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Margaret Strong - Helen Jackson

"GOD GIVE US MEN"

Psa. 1:3

What does it mean to honor parents? The Hebrew word translated (honor) literally means to ("give weight"). To give weight to your Father -- that is to say let your father have an influence in your life.

A special part of the Commandment says to do this is to add days to your life. Some scoff at such a promise.

Some children say but Preacher, I have a higher I. Q. than my parents. Yes, that may be true. I attended school longer than either of my parents. But there are some things my Father learned by the very process of living. He learned that fire burns, the laws of gravity operate, that bad company leads to bad trouble, that getting an education is important. They have learned these things and if you profit from their experience, your days will be extended.

Every home needs a strong symbol of authority. The Father must be willing to accept the challenge.

He ought to be a man of conviction. (Jer. 5:1) "Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man." Jeremiah urged people to run throughout the streets of Jerusalem and see if they could find any man who practiced justice and sought the truth. God would spare the city, if such a man could be found.

(He ought to be a man) of compassion, a tender, kind, unselfish man. Edward Young once said, "Shun the proud that is ashamed to weep."

He ought to be (a man with an open mind.) Sad sight to behold a man who thinks he knows everything. Takes a great man to say, "I was wrong."

He ought to be a (man who loves his family). This is the most profound of all human relationships. Investing his affection in that which will pay the greatest dividends. When such a man can help his wife in their marriage relationship, it adds -- "Icing to the cake."

For children to know that Daddy loves them and loves Mama, produces more stable mental and emotional health.

God wants (men who are responsible) men.

Bad when a man is like a (worn-out alarm clock). You have to shake the thing to get it to run -- it stops in few hours, have to shake it and wake it up again. Or you turn it over on its face -- shamed face clocks -- some men are like that. You have to shake them once in a while.

In (California) is the biggest oldest living thing in the world. More than a million people come every year to stand and look at this biggest oldest thing alive on the face of the earth!

The name of it is the (General Sherman tree). A giant Sequoia -- a tree scientists estimate to be (4,000 years old) and still growing! That tree was a sapling blowing in the wind when (Abraham) was born. When (Jesus) was born, it was already a giant tree, rising high above all the rest of the forest.

(History) tells us that between the (birth of Christ) and the (discovery of America -)

fire swept across that part of the country. But it only scarred this tree.

Today it stands (272 feet high) with a diameter of 30 feet -- its bark is a foot thick, impervious to insects or fire or any other hazard; its roots grow out and down covering 3 acres!

In the 1st Psalm a portrait of two men is painted.

It says the ungoldy are like the chaff which the wind blows away as the wheat is harvested. A little puff of wind can blow it away.

The life without God is a life that is not rooted is like chaff and is swept away by the least little wind of circumstances. Their life is wrecked, shattered, unable to stand, no stability - no endurance - no permanence.

In contrast the Godly person who has rooted his life in God, is like the giant Sequoia tree -- planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season.

Is that the kind of life you are seeking? A stable life - rooted regardless of storm, firey test, suffering, sorrow, disappointment, heart-break, sickness -- whatever comes, we can be like a tree growing eternally in the presence of God.

I. PLANTED - HE SHALL BE LIKE A TREE PLANTED.

Planted implies that that tree is not a voluntary seedling. A voluntary seedling comes up as the wind has blown the seed, just by chance; it drops into a little crevice of soil and comes up voluntarily.

The natural reproduction in the forest is by voluntary seedling. The grasses and weeds are voluntary seedlings.

The life in God is a planted life. A hand, a will, and a personality put the seedling there.

Behind your life and mine, there is a purposeful God.

It is not chance - mishap - fate - but a God with a purpose. A mind - a will - power to plant - that is the great conviction we live by.

Some time ago, I stood in the garden of Gethsemane and looked upon the Olive Trees and remembered years before Jesus and his Disciples stood there. It was not by chance that these mighty trees were there. At Jericho there was a Sycamore Tree - the small man Zacchaeus used it for a reviewing stand.

Back of that tree and the Olive Trees was a purposeful God establishing his plan for the ages.

If you are planted in God - God reigns - God loves - God cares - God is in this world, where we believe that he has a purpose for our lives.

William Cowper - who wrote several hymns we sing in our church -- was orphaned at six years of age and so mistreated at school that at age ten, he ran away. At 21, a frustrated empty-hearted young man, he sought to commit suicide. He tells of going to the bridge across the River Thames and trying to jump -- but he lost his nerve and could not climb over the rail.

