

Being “Responsible”

Becoming progressively more “responsible” is inseparably linked to maturation/growing up- you can’t do one without the other, cf. Heb.5:12-14; Eph.4:11-16; 2Pet.3:18. Thus, as you grow/mature, so do your responsibilities, and vice versa.

You, our children, are maturing/growing before our very eyes. As you forge ahead toward inevitable maturity, we often want selfishly to cling to you- almost to hold you back from it, longing for the time when you were babies... that’s usually the Moms... the Dads, on the other hand, can’t wait to get you “grown and gone”! Just teasing... sort of, but not really.

But seriously, I’ll let you in on a secret: In a sense, your growth and maturity, and the responsibilities that come with it and to some degree cause it, terrify us as parents. Have we adequately prepared you? Are you ready for each layer of successive responsibility? And all the time, you can’t wait to get “there”!

So tonight, let’s talk about “responsibilities” and being “responsible”... what does that even mean? The American Heritage Dictionary defines “responsible” as, in part, “personal accountability or ability to act without guidance or superior authority” and, “capable of making moral or rational decisions on one’s own and therefore answerable for one’s own behavior.” Personal accountability. Acting without guidance or superior authority. Making your own decisions AND being answerable/accountable for them. That’s responsibility! So, if you want to make your own decisions and “grow up,” you must be also willing to be held accountable for them and your own behavior.

You need to take your “responsibilities” seriously; many of you have “put on Christ in baptism.” While this of itself doesn’t make you a mature “grown up,” it is definitely an *adult* thing to do that comes with *adult* responsibilities, cf. Acts 8:12. So...

- ✓ Be responsible for **your things**, Luke 16:12;
- ✓ Be responsible for **your duties** (familial chores, school work, spiritual duties and opportunities), Eph.6:1-4; 4:16;
- ✓ Be responsible for **your dress**, 1Tim.2:9-10; cp. 1Pet.3:3-4;
- ✓ Be responsible for **your speech**, Eph.4:29; Titus 2:8;
- ✓ Be responsible for **your actions**, Titus 2:6-7;
- ✓ Be responsible for **your attitude**, Phil.2:5ff; 3:13-16 (*Christ-like, or selfish?*);
- ✓ Be responsible for **your emotions**, Eph.4:26; Phil.4:4-7 (including thoughts, v.8);
- ✓ Be responsible for **your temptation**, Jas.1:13-16; 1John 1:8-10; and,
- ✓ Be responsible for **your soul**, Gal.6:3-5; Matt.16:26 (it’s the most precious/valuable thing you have, or will ever have).

But don’t take or take on “responsibility” for:

- × **Your friends (or siblings!) when they misbehave and get in trouble-** you can’t help them to *know* or *do* better by joining them in doing wrong, Eph.5:3-17; 2Cor.5:10;
- × **Your parents when they disobey God, or mistreat one another or you-** that’s NOT your fault or responsibility, cp. 2Cor.12:14; Ezk.18:20; Eph.6:4; Col.3:21.

Conclusion: *Responsibilities* (and taking them on, and being accountable for them) is part of growing up and into maturity; don’t shun but instead embrace them! I have every confidence in you! Yes, it *is* a “*crooked and perverse generation*” in which we live- but you **can** be “*lights in the world*,” Phil.2:15... if you take your responsibilities seriously!