

THE BIG IDEA: If you want fruit that remains, grow roots that sustain.

The Take-Off

This morning we're continuing our THIS IS US series and we're talking about how we are PLANTED.

If you've been with us much time at all, then you know that our term for membership in the church is planted

Don't worry, this doesn't mean that you have to grow flowers or food to join the church

If that were the case, I'd have to leave - I'm whatever the opposite of a green thumb is (maybe a red thumb for STOP GROWING??)

I'm not sharing this to get you to join, but rather to get you to ask God if this is the place He wants to plant you

We believe passionately that God plants people in churches; He doesn't just plop them

John 15 is an entire chapter about abiding with Jesus - it's all agricultural with vines and branches - and about halfway through in **John 15:16 (NIV)**, Jesus drops this nugget on the disciples:

"You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you so that you might go and bear fruit - fruit that will last"

Some versions say fruit that remains.

Jesus knew that ALL OF US want to give our lives to things that will last longer than ANY OF US.

You build a business to hopefully see the next generation keep it going.

You raise your children knowing that (hopefully) they outlive you and carry on what you've taught them.

I planted this church trusting that one day it would have anniversaries without me.

We all want this, and yet so few find it. So few actually leave legacies worth continuing.

Fruit that remains is elusive. We have all kinds of one-hit wonders in the faith. Revivals and awakenings that lasted weeks instead of decades or even centuries.

Jesus prayed that we would bear fruit that remains, and here's the key: **if you want fruit that remains, grow roots that sustain.**

Get planted and stay planted because WE have to remain before fruit can.

1. Being planted is a good thing

- a. I'm not going to offer a lot of commentary here.
- b. I just want to read some passages and allow God's word to speak about how **being planted is a good thing**
 - Jeremiah 17:5-8
 - Psalm 1:1-3
 - Psalm 92:12-15
 - Isaiah 60:21

2. A new kind of family tree

- a. Did you notice that some of those mentioned trees? We're planted like trees.
- b. In a sense, the church is **a new kind of family tree!**
- c. Some passages about that:
 - Psalm 1:3
 - Psalm 92:12
 - Psalm 52:8
 - Hosea 14:6
- d. We're not just planting some little bonsai tree that looks perfect [**IMAGE - Bonsai tree**]
- e. God is into massive trees! (Matthew 13:31-32) [**IMAGE - Massive tree**]

3. It's all about the soil

- a. How do we grow like trees? A few more passages can answer that:
 - Ephesians 3:17-19 / in the love of God and the family of God
 - Psalm 1:3 / by the river of God
 - Psalm 52:8 / in the house of God
 - Psalm 92:13 / in the house and courts of God
- b. How do we grow like trees? **It's all about the soil.**

4. We can learn a lot from palm trees

- a. Let's camp out for a bit in [Psalm 92:12-15 \(NIV\)](#)
- b. When we read it earlier, did anybody notice that it mentioned a palm tree? I did.
- c. The more I dug into it, the more I realized that **we can learn a lot from palm trees!**
- d. When we think of palm trees, we think of the beach or the tropics, right? [[IMAGES - Palm tree beach](#)]
- e. Or maybe you think of palm trees in a storm [[IMAGES - Palm tree bent](#)]
- f. Then that makes me wonder how they survive those storms.
 - Some palm tree cells are malleable - they can be shaped or formed
 - Others can easily flex and then return to their original position
 - As one scientist put it, their lack of "conventional structure" gives it flexibility and makes it "supremely adaptive" to changing conditions.
 - Another scientist said that's why there are so many types and species of palm trees - it's found in a variety of "environmental niches" and it flourishes in each of them
 - In other words, they are flexible, adaptable, and stable [[VIDEO CLIP - Thank you, Mr. Know it All](#)]

The Landing

Just one last question as we start to close. Why is a palm tree mentioned in the Bible, specifically in Psalm 92:12? One last quote to answer that question:

The palm-tree figure is especially intriguing. In Scripture, the palm is always the date palm, stately and beautiful. It has extremely deep tap roots—called a root ball—and thus can flourish even in the desert, growing tall and living long. It is perhaps the most useful of all trees, not only producing dates, but also sugar, wine, honey, oil, resin, rope, thread, tannin, and dyestuff. Its seeds are fed to cattle and its leaves are used for roofs, fences, mats, and baskets.

Its fruit is said to get sweeter as the tree grows older, and this is compared to the believer in a beautiful verse: "Those that be planted in the house of the LORD shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing" (Psalm 92:13,14).

How do we become a palm tree that bears fruit in all seasons and even in old age?

By being planted and growing roots that sustain.

Let's pray.