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## The Challenge Of Keeping A Servant's Heart

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SPEECH # 2 - THE CHALLENGE OF KEEPING A SERVANT'S HEART.  
(Theme: From Little to Big- The Challenge of Growth)

I. A SIMPLE ANALYSIS:

God surely is PLEASED with your Lectureship Series! → "The Growth of Goodness & Righteousness." It is in great harmony with the Spirit and Letter of the Gospel of Christ.

The Theme suggests that things do not remain the SAME when growth comes.

GROWTH - is generic in terms of good or ill. It can bring more and more joy and happiness or can fall into the pitfalls of human frailties - such as pride, aloofness, a perverted view of ourselves. It can lead to self-satisfaction and over-confidence which bring us diminishing returns ultimately. We want NONE of that sort of thing-ever!!!

II. MY PLEASURE IS TO TALK ABOUT MAINTAINING THE SERVANT-SPIRIT IN THE MIDST OF GROWTH AND CHANGE. (Note: Not easy for all. Some-yes. Many-yes. Most-maybe. Some-NO!

A. ILL. Quote: Benjamin Franklin: "There is perhaps not one of our natural passions as hard to subdue as pride. Beat it down; stifle it, mortify it as much as you please, it is still alive. Even if I could conceive that I had completely over come it, I should probably be PROUD of my humility." *Like new birthday candle - want go out!*

B. ILL. Nationally-famous speaker at the Adolphus hotel in downtown Dallas: He was God-gifted and Professionally-trained. Had a photographic memory. Spoke with amazing clarity and detail. An astounding presentation. At end: received a standing ovation with long-appreciative applause. (Then.....a very sad thing took place.) He thought his microphone was OFF, when it wasn't. To the compliments of a friend on the podium he QUIPPED some self-serving remark which was almost contemptuous of the audience. *Put down.* A hush quelled the applause and slowly and quietly, at first, was replaced with Boos. The Boos grew louder and cresendoed into a loud roar ---finally to the point of driving the speaker from the Ballroom. *"STAND!" He'd*

I doubt he was ever invited to speak in Dallas again!!! \* I Cor. 10:12. heard it!

NOTE: This illustration was used in one of my graduate courses in Speech at the U. of Houston. The professor threw the matter out to the class: "What do we learn from this poor man's misfortune? One smart-aleck at the back of the room quipped, "Never speak off the cuff with your mike on!!!"

C. There an old axiom which says: "Its not as much how you start out, as how you finish that counts."

D. Man's eternal problem: Finishing as well as he starts out

Many - big starters! Start lots of things. Finish very few. Some character flaw.

Many more - Start out EQUAL and WELL, but let Life's Variables ruin the pudding of Life. ↑

Request: Name these Variables and Pit-falls: Allright, I will!

GROWTH! Success. Wealth. Fame. Fortune. Strength. Power. Influence.

ALL are great-blessings when handled in true perspective=from God's viewpoint.

ANY can be diseasterous if ill-used, selfishly and purely for personal gain.

Request: Can we have some examples!!! Surely.....

1. BEGINNING OF THE RACE: Adam & Eve: Gen. 1:31. "Very good!"  
CURIOSITY got the better of them - led to demotion.  
Started PERFECT - ended subdued and worn out. - *in death.*

2. FIRST FAMILY: Two boys: Cain & Able. "Very good."  
PRIDE - punctured Cain's baloon and he punctured Ables. *"PRIDE"*  
Started PERFECT - ended in disgrace and disaster. \* Prov. 16:

*PRO BOWL*  
*TODAY: Dallas Cowboy: Eric Tomlin. Super-star. Hall of Famer. DRUNK. HAS BEEN*  
3. NOAH'S GENERATION, KING SAUL, SOLOMON, ANANIAS & SAPPHIRA etc. etc. *Too often involves innocent suffering.)* 18.

4. YOU HAVE STARTED WELL !!!!! PROOF? Look around!!  
SEE THE SIGNS: Growth. Success. Winning. Victorious.

a. \*Prov. 14:34 applies to a Nation. Can apply to a church! Satan is interested!  
I Pet. 5:8. II Pet. 3:18. *"GROW!"*

b. A Simple solution to KEEPING THE SERVANT'S HEART: Keep your eyes on Jesus !!!

