

INDEPENDENCE!

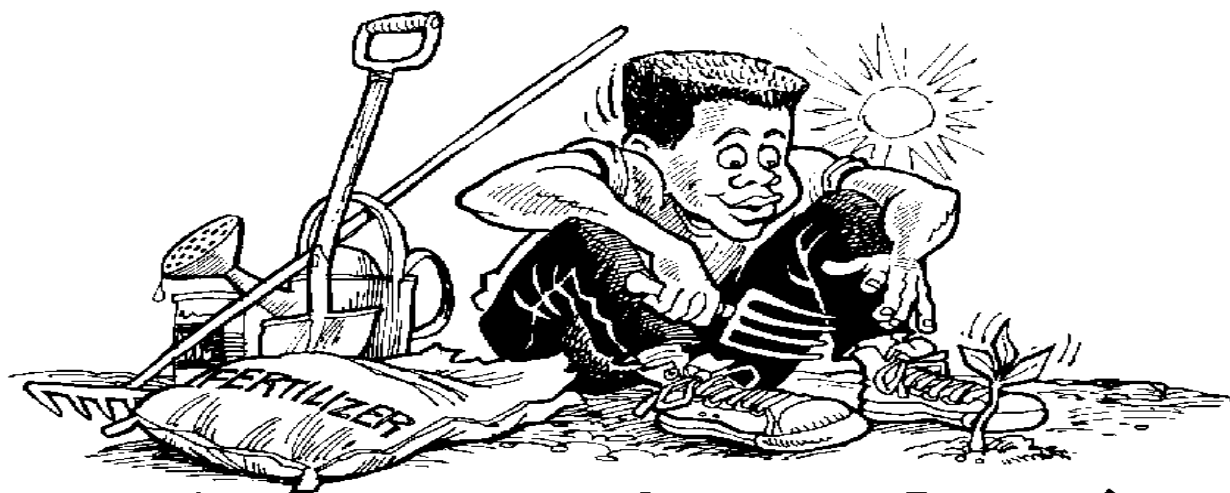
Adolescence is a time of transition between childhood and adulthood. It's a time of growing up into an independent individual. This evening we are going to discover that we can prepare for increasing freedom and responsibility by respecting, obeying and communicating with our parents.

Start by making a list. List ways in which you and your parents have different opinions.

WHAT I LIKE...	WHEN IT COMES TO...	WHAT MY PARENTS LIKE...
	MUSIC	
	FASHION	
	FOOD	
	MY CURFEW	

It's easy to see that God created you different than your parents. You will gain increasing freedom as you grow through the teen years. This freedom takes time, and comes with increased responsibility.

Let's take a look at some principles to remember that will help you grow in independence!



It's Time to Do Some Growing!

PRINCIPLE #1 - OBEY AND HONOR YOUR PARENTS

Look up Ephesians 6:1-3.

What two things are children commanded to do regarding their parents?

_____ AND _____

What does God promise for those who obey this commandment?

Let's look more closely at the idea of **OBEYING** and **HONORING** your parents.

Look up **Luke 2:51**. According to this verse, what was Jesus' attitude toward His parents?

FOR DISCUSSION -

- In what area is it the hardest for you to obey your parents? Why?
- How do you think obeying your parents will help you grow in independence?
- How does not obeying your parents hinder your growth in independence?

Webster's dictionary defines HONOR as "to respect greatly - to show high regard for."

Honoring someone means respecting them and considering them very important people. It's considering someone important enough to do what they say.

Honoring is a choice, not a feeling. God wants us to consider our parents extremely important and valuable. He wants us to show them the same honor we would our favorite musician or sports star!

Name three things you could do to show your parents you honor them.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____



Honoring your parents also means refraining from DISHONORING them. Smart comments, sarcastic remarks, talking poorly about them to friends and making fun of them are all DISHONORING to our parents.

FOR DISCUSSION

- How do you think HONORING your parents helps you grow in independence?
- How would DISHONORING them hinder your efforts for more independence?

PRINCIPLE #2 - BE RESPONSIBLE IN THE LITTLE THINGS!

Jesus, in Matthew chapter 25, tells a story about a man who gave certain responsibilities to his servants before traveling on a long trip. When he returned, he called his servants together and asked them how they responded to the responsibilities he gave them.

The first two servants carried out their responsibilities flawlessly. The Master responded to both by saying, "Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things!"

But the one servant who did not fulfill his responsibility was told, "You wicked, lazy servant!" And what he had was taken away from him.

What is the moral of this story?

What are some of the responsibilities your parents have given you?

FOR DISCUSSION

- What does it mean to act responsibly in these areas?
- How do you think acting responsibly in the few areas you have now will help you grow in independence?
- How does it hurt your chances to grow in independence when you blow off the responsibilities you have now?



It's important to remember that with increased freedom comes increased responsibility. The more independence you have, the more responsibilities that come with it.

For instance, discuss the increased responsibilities that come with these markers of independence.

Buying a car.

Going to college.

Owning a home.

Being a parent!

WRAPPING UP

As you grow in independence, remember that you are gaining your independence from your parents. Prepare for increasing freedom and responsibility by respecting, obeying and communicating with your parents. Let's end by reading this note from a mother to her child. Discuss your reactions afterward.

Dear Katie,

I can hardly believe how quickly you've grown up! You're no longer a child, but you're not quite an adult yet either. But I can see the time I have left with you under my roof is running out. As we look to your future, there are a few things I want to share with you to help these last years at home be the best they can be.

I realize you want your freedom and independence - and you feel, "the sooner the better!" Sometimes I must drive you nuts with all my "motherly" talks. Please be patient with me! This is new for me too! You see, when I first became a mother, my job was to protect and care for you. You were completely dependent on me!

Now this person I was totally responsible for is becoming more and more independent. It's exciting to watch you grow. I love to see what God is doing in your life. But I hope you understand my job as a mother is not quite done. I still have a few more years to help you prepare for adulthood.

I realize I can't protect you from everything and please understand I am not trying to take away all your fun - or keep you a baby. It's just that someday you will live on your own and I want to do everything I can to help you prepare for it. Too much freedom at one time can be more harmful than good. And since I will answer to God for how well I've trained you - both in everyday life and in your spiritual life - I want to make sure I do the best job I can.

My job as a mother is to work myself out of a job! There's still lots to cover to prepare you completely. Let's agree to take one step at a time.

I pray daily for God to help me be a wise mother. As we travel down this road ahead, let's be united as a family, looking forward to the future, but enjoying every minute of today!

I love you,
Mom