

GOD'S PLAN & YOU (Pt 3 of 9): "INTEREST AND INVESTMENT"

THESIS: Invest In Heaven

TEXT: Philippians 2:4-30

OPEN: (*time.com* "Things The Most Interesting People Have In Common")

Things The Most Interesting People All Have In Common

(By Eric Barker, *time.com* 04/18/14)

- 1) **Don't Be Boring:** Be brief, be positive.
- 2) **Be a good listener:** People love to talk about themselves and there is a shortage of good listeners. Let the others talk—it gives their brain as much pleasure as food or money.
- 3) **Talk About The Other Person's Interests.**
- 4) **Have A Good Story:** Comedians don't just talk about anything when they're onstage. They have their act rehearsed. You don't just trot into a job interview and say whatever's on your mind. A good story entertains, informs, or engages. People are generally more interested in stories about people rather than things. Drama, gossip and reality TV are successful for a reason. We all find human behavior fascinating. On the other hand, most people don't want to hear about the features on your new iPhone.
- 5) **Live An Interesting Life:** Hang out more often with the most interesting people you know. The friends you spend time with dramatically affect your behavior — whether you like it or not. The Longevity Project, which studied over 1000 people from youth to death had this to say: The groups you associate with often determine the type of person you become. Spend time with people who are already like that.

In **Philippians 2** let's discover God's plan for how you may be interesting to others as an instrument for Christ.

1. INVEST IN HEAVEN REWARD BY LOOKING TO THE INTERESTS OF GOD AND OTHERS.

A. **Philippians 2:4-11** "Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made Himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross! Therefore God exalted Him to the highest place and gave Him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in Heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

1. **Look** (Greek: *skopeo*) means to concentrate one's attention upon, to take notice of, or to watch out for.
 - a. *Look to the interests of God and others by not being argumentative or a complainer.*
 1. **Philippians 2:14-16** "Do everything without complaining or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation in which you shine like stars in the universe as you hold out the word of life—in order that I may boast on the day of Christ that I did not run or labor for nothing."
 - a. **Complaining** (Greek: *gongysmos*) means grumbling or muttering private talk or whispers, an expression of dissatisfaction.
 1. **Numbers 11:1-2** "The people complained about their hardships in the hearing of the Lord, and when He heard them His anger was aroused. Then fire from the Lord burned among them and consumed some of the outskirts of the camp. When the people cried out to Moses, he prayed to the Lord and the fire died down."
 - b. **Illustration:** ("Whose Point Of View?" *Leadership Is Influence* seminar notebook, p. 9)

Whose Point of View?

(John Maxwell, *Leadership Is Influence seminar notebook*, p. 9)

When the other fellow takes a long time, he's slow. When I take a long time, I'm thorough. When the other fellow doesn't do it, he's lazy. When I don't do it, I'm busy. When the other fellow does something without being told, he's overstepping his bounds. When I do it, that's initiative. When the other fellow overlooks a rule of etiquette, he's rude. When I skip a few rules, I'm original. When the other fellow pleases the boss, he's an apple polisher. When I please the boss, that's cooperation. When the other fellow gets ahead, he's getting the breaks. When I manage to get ahead, that's just the reward of hard work.

- b. *Look to the interests of God and others by proving yourself through genuine care (service).*
 1. **Philippians 2:19-22** "I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, that I also may be cheered when I receive news about you. I have no one else like him, who takes a genuine interest in your welfare. For everyone looks out for his own interests, not those of Jesus Christ. But you know that Timothy has proved himself, because as a son with his father he has served with me in the work of the gospel."
 - a. **Historical:** Timothy was a young preacher who worked primarily with the Apostle Paul. Paul regarded him as his son in the faith and churches spoke well of him, too. He was noted for faithfulness & encouragement. Timothy's mother was a Christian, his father not.
 1. **2 Tim 1:5** "I have been reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois & in your mother Eunice and I am persuaded, now lives in you also"
 - b. **Application:** For God's glory and the good of others live your life in a way that people will say "I have no one else like him or her." How are you adding value to others or making those around you better? Look for ways to do so by asking, listening, and observing.
 1. **Matthew 7:12** "So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you."

CONCLUSION: Let's be interesting and an inspiration to others by being an instrument for Christ.

Philippians 2:12-13 "As you have always obeyed—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to His good purpose."

Illustration: (vikings.com "Dennis Ryan Named NFL Equipment Manager Of The Year")

Vikings' Dennis Ryan Named NFL Equipment Manager Of The Year

(By Lindsey Young, vikings.com 04/07/18)

Ask anyone who has played for the Vikings over the past four-plus decades, and he'll tell you that longtime equipment manager Dennis Ryan is the hardest-working man in show business. All-Pro safety Harrison Smith says about Ryan: "Anything we need football-wise, whether it's our equipment, or specific things that guys like to wear, the logistics of getting all of our gear from game to game—just our daily use of shorts, socks—it's 90 guys just running through all of these things, and he's always there. He knows what each guy likes and already has that set up in our locker when we get there on game day. If something happens mid-game (to equipment), he's always there to fix it immediately." The award-winning Ryan emphasized that the honor is a reflection on the entire Vikings equipment staff who help things run smoothly and support him in a role that he's never stopped loving. Even after four-plus decades, the equipment manager looks forward to work each day. He said, "I really enjoy my job. I enjoy being able to be a part of the organization and part of a team. I try to not overlook anything. I always make sure we're on top of things." Vikings General Manager Rick Spielman spoke highly of Ryan's calm demeanor that enables him to work well with various personality types and fulfill unique needs or requests. "In Dennis' role, I guess the best way to determine if you're doing a great job or not is if no one's complaining," Spielman said with a smile. "He's so efficient at everything he does and is so knowledgeable of all the new

equipment coming out, all of the things that coaches and players may need on the field. Not only does it reflect how Dennis handles his business in the building, but also the respect that he's earned outside of the building – especially through his interactions with visiting teams at U.S. Bank Stadium. He just has a very unique way of being so unassuming yet being so efficient at what he does." Equipment assistant Terrell Barnes joined Ryan's team in 2014 and described his supervisor as "caring and fun to be around." Barnes appreciates feeling trusted by Ryan and said that he "treats you as a person should treat another person" and invests in each member of the equipment staff. "He cares a lot about his work. With a lot of equipment managers, your job often goes unnoticed." Safety Smith adds: "He's a guy that we have some of the most interaction with, and he makes sure that everything runs smoothly and we're all taken care of. And he's not a guy who wants the spotlight."

Philippians 2:29-30 "Welcome Epaphroditus in the Lord with great joy, and honor men like him, because he almost died for the work of Christ, risking his life to make up for the help you could not give me."

CLOSE: Invest in Heaven by looking to the interests of God and others—it's the Lord's plan for you.