(1. Bible Illustration: Peter on the Sea of Galilee. \* Matt. 14:24-32.

(2. Personal Experience: Pecan Park church of Christ, Houston, Texas.  
Held a meeting there. Sent letter signed by ALL the members: "Come be our preacher!" Near U. of H. Body, solidly united - one heart!

A. MY ANALYSIS & PREDICTION: The Lord can TRIPLE that congregation in 3 years. Grew into two services. Studied for 2 yrs. what kind of bldg. we wanted to build on the Famous Gulf Freeway. Selected-Southern Colonial. THREE STEPS: 1. Pick the plan. 2. Sell \$180,000 in bonds. 3. Weld the growth-members to the original united-body.

B. STEPS 1 & 2 went smoothly. By now we were three times the size we were when we started. The old faithful plus those attracted by our growth and the excitement of building. "A fish-net catches many kinds of fish!" *church is like a fish net.*

C. A SNAFU DEVELOPED WHEN THE BUILDING 1/3rd finished:

We were on vacation. While away, a New member persuaded an old member to join him in a protest about the building: Putting a steeple on the bldg.

Question: Have you ever seen a So. Colonial church building without a steeple?

The two men mounted a campaign against the Steeple. Planned to kill it in a business meeting while we were away. Appearance: many indians on the war-path. At the meeting: No One supported them "openly" The men were embarrassed and were scolded and shamed by the elders.

WHEN WE GOT HOME THEY RUSHED OVER TO TELL ME ABOUT IT. Wanted to know why everybody "agreed" with them and no one "voted" with them.

TWO THINGS BECAME VERY EVIDENT: 1. Satan had gotten into the two *men.*  
(What they did was very WRONG: Tried to sow discord among brethren.)  
2. They got their eyes off JESUS. (Like Peter, looked at the waves and started to drown SPIRITUALLY. (

INTERESTING NOTE: Steeple cost \$4,000. Amounted to 1/40th of total cost.

I was for the steeple. I sold \$95,000 worth of the bonds. Bought all could. They against the steeple. Sold NO bonds and "too strapped" to BUY any bonds!!!!

CONCLUSION: THEY HAD LOST THE SERVANT SPIRIT. Wanted to be the BOSS.

*Biblical View:*

*Jesus is supposed to be the "Boss" Lord Head.*

*Bumper sticker: my boss was a carpenter of our lives!*

c. CHARLES PARKHURST: famous American reformer said, "The man who lives BY himself and FOR himself is apt to be corrupted by the company he keeps."

No person.....without Jesus, and the Holy Spirit dwelling in his heart, can continue to be the beautiful, spiritual, desirable and attractive Christian  
Example the Lord desires.

d. SO, ONE MORE WAY TO KEEP THE SERVANT SPIRIT: Choose your company carefully!!  
The Lord needs CHEERFUL, OPTIMISTIC, POSITIVE AND PROGRESSIVE-thinking servants.

Maintain running-relationships ONLY with members with "Servants Hearts". In this case:  
"Birds of a feather best flock together." *Humble - poor in spirit.*

e. A SIMPLE FORMULEA for making and keeping the right kind of friends in the church:  
Talk is cheap! That's why there's so much of it. There's good-cheap and there is bad-cheap talk.

MAKE YOUR LIFE'S RESOLUTION NOW - TONIGHT:

*"Lord's Church!"*

TO: Think up. TALK UP. Build up and HOLD UP your home congregation.

MY MAGIC FORMULEA: When ENTER a new relationship with a congregation - will do 2 things

1. Listen to ALL criticism, complaints, murmurings, accusations and charges!

a. If its about the ELDERS we will go immediately to the elders and rehearse everything that has been SAID: *They told this at first, made few trips.*

b. If it is about the staff or any member -- I will extend the courtesy of LISTENING to everything offered and be sure I hear it RIGHT.....

THEN we will go directly to the person or persons, carrying the information, in writing, to be discussed and settled

Results: sowers of discord ignored me after learning that I REALLY WILL DO WHAT I HAVE SAID I WOULD DO. *Helps keep us all on the same team.*

CLOSE: THIRD SECRET IN MAINTAINING A SERVANT'S HEART: Honor the Lord's requests of you:

\* MARK 10:42-45. and Romans 12:10.

*Don't stifle it. Resolve it. Gal. 6:1 "Brother overtaken - Restore."*