

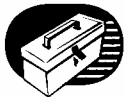
RULE 3 ■ Know Your Family

The Family of Responsibility



Surveying the Site

1. When did you first start to feel like an adult?
2. Who taught you how to do your job? What was your relationship like?
3. Have you taught a son, a daughter, a younger brother or sister, or another youth to play ball, or to drive? What was it like?



Checking Your Toolbox

In the last weeks, we have looked at some of men's most important relationships. We are sons and inheritors of traditions and skills. We are husbands, partners, coworkers, lovers, and brothers. As we continue into adulthood, we may add other roles as well: father, uncle, teacher, mentor, manager, coach, or grandfather. In these roles, we become part of a family of responsibility. We can show other people how to live in the world.

These adult roles add a new aspect to our lives. As sons, we accept and inherit. As husbands, we are partners. As fathers and mentors, we participate in a deeper responsibility. Because we have increased in our capabilities, we have a responsibility to care for others. If we have children, we provide for them, protect them, nourish them, and teach them the ways to live best. We also teach our jobs to new people at work and pass on our skills to apprentices. In the community, we become leaders so

that we share our talents and gifts with others around us.

As mentors, fathers, and leaders, we must always act in responsibility and respect. It is not our job to control others or to tell people what to do. We are not bosses for everyone we meet, and we shouldn't act as if we know everything and can solve every problem for everyone else. Instead, we should act out of caring and concern, helping people to take care of themselves and providing for their needs out of our resources. Adult men need to be giving to their communities.

- What have you learned from someone who has mentored you that you want to pass on to someone younger?

Parenting is one of the most demanding parts of this responsibility. As a father, a man has responsibilities twenty-four hours a day. Children pay close attention to their fathers (even when it seems as if they aren't!) and will go out of their way to become like their fathers. They imitate the men they see in their lives, and so we are role models throughout our lives. Just as people taught us how to live in the real world, we must pass it on to the next generation.

Part of the responsibility of Christian men is to spread the faith. Through our examples, we teach our own children and other children how to be Christian and live in faithfulness to God. This is one of the greatest responsibilities we have. We are examples in our daily living for our children, but also for a wide variety of other people. We are the image of Christ

Blueprints

When I was a son with my father, tender, and my mother's favorite, he taught me, and said to me, "Let your heart hold fast my words; keep my commandments, and live. Get wisdom; get insight: do not forget, nor turn away from the words of my mouth."

Proverbs 4:3-5

everywhere we go, and people throughout the community learn about being Christian by watching us. We owe it to God and to ourselves to live lives of integrity and faith, while doing all that we can to help others do the same thing.

■ Who are you responsible for? What do those responsibilities look like?

As Christians, how can we be more responsible for sharing our faith?



Conversation with the Master Carpenter

Close your session with prayer. Lift up any prayer concerns or insights. Pray for God to empower you with God's Spirit in ways that will let you carry out your responsibilities as a father, mentor, and/or leader from an increasing Christ-centeredness in your life.



On-the-Job Experience

1. Ask around the church and find a teenager who is thinking about a job like yours. Spend some time with him or her and let him or her know what it is like for you.
2. Volunteer in your community to teach an adult to read or to take better care of personal finances.
3. Spend some time each week with children and become a role model for

them as people and as Christians. You might become a Big Brother through a local program, a coach or assistant for a children's athletic team, a Sunday school teacher, a youth-group leader, or a nursery attendant at church.