Back to his room he took a kitchen knife, put it against his chest, and fell on it. The knife hit a rib and snapped the blade. He failed again. A third time he tied a rope around his neck, threw it over a rafter and stood on a stool. When he jumped, the rope broke.

Finally, he says in the depths of despair, there must be a God -- God is trying to show me a way out!

Cowper had a conversion experience and his life was changed. He became planted by the rivers of water. He wrote "God moves in mysterious ways, His wonders to perform; He plants His footsteps on the sea and rides upon the storm."

He also wrote, "There is a fountain filled with blood, Drawn from Immanuel's veins; and sinners plunged beneath that flood, lose all their guilty stains."

When you put your life in the hand of God - believe you belong to Him - you are his and he is yours. He will plant your life beside the flowing rivers of grace and love that will sustain you. It may seem like a desert - life may be going to pieces -- but you will be like a tree, knowing God has planted and will supply all that you need.

What have you been planted for?

II. PRODUCTION

"He bringeth forth his fruit in his season."

What kind of trees are we?

Flowering crabapple trees to look pretty?

Jesus is talking to his Disciples - did not point to a flowering tree, but to a vineyard.

I am the vine, ye are the branches, ye are to bring forth fruit. We are fruit bearers.

God planted my life and my life must bear fruit -- an apple tree - apples. An orange tree - oranges. Ask yourself -- am I bearing fruit? Where have you

borne a witness for him.

All around you there are hurting people -- lonely people crying out to us.
Express your love and begin to bear fruit.

III. PERMANENCE

"His leaf shall not wither."

Winter - trees shed their leaves in coldest weather. Leaves turn brown,
shriveled up.

Not so, the life planted in God - his leaf shall not wither.

In the little (old church) there was a metal stove that burned wood. In the
winter, they would get that stove so hot it would almost dance. But in 15 minutes,
it was cold again. A Deacon would put some more wood in and everybody would move
away from it. Hot and cold -- I know a lot of people like that. Up and down --
on and off.

Revivals in the past were called protracted meetings. 1st and 2nd weeks of
July or August. (1st week) you get folks warmed up -- some would start back to
church. The (second week) the members and Christians would be "renewed up" they
called it, and everybody would rejoice. They would be in Sunday School and Worship

for one or two months and they would begin to cool off. In six months, most would be on out -- until the next revival when they would go and get renewed up again.

We all have that battle.

We all want to be planted and it be real - and his leaf shall not wither.

In season and out of season. I know God planted me here - his purpose goes on - I'm planted by the river of love and grace - this sustains me.

I am bearing witness - produce.

I'm different from that oak that inspired Joyce Kilmer in the poem Trees -

"I think that I shall never see, a poem lovely as a tree, but only God can make a tree."

The 160 year stood on ground owned by Rutgers University, New Brunswick, N. J. Tried to save, cut - stump 54 inches thick and 3 feet high was left. A plaque in memory of Kilmer was placed on the stump.

IV. PROSPER

Prosper - (literally) grow - you will have (a growing) life. Isn't that what you want?

We do not want life to be static - we like to feel we are making progress - coming to grips with the problems of life. I am growing spiritually.

How does a tree grow?

1 - General Sherman tree grows (inwardly) -- growth inside - we more loving, Christ-like, forgiving, day by day.

2 - Tree grows (outwardly) - branches stretch out. We are sensitive to others around us - accepting them - feeling for them.

3 - Tree grows (downwardly) Through roots. General Sherman runs its roots over 3 acres. That is why the storm cannot shake it. Roots broad and deep. We get deep roots in the church, in the Bible - the Word of God. In the experience of fellowship with other Christians.

It is so important to come to a service like this -- together with other believers. To be a part of sharing in the church program to reach others.

4 Tree grows (upwardly) - we are closer to God than we were yesterday.

And we shall be like a tree - leaf not wither but grow.

Years ago a wealthy man died without a will. He had no relatives -- everything was auctioned off. Including his mansion. After everything was sold, one elderly lady bought a small picture of a boy. When she took it home, she found an envelop on the back of it. A note -- "To the one who finds this envelop, take it to an attorney." She carried it to an attorney and discovered that this man had left all his wealth and his entire fortune to the one who bought that little picture. The picture happened to be the man's only son, who had been killed in the war. He had died for his country. He had fought and died on foreign soil. That man had left all of his millions to anyone who cared enough to buy the picture of his son.

When you accept Jesus and invite him into your life and say I want him to be my Lord, Master, and Saviour -- God becomes yours and you become joint heirs with Christ of all the riches of glory.

You may become a member of this church and make this a definite time and place when you invite Christ into your life.

You are a Christian and you want to plant your life in this church by letter.

Would you come now as we sing.