



## **Food For Thought: The Kind of Man I Want to Be**

*"If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour." John 12:26 NKJ*

It is that time of year when the church is looking for Deacons and the time when I ponder on the question on whether I want to be a Deacon or not. I realize that I must grow in the Grace and knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and I envision this as being one of the next steps in my walk. I know that Spiritual Growths are not always a constant process. There will be ebbs and flows and times when we surge forward, only to slip backwards and re-acquire those bad habits we just kicked.

But at the same time, I look at the current order of Deacons and ask myself if I feel qualified to fill their shoes – Am I that kind of man?

Although I feel on the surface that I am ill equipped for the position, I also know that God does not call the equipped...He equips the called. The fact that I am even considering it means that God has already spoken to me and planted a seed. I know that whatever He calls me to do, He will be completely faithful and give me whatever I need to accomplish every good thing that is His will and is pleasing in His sight. (Hebrews13:21) That sentiment is echoed in 1<sup>st</sup> Thessalonians 5:24 - Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it." (NKJ)

I am sure that most of us can remember back to when we were young and it seemed like we needed to have new clothes every few weeks? We barely got them home from the store before our moms noticed that our pants were hitting the high-water level and we had more arms than shirt sleeve. You might also remember your parents' distress as they calculated the cost of keeping you appropriately dressed. This phenomenon was referred to a growth spurt. During this period of intense growth, kids can gain as much as four inches in height in one year.

Those growth spurts were often problematic. Limbs can develop at different rates and leave teenagers feeling awkward and clumsy. That can also be painful. The layers of soft cartridge from which bones can grow can be aggravated by the stress of activities such as running or jumping. Once the bones harden the pain eases up, but until that happens they can be

difficult to deal with. Growth spurts are no fun, but they are necessary if the adolescent body is to grow and mature into adulthood.

Spiritual growth spurts are equally uncomfortable. Just as with the body growing, I discovered that same feeling of clumsiness and uncoordinated with talking to Church Elders or other mature Christians who seem to have more profound insights than I do and are able to back up their thoughts and comments with passages from the Scriptures. I am always impressed yet at the same time it makes me feel woefully inadequate.

From some of my reading, I discovered that several of the Apostles had the same problems: Peter who left his life as a fisherman to follow Jesus, found himself confused by Jesus' parables and had to ask Him what they meant. How much faith it must have taken Peter to get out of the boat and walk on water when Jesus asked him to. Undoubtedly He must have felt that his spiritual growth spurts were challenging, but they also played an important part in his development as a spiritual leader.

Unlike physical growth, which can occur whether you want it to or not, spiritual growth requires effort and determination. Although God will sometimes put us in situations that can test our faith to make us grow spiritually, we will still have to work to grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ. I have come to know that there are no short cuts through the Bible.

The initial step in growing in your walk starts with a thorough careful study of the Word of God. As you read, you will find that spiritual principles and insights will begin to become clear to you. The next step is to take those revelations with you in prayer and ask God to show you how to apply them in your everyday life. Prayer is essential, it is the soul food that feeds the life-blood of your growth.

Maybe I won't ever reach Peter's stature and be transformed from a clueless fisherman into a man who led more than three thousand people to Christ in one day, but I am hoping that God will help me grow in wisdom and character until I am ready to fulfill His plan and purpose for my life.

Perhaps it will be as a Deacon, or maybe He has new places and new ministry opportunities for me on the horizon. Spiritual growth can be confusing and scary. But of this I am certain. When God does call you or me, we can be sure that He's going to equip us to carry out what He has planned!

So, if you're like me and planning on taking that next step in your Spiritual Walk, spend some time in prayer this week turning all your fears and concerns over to Him. Then just watch as He does some amazing things in and through you. Who knows, you may hear Him calling to serve and turn you into the person that you can be!!

Just some Food For Thought