try and hold yourself accountable to 30 minutes daily. You'll likely fail too much, become discouraged, and give up.
- 3. Craft only one or two specific questions.** Too much accountability in too many areas is overwhelming. Craft one question around Bible reading goals, and only one or two more in other areas. That's it. Stay focused on a few critical areas until you see substantial progress.

Learning to craft excellent, helpful, specific, and motivating accountability questions is both an art and a science. It takes time, and that's okay. But, don't give up. Some questions are better than others. Strive to ask and answer good questions so that both you and your accountability brothers benefit.

The main reason I believe we avoid specific questions is because we are afraid of feeling embarrassed or ashamed or weak if we fail. And that's understandable. Nobody likes to disappoint others. Nobody likes to feel embarrassed. Unfortunately, if we do not ask specific questions then *we lose so much motivation to grow!* In our fight to grow into the men of God we are designed and called to become, we need more motivation, not less. And regardless of how many times we fail, *there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ* (Rom. 8:1)! Although everyone will fail and will not live up to their own expectations or others all the time, that doesn't mean there isn't inexhaustible grace from God that is available to heal us, restore us, and strengthen us for the days ahead. So take courage, Brothers, and ask the hard, specific questions. God's grace and mercy is more than enough.











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**2. Specific Accountability Questions and Confession. Where are you at with your key sin issue(s)?**

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**3. Are there other sins or struggles you need to confess from since the last time we saw each other?**

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**4. How can we help you follow Jesus before we meet again?**

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