

PRIVILEGES

“With privilege comes responsibility”, is a saying that I often use around my step-children. The saying means that privileges, such as using the kitchen between meals, require clean-up as well. If you use the kitchen and don’t clean-up afterward, you may lose your privilege.

To be given a privilege is to be given favor to do something that you want to do – whether you’ve earned it or you’re gracefully given it. When you turn the age of 16, driving privileges are given once a license is acquired. When you turn the age of 18, voting privileges are invoked once you register. When you turn 65 (an unimaginable age at this time of your life), senior citizen privileges are granted to include Social Security and other benefits.

Privileges can be granted and be taken away depending on the decision of those who allow or grant privileges and the recipient’s response, responsibility, treatment or behavior. If the recipient abuses the privilege, he may lose it if just for a temporary period. If you drive recklessly and acquire several tickets, you may have your license suspended or revoked; in addition, you may have to appear in courts, pay fines, and attend driver’s school.

Privilege is different from an entitlement. An entitlement is something you have earned or in some way expect based on circumstances. Sometimes entitlements

It is the province of knowledge to speak and it is the privilege of wisdom to listen.
- Oliver Wendell Holmes

and privileges are misunderstood or confused with each other. Consider the young person who believes that borrowing the car, or even having one purchased for him, is an entitlement when he turns 16 or acquires his driver’s license; thus, at 16, he expect a car or some form of *wheels and road-time*. In his confusion, driving or borrowing the car is not a privilege but rather an entitlement; driving does not result from responsibility and conditions but is instead a right simply because he has a license and desire to go somewhere.

A privilege should be under girded with trust, respect, and appreciation; but more than likely, a privilege is never fully appreciated, or the source fully respected, until the privilege is in jeopardy or has been lost for some reason. To lose appreciation and respect is to take both the privilege and the source for granted; that is, to assume the once-privilege is now an entitlement.

Freedom, though a relative term, is a privilege. Other privileges are as follows:

- Education – yes, even going to school you can believe it
- Parents – having parents, grandparents and other relatives who love you and enjoy spending time with you
- Health – good health is under rated...until your seriously ill or diseased
- Salvation – nothing else or no one else even comes close to this one

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