

Putting Down Roots: Change in Season

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Blessed is the one ... whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and who meditates on His law day and night. That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither—whatever they do prospers. – Psalm 1:1-3

This whole passage is a contrast

Those who are connected to spiritual streams

Who allow the word of God to seep into their life continually

Who are – as Jesus said

Branches vitally connected to God the vine

Contrasted with those who are not connected to spiritual streams

Who do not allow the word of God to seep into their life continually

The whole passage is a contrast

I did a little studying on trees and roots and water and such

I found some pretty fascinating things about physical trees

That parallels really closely to our souls

If you look at arborist websites about tree watering

You're going to hear them say that you need to **water your trees **consistently****

If it gets a bunch of water all at once

That water either runs off or evaporates

Without water – trees begin to die

If they go through dry stretches

Your tree will begin to shut down

And this part was really fascinating to me

Especially thinking of the spiritual parallel

If it gets too dry

You'll notice the leaves getting brown at the ends

This is really cool

So if a tree struggles to get enough water *here*

You'll notice browning – slow death – on the edges of the leaves *there*

And if you didn't understand what was going on inside the tree

You'd never make a connect between the two

Man, as a pastor, I see this just about every week

The Bible says that we are “fearfully and wonderfully made”

We're a complex combination of mind & body & spirit

We're more than just cells bouncing around

We've been designed for a purpose

And your soul is a lot more significant than you maybe giving it credit for

And I see people all the time

Having physical symptoms

Brown leaves if you will

Because their soul is malnourished

I see people having mental symptoms

Relational symptoms

Brown leaves popping up all over the place

And they are trying to address it at the surface

Up here

But the cure is much deeper

And I can almost guarantee that all of us *under-estimate* the significance of what I just said

Guarantee

And I don't say that lightly

Unless you are the *significant exception*

You don't connect mental, relational, and even physical symptoms with spiritual things

As much as God does

Let me show you:

1 Corinthians 11:27-29 - So then, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. Everyone ought to examine themselves before they eat of the bread and drink from the cup. For those who eat and drink without discerning the body of Christ eat and drink judgment on themselves.

That makes sense

Its talking about communion

And if you do that thoughtlessly

Without considering Jesus' death and resurrection

It's similar to taking God's name in vane

You are treating an extraordinary thing as ordinary

I would guess that some of us have heard sermons about this passage

Maybe a communion meditation or two

Because this makes sense with our modern sensibilities

However... this is verse 27, 28, and 29

I bet almost nobody has heard a sermon about verse 30

I have never preached a sermon on verse 30

We agree with verses 27, 28, and 29

But I bet most of us would be shocked

Or even in disbelief

About verse 30

Because we underestimate the connection between our spiritual roots

And the brown leaves in our lives

Let me say that again:

We underestimate the connection between our spiritual roots

And the brown leaves in our lives

Reread verses 27-29 from the screen

1 Corinthian 11:30-32 - That is why many among you are weak and sick, and a number of you have *fallen asleep*. But if we were more discerning with regard to ourselves, we would not come under such judgment. Nevertheless, when we are judged in this way by the Lord, we are being disciplined so that we will not be finally condemned with the world.

The Corinthians were experiencing *physical consequences*

Because of Spiritual disobedience

The brown leaves on the surface

Were tied to parched roots underneath

Man, this is big

I want you to catch a key 10-word phrase in this passage

This may be why God brought some of you here today

This 10 words

“But if we were more discerning with regard to ourselves...”

The cure

For what ails many of us

Is spiritual

Our souls are parched

Our souls are parched

But our whole body is feeling the affect

Psalms 63:1 says:

You, God, are my God, earnestly I seek You; I thirst for You, *my whole being longs for You, in a dry and parched land where there is no water.*

Our souls need refreshment

And they need it consistently

Listen to me a second

This needs to be a bigger deal for us

If your boss said

She needed you to work an extra couple hours this week

You'd adjust your schedule

If the school said your kids need this item or that specific notebook

You'd get it

For Heaven sake

Some of you went to three stores

Because the teacher said your kid needed a chartreuse colored 3-ring binder

So they were gonna have one

I mean, they might not get into college if they don't have this binder for 3rd grade

The God of the universe

Your Creator

Your Sustainer

Said that your soul needs nourishment

That your relationships will suffer without it

That your mental stability will suffer without it

That your joy & peace will suffer without it

And like a tree

It needs it consistently

Arborists say that trees need **watered abundantly**

I was shocked at how much water trees consume

On average – this is a rule of thumb

For every 1" in diameter of the trunk

If you've forgotten HS geometry – the diameter is the width across

For every 1" in diameter, a tree needs 10 gallons of water / week

10 gallons each week!

