



WORDS FROM
Pastor Randy

Arthur Flake, church leader in the 1920's and 1930's, began his strategy with one basic premise: "Every Sunday School should grow." What might happen if each of us adopted his approach to whatever area we serve in the church?

Far too many are like the guy that **Tennessee Ernie Ford** told about who started out at the bottom and sort of liked it there. Often we become satisfied with far too little.

There must always be a "holy dissatisfaction" within us that continually readjusts us by affirming that while we appreciate where we are, we are not satisfied to stay here!

The Apostle Paul said, "*I count not myself to have apprehended*" (Phil. 3:13). In other words, he never claimed to have arrived. This realization kept Paul "*reaching forth unto those things which are before,*" and pressing "*toward the mark for the prize.*"

There's an old adage that says, "If you want to keep getting what you're getting, just keep doing what you're doing." If you're satisfied right where you are, there's no need to try to go anywhere else. Few of us enjoy "change." As a matter of fact, the only ones I can think of right now that really like "change" are the little babies in the nursery!

For several years, I was the proud owner of a black marble oscar (a freshwater fish!). He wasn't much bigger than a quarter when I got him. They told me he'd grow to whatever size aquarium I put him in. They were right! He weighed in at close to a pound the day we left for vacation. I left him in the care of a well meaning neighbor who unfortunately knew absolutely nothing about fish!

What a shock I had when we returned home to the strange smell of "something dead" in the house, and the sight of my big floating oscar . . . graveyard dead.

You understand there is a great difference between growth and just getting bigger. Getting bigger does not always indicate life. Consider that "road kill" you passed on the side of the highway on your way home. He's probably getting bigger alright, but he surely isn't alive! It's possible to "swell" instead of "grow."

God wants His church to grow. There's no doubt about that. True growth always demands some kind of right change. If you like what you're getting, keep doing what you're doing. If not, dare to do something different.

Remember that **we exist as a church for all those people who are still outside our church**. It's them that we are to be concerned about. It's not until we've all conquered the "holy huddle" mentality that we cease to be intimidated by new comers and begin to rejoice in the fact that God's house is full again. Bigger is not always better . . . but it's generally a whole lot more fun!

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