

LESSON 5: GROWING UP: FROM CONSUMER TO CONTRIBUTOR

RC BLAKES

When my children were toddlers, they contributed absolutely nothing to the household. They consumed food, they created messes, and they required constant supervision. That is completely normal for a toddler. But if a thirty-year-old man lives in his parents' house, eats their food, makes a mess, and refuses to get a job, something has gone terribly wrong. Growth requires a shift in responsibility. At some point, you have to stop merely consuming the resources of the house and start contributing to the health of the family.

#1 THE TRAP OF CONSUMER CHURCH CULTURE

The modern church has conditioned believers to remain spiritual toddlers. We evaluate the worship set, we critique the sermon, and if our preferences are not met, we take our attendance somewhere else. We treat the church like a restaurant instead of a family. But kingdom citizens operate entirely differently. If you have been sitting under solid teaching and receiving the grace of God for years, it is time to grow up and carry the mantle for the next generation.

Hebrews 5:12 NIV

In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food!

Transition: But if we are going to step into our destiny, we have to clarify whose job it is to raise the family.

#2 THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A PASTOR AND A SPIRITUAL FATHER

Failing to make this distinction is one of the quickest ways to stay stuck in spiritual infancy. A pastor is an office; spiritual fathering is a life-on-life covenant. I am your Pastor. I provide the covering, the vision, and the uncompromised Word for this house. But Jesus pastored the multitudes and fathered the twelve. He knew authentic partnership does not scale. If you are waiting for the pulpit to do all the fathering, you are feeding the consumer church bottleneck. God placed mature men and women in the seats next to you who are uniquely suited to water your destiny.

Mark 3:14 NIV

He appointed twelve that they might be with him and that he might send them out to preach.

Transition: The responsibility of passing down the divine inheritance belongs to the entire Body of Christ.

#3 DEMYSTIFYING THE CONNECTION

How do you actually find this? First, remember that true fathers do not campaign. So you have to look for the quiet, mature believers who have a peace you desire or a marriage you respect. Second, recognize that while the connection is supernatural, it begins with a natural step. You do not need a weird, formal ceremony. Walk up to them and say, "I really respect how you handle your family. Can I buy you a cup of coffee this week and ask you a few questions?" It starts with an invitation to wisdom.

D.L. Moody summarized this shift beautifully: "The measure of a man is not how many servants he has, but how many

men he serves."

2 Timothy 2:2 NIV

And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others.

Transition: It is time to take ownership of your personal potential.

THE MIRROR: SELF-ASSESSMENT

Look in the mirror one final time for this series: Am I unfairly expecting my Pastor to be my personal spiritual father? Who am I currently covering? Whose destiny am I actively watering?

Conclusion:

The biblical theology of spiritual fathering is profound. We must seek out the mantle of mature believers, we must heal from the counterfeits, and we must reject the orphan spirit. But at the end of the day, we are called to step up, carry the inheritance, and become the spiritual fathers and mothers this next generation desperately needs. The family is waiting. It is time to take your place.