And that's a small tree

So a medium sized tree is going to consume 5-6,000 gallons of water / year

A large tree needs over 10,000 gallons a year to be healthy

For perspective –

A large tree needs this much water to be healthy

And remember, most of it comes through hundreds of tiny, tiny hair-like roots

Absorbing water from the dirt

How does this relate to us?

Your soul needs a lot of water

The next time you go to a pool

I want you to think about your thirsty soul

I think sometimes

Pastor-types like me have sold people a bill of goods

I fear that we've unintentionally mislead people

We've said – correctly – that God loves everyone

We've said – correctly – that grace is free – that salvation is a gift

We've said – correctly – that there's nothing you can do to make God love you more

But in the process, we've contributed to a Christian sub-culture that doesn't value discipleship

That doesn't prioritize spiritual growth

Or holiness

Or putting down roots into the deep spiritual refreshment that God has for us

We've unintentionally mislead people - the result?

Many churches are half-full of empty people

Look at this great verse from Jeremiah 17:

Jeremiah 17:8 - They will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green. It has no worries in a year of drought and never fails to bear fruit.

When you see a culture that lives in fear

With brown tinged leaves

That's consumed by worry

A culture that wants more love and joy and peace – patience – kindness & goodness – control of self

We're parched

We need refreshment that only God can bring

Look for ways to get more of God's Word in your life

Read it

Study it

Prioritize it as you would something you really value

Get in groups to talk about it

Prioritize attending a church where the Bible is preached

I know a good option

But this is not about us

This is about you

Ultimately, its about Him

So if we're not it

I know most of the pastors in town

I'll introduce you

And while I'm at it

Let me say just a word about worship

Worship is not the music part before the message

To give you time to get your coffee

In worship, you & I set aside a few minutes

To specifically connect with God

To say powerful words TO HIM and ABOUT HIM

And to connect with Him in ways that are sometimes difficult to do anywhere else

To stretch my analogy

When you sing in worship to God

It's like your soul puts out another little root

Into the stream your soul was made for

Your soul craves that

It's just one little root

You may not even notice the difference one week to the next

But over time

One root and then another and then another

Over time

You'll develop a soul that's very strong

Your soul needs refreshment consistently

Your soul needs refreshment abundantly

Arborists would tell you to **water** your trees **deeply**

Arborists say that you should put irrigation systems in

Ideally – that seep water onto the roots from a few inches below the ground

That prevents any runoff or evaporation

And the water gets right to the roots and then into the heart of the tree itself

That's such a picture for our faith

Faith is not designed to be a surface level endeavor

If you're new to faith or not yet sure what you believe

God meets you where you are

And we certainly would love to walk along with you

But ultimately

I need you to know this

Ultimately – what we want for you

What GOD wants for you

Is to allow Him to bring spiritual nourishment

To the core of who you are

All the way back in the Old Testament

Before Jesus came

In the days of Moses

God appeared to him on a mountain

And gave him the 10 commandments

The 10 most important laws to guide the people

To guide their lives

And the top two commandments

Ahead of the other eight

God said "Do not worship any other gods before me"

Don't enter into religious worship other than to me

And number two – "Don't worship any idols"

Don't idolize anything so that it comes between us

Ahead of prohibitions against murder and theft and adultery

All of which cause such tremendous, generational pain

Before any of those

God says worship me

Revere me

At the core of who you are

And when you declare me as Lord

At the center of who you are

Everything else begins to take its rightful place

Listen to how the book of Proverbs describes listening

And finding nourishment

In the Scriptures

Proverbs 4:21-23 (NLT) - Don't lose sight of them. Let them penetrate deep into your heart, for they bring life to those who find them, and healing to their whole body. Guard your heart above all else, for it determines the course of your life.

