

Parenting Your Kids to Adulthood, Part 6 | The Ceremony

I. The Goal

- We want to praise the Lord for His person and His work in your child.
- We want to honor your child for submitting to the Lord and working toward His glory.
- This is a time to show love toward the others in your child's life who have significantly contributed to the reaching, reproof, correction, and training that have brought them to this point.
- And, yes, this is also a tacit celebration of you, mom and dad, for submitting to God's expectations for your parenting. Should you plan a moment to pat yourself on the back? No. Will anyone take the time to do it for you? Maybe. But that's not the point. As a biblical parent, the experience itself is more than enough.

II. The People

- We want to invite the men and/or women who have intentionally and consistently influenced your child for the Lord.
- Hopefully this will include family, people in your church, Christian friends, and the others we discussed in our community episode.
- But what about your child's friends? This might be a tricky one.
 - If your child has friends who parent's are part of your parenting community, and you're all on the same page about rearing your kids to adulthood, those young people should definitely be there.
 - But what about your child's other friends—the kids on their team or the young people in their class?
 - This is not just a party where everyone amuses themselves. This is a significant celebration of an act of God in your child's life and them graduating out of childhood into adulthood. To be honest, most of their friends likely will not really get what's going on because their parents haven't been rearing them to be adults. But that doesn't mean they shouldn't be there. This is an opportunity to do something really grown up—to invite their friends to be exposed to the Gospel.
 - As always, you need to consider how many people should be there. There's no reason to feel like you have to rent out a hall. This can be as small and intimate as you want it to be. But I would also caution you not to invite so many young people that it becomes a distraction if they aren't mature enough to appreciate what's going on.

III. The Food

- Definitely have a meal your son or daughter will really enjoy.
- In his article, Scott Aniol shares that they served BBQ brisket at their son's ceremony and had a formal tea at their daughter's. Again, these aren't expectations; they're simply one man's example of things his children would love.
- What's funny is that no one in my family can remember what we ate during either of my kid's ceremonies. Now, our last one was nearly three years ago, and the one before that was nearly six years ago.
- According to my daughter, "My memory of my the rest of the Womanhood Ceremony overshadows what I ate."
- Needless to say, if the food is the biggest take away from the ceremony, there may have been some priority issues. But that doesn't mean it shouldn't be delicious and fun in the moment because eating and celebrating are intrinsically linked by God.

IV. The Ceremony

- A Reading of I Corinthians 13:11-13
- A Song of Worship
- A Meal
- Parental Challenge
- Community Challenges
 - Give careful thought to which of your guests you'd like to give a challenge and give them enough time to prepare their thoughts. This really shouldn't be done by the seat of anyone's pants or the skin of anyone's teeth. This is a big deal. This is important. No doubt, if these people have been actively involved in the discipleship of your kids, they will have a valuable challenge to contribute, but don't take that for granted.
 - You could also ask the specific speakers to touch on a unique topic to avoid the possibility of everyone sharing thoughts on the same verse.
- Presentation of the Code of Conduct
- Declaration of Adulthood
- The signing of the Code of Conduct and Declaration of Manhood
- A Reading of Proverbs 3:1-24 (young men) or Proverbs 31:10-31 (young ladies).
- Prayer of Blessing
- A Final Song of Worship
- Fellowship