

My Interests and Dreams



Surveying the Site

1. Take a few minutes to reflect on the one dream (what you wanted to be when you grew up) you had as a boy. What was it? Share your boyhood dream with the other men.
2. Did you achieve your dream? If so, what sacrifices did you make? If not, what got in the way?



Checking Your Toolbox

Dreams. Every boy has to have a dream. No boy would ever pick up a basketball if it weren't for the dream of being the next Larry Bird or Michael Jordan or making the winning shot. There would be no airports or 747s or space shuttles if it weren't for man's dream of soaring through the heavens like the birds. It's quite possible that teenage boys would never have bathed if it weren't for the dream of getting their first kiss. Dreams are the driving force of human achievement.

Most of us never achieve those boyhood dreams. We eventually reach that age when we know we won't be tall enough or fast enough or sing well enough or see well enough. Physical limitations have put an end to a lot of dreams. We also find that as we grow up, our interests change. Our experiences in life open up new and more exciting horizons to us. New dreams emerge from new interests. We are once again off and running in hot pursuit. Circumstances have a way of altering our dreams: marriage,

children, divorce, job loss, and the death of a loved one. Yet with each new experience, no matter the height of its joy or the depth of its pain, there comes a new opportunity for a new dream, a new motivation that puts energy into our bodies and purpose into our lives. Every boy, every man has to have a dream.

- What is your strongest interest at this stage of your life? How does it reward you? What does it demand of you? Is there room in this interest for God?

Read the Blueprints. The prodigal son had a dream. He asked his father to finance it for him. His father lovingly obliged. The son's dream was never fulfilled. Circumstances changed. His money ran out. Good work was hard to find. He had to come to terms with his station in life. He assessed the state of repair of his spiritual house. It needed serious repair. He knew where to turn to put his house in order. Experience buried one dream and gave birth to another.

As we conclude the first "rule," we are given the opportunity to do a little assessment of ourselves. We are beginning the process of coming to terms with ourselves and with our stations in life. Like the prodigal son, we, too, have someone to turn to for help in getting our spiritual houses in order. It is Jesus Christ, the Master Carpenter. The tools he will use will take many forms. As it was for the prodigal son, it may be our fathers or male role models. It will most certainly be the men in this group. It will hopefully be your minister, church family, family, and friends as well. The Master Carpenter will use scripture, worship, prayer, service, and the experiences of life, old and new, as the

tools for helping us in our task. It is a growing faith that allows us to recognize the tools he places in our lives.

- Take a quick inventory of the “tools” in your toolbox. What are some of the tools you already have available for working on your “spiritual house”?



Conversation with the Master Carpenter

Close your session with prayer. Thank God for each man’s dreams and interests. Ask God to bless the dreams each of you still hold dear. Ask God to give each of you the strength and courage to still pursue them.



On-the-Job Experience

Over the course of these last four weeks, you have looked at how your upbringing, your family, your job, and your dreams and interests have helped to shape your life. Remember, we are all products of our past. It is up to you whether or not those past experiences will continue to determine your life. With this in mind, take a daily inventory of the “tools” the master carpenter is placing in your life. Using your pocket notebook from last week, record those tools in prayer. Every time one makes its presence known, write a brief prayer that begins, “Lord, I am a man under construction. Thank you for sending me...[Fill in the rest with the name or description of the ‘tool’]. Help me to...” You fill in the rest. This exercise should continue throughout your work as an apprentice.

Blueprints

“A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and traveled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living. When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need...but when he came to himself he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands.’ So he set off and went to his father.”

Luke 15:13–20a

Group Action/Reflection

Pick a morning between now and the start of your next session in which all the members of the group can have an early morning breakfast together. While enjoying the fellowship of breakfast, discuss the state of repair of the building in which you worship. If old, is it adequate? If new, why the need for a new building? Tell any stories you might know about the church building. They may be personal. Share any feelings you have about the need for changing the current building and the costs/benefits of such changes. What would be the process of going about implementing the changes you have identified? Depart by extending to one another the peace of Christ. Look forward in anticipation to beginning Rule 2.