This year

As we are turning the page on a new season

Determine to prioritize your spiritual life

Above everything else

Do not make excuses for a lack of reading the Bible

Do not allow yourself to go a day without speaking to God

And asking for His wisdom

Get your kids to EVERY.SINGLE.SPIRITUAL.OPPORTUNITY WellSpring provides

EVERY.OPPORTUNITY

Because our souls

And the souls of our children

Need spiritual nourishment

At the core of who we are

Listen – I've heard this again and again

People who have gotten out of the habit of coming to church

Or going to a LifeGroup because of the pandemic

And I get it

But now they're going to everything else in the world

But they're "out of the habit" to do spiritual things

Don't wait for the leaves to get brown on the edges before you do something

Don't wait for the right time

Or the Right moment

Or a sign from Heaven

Prioritize the nourishment of your soul

With those pictures in mind:

Healthy trees need water consistently, applied deeply, and abundantly

Let's take a look at the key verse again:

**Blessed is the one ... whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and who meditates on His law day and night. That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which *yields its fruit in season* and whose leaf does not wither—whatever they do prospers. –
Psalm 1:1-3**

So when we meditate on the words of God

When we read them

When we meditate on them

When we hear people teach them

We're like that blessed tree

And notice what it says will happen:

The blessed tree will yield fruit in season

I know we're all at different places spiritually

And I love that about our church

So I know that some of you are not yet Christians

I'm thrilled you're joining us

Here in the room

Or online

But you can ignore me for just a second

Because I want to talk

For just a second

To those who have given their life to Christ

This passage says that the blessed tree will yield fruit in season

There's a time for trees to grow and strengthen and mature

And there's a time to bear fruit

I'm convinced that this is a time for the people of God to bear fruit

Every year, as kids go back to school

People take on new habits

And consider new opportunities

And church is often a piece of that

People know they need something spiritual

They have a longing for God

They may not realize it

But they have a longing for God

The last 17 months hasn't changed that

But for the last 17 months

People have had a hunker down – bunker in place – mentality

Now we're coming out of that

And the longing they naturally have in their soul for God

The longing they naturally have in their soul to connect with other people

Is still there

Pent up

And the church's main job is to point people to the answer

WellSpring exists to Help People Follow Jesus

Because as a follower of Christ

My mission is to help people follow Jesus

Your mission is to help people follow Jesus

To go into all the world and make disciples

Baptizing, teaching, loving, encouraging

And each of us needs to take a good long hard look at our lives

When seasons change

And this is a biggie

When seasons change

It's a natural time to take an inventory

Would someone

Looking from the outside of my life in

Believe that the #1 mission in my life

Down to the core of my being

Is to help other people

Coming into a relationship

With the God of the Universe

By following His Son Jesus

Would that be a natural conclusion?

If not

You may not be living the blessed life that God has for you

For some of us

It's time to step it up

We've had time to learn and grow and mature

And there's a place for that

And now's a time to bear fruit

In Matthew 9, it says:

When He saw the crowds, He had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then He said to His disciples, “The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into His harvest field.” – Matthew 9:35-38

Jesus was moved

At a guttural level

When He saw the pain and loneliness and desperation in the crowds

And He turned to the disciples

And asked them to pray

And I’m asking you to join me in prayer

That God would raise up workers

To go into His harvest fields

Over the next three weeks of this series

We’re going to give you a prime opportunity to change that

I want to invite you to

Put down roots with WellSpring

8/15/21 – Rooted leader signup

8/22/21 – Impact Team signup (Rooted leader training)

8/29/21 – Rooted Group signup

The Blessed one

Like a tree planted by streams of water

Yields its fruit in season

But there's something else

Look again with me

Blessed is the one ... whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and who meditates on His law day and night. That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither—*whatever they do prospers.* – Psalm 1:1-3

“Whatever this person does... prospers”

The Hebrew word translated “prosper” there literally means:

“Break out”, “Come mightily”, or “Push forward”

I love that

I don't know about you

But the last 18 months has felt like anything but “Breaking out”, “Coming mightily”, or “Pushing forward”

The last 18 months have felt like quicksand

But God here says that when we connect deeply with Him

When we align with His purposes for our lives

We'll prosper:

Break out

Come mightily

Push forward

And our world needs the church to prosper

Sometimes you'll hear TV preachers talk about a prosperity gospel

And that means nice cars & fancy jewelry

Not sure where they find that in the Bible

But I could get behind *this kind* of prosperity Gospel

It's time for us to break out of our apathy

To come mightily in the power of God
And to push forward *His* agenda for the world

In preparation for this message

I looked it up

And a person can go without food for several weeks

If they've stored up extra beforehand

(I'm prepared)

They can go without eating for up to two months

60 days!

But as a rule

You & I would die after only 3 days without water

We were never designed to live away from it

And I don't think it's a coincidence that God uses that metaphor

To teach us how to live with Him