

Owning Kingdom Responsibility

Series: Following Jesus: Growing & Maturing

Matthew 5:48 TM (0922)

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CHARLES COLSON *Ordained by God as the basic unit of human organization, the family is . . . the first school of human instruction. Parents take small, self-centered monsters, who spend much of their time screaming defiantly and hurling peas on the carpet, and teach them to share, to wait their turn, to respect others' property. These lessons translate into respect for others, self-restraint, obedience to law—in short, into the virtues of individual character that are vital to a society's survival.*

Matthew 5:48 TM *"In a word, what I'm saying is, Grow up. You're kingdom subjects. Now live like it. Live out your God-created identity. Live generously and graciously toward others, the way God lives toward you.*

I. The connection between maturity and responsibility

a. The seeming loss of "natural" understanding

b. We must resist the tendency toward "consumer Christianity"

II. Taking responsibility for our own spiritual lives

Galatians 6:4-5 TM *Make a careful exploration of who you are and the work you have been given, and then sink yourself into that. Don't be impressed with yourself. Don't compare yourself with others. Each of you must take responsibility for doing the creative best you can with your own life.*

BILLY GRAHAM *God will hold us responsible as to how well we fulfill our responsibilities to this age and take advantage of our opportunities.*

a. Myths that hinder our progress in owning kingdom responsibility

CHARLES R. SWINDOLL *A family is a place where principles are hammered and honed on the anvil of everyday living.*

Just like children, we love to blame our siblings for our own immaturity and selfishness! A wise parent is not fooled by this ploy. A wise parent says to both children, "You worry about you. As you grow up you'll be amazed at how much your brother or sister suddenly changes!"

GEORGE MACDONALD *You would not think any duty small if you yourself were great.*

John 13:3-5 TM *Jesus knew that the Father had put him in complete charge of everything, that he came from God and was on his way back to God. So he got up from the supper table, set aside his robe, and put on an apron. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the feet of the disciples, drying them with his apron.*

JEWISH PROVERB *If each one sweeps in front of his own door, the whole street is clean.*

SAINT AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO *Since you cannot do good to all, you are to pay special regard to those who, by the accidents of time, or place, or circumstances, are brought into closer connection with you.*

RING LARDNER *The family you come from isn't as important as the family you're going to have.*

b. Three major challenges to maturity

Proverbs 26:17 NLT ¹⁷*As iron sharpens iron, a friend sharpens a friend.*

1 Corinthians 15:33 NIV ³³*Do not be misled: "Bad company corrupts good character."*

III. Taking responsibility for our role in the church

a. The role of leaders in the church

Romans 12:8 NLT *If God has given you leadership ability, take the responsibility seriously.*

DWIGHT LYMAN MOODY *I believe the family was established long before the church, and my duty is to my family first. I am not to neglect my family.*

Ephesians 4:11-13 NLT ¹¹*He is the one who gave these gifts to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. 12Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ, ¹³until we come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God's Son that we will be mature and full grown in the Lord, measuring up to the full stature of Christ.*

b. The role of members of the body of Christ

1 Thessalonians 5:12-13 TM *And now, friends, we ask you to honor those leaders who work so hard for you, who have been given the responsibility of urging and guiding you along in your obedience. Overwhelm them with appreciation and love! Get along among yourselves, each of you doing your part.*

c. Wise managers of what we have been given

2 Corinthians 2:9 TM *The focus of my letter wasn't on punishing the offender but on getting you to take responsibility for the health of the church.*