

The Ishbane Conspiracy

Accountability

Ice Breaker/Game:

Book Study:

Image Distortion

Time: about 60-90 minutes

Students will learn about the themes of "The Ishbane Conspiracy" by Randy Alcorn, more specifically what real accountability is and how it benefits them in their lives.

Supplies: Bibles, *The Ishbane Conspiracy* by Randy Alcorn, Copy of Relationships of Accountability handout for each student.

Start the study out in a large group and discuss the students' reactions and insights of chapters 27-29. Allow time for discussions and questions. **(25min)**

What stood out to you, this week, in your reading?

Do you have any questions about what we have covered so far, or about the story?

What did you think about the class discussion that Rob had and Jillian's reaction?

Say: **Tonight we are going to talk about what it really means to be accountable.**

Ask: **What does the word accountable/accountability mean to you?**

Say: **Here is the actual definition of being accountable – "subject to the obligation to report, explain, or justify something; responsible; answerable." In other words, Accountability is taking or being assigned responsibility for something that you have done or something you are supposed to do.**

Ask: **Why is it important to be accountable to others?**

Say: **In order to live a Godly life, being accountable to each other is essential. If you do not have a Christian mentor in your life, you need to seek out someone that is mature in their faith, older, and able to invest into your life.**

Ask: **Can you be accountable to your peers?**

When was there a time you were helped, challenged, or corrected by a friend?

What would have happened if that friend wouldn't have been there?

Break into small groups of 4-5.

(25 min)

Hand out a copy of the "Relationships of Accountability" hand out to each student, and go over the check list with the students as a practical tool for accountability partners. Talk about why each of these is important and have the students brainstorm more guidelines.

(Discussion based on Innovative Tools by Group Publishing)

Read *Proverbs 2:1-5*

2 My child, ^[a] listen to what I say, and treasure my commands. ² Tune your ears to wisdom, and concentrate on understanding. ³ Cry out for insight, and ask for understanding. ⁴ Search for them as you would for silver; seek them like hidden treasures. ⁵ Then you will understand what it means to fear the Lord, and you will gain knowledge of God.

Ask: **What does wisdom have to do with accountability?**

Say: **One of the benefits of accountability is that it can help protect you from the damaging effects of sin. The prayers of others and the realization that we have to answer to real people can give us the strength to avoid sin. But for the relationship to work, you have to be honest and you have to trust that person.**

Come back together into a large group.

(25min)

Say: **Accountability absolutely requires vulnerability. A lot of people, and maybe even you, have said that they need accountability but when the time comes for them to be held accountable, they react against it because it feels like it is judgment.**

Ask: **What is the difference between holding someone accountable and judging them?**

Read *Proverbs 17:10 (GNT)*, *Proverbs 27:6*, *Proverbs 27:17*

¹⁰ An intelligent person learns more from one rebuke than a fool learns from being beaten a hundred times.

⁶ Wounds from a sincere friend are better than many kisses from an enemy.

¹⁷ As iron sharpens iron, so a friend sharpens a friend.

Have a student come up and act a short role play that involves having to hold the youth pastor accountable for something. Make sure that they understand that this is an already established relationship, and that Pastor Mike has asked to be held accountable. Pastor Mike should act offended and react against the discomfort of the situation.

Say: If you are really being accountable to someone, it will not always be easy and comfortable. When we have to confess sin in our lives, our natural instinct is to get defensive and claim to be right. But God calls us to humble ourselves, not as a punishment, but so that we can reconcile ourselves to God and live healthier lives.

End by reading *1 Peter 5:5* and prayer.

⁵In the same way, you younger men must accept the authority of the elders. And all of you, serve each other in humility, for “God opposes the proud but favors the humble.”^[a]