

# Roots: Producing Fruit

## June 10 & 13, 2010

### 2 Chronicles 34

Introduction:

- You've heard the phrase, "Oh, he's a bad apple."

Matthew 7:15-20

**15) "Beware of false prophets who come disguised as harmless sheep but are really vicious wolves. 16) You can identify them by their fruit, that is, by the way they act. Can you pick grapes from thornbushes, or figs from thistles? 17) A good tree produces good fruit, and a bad tree produces bad fruit. 18) A good tree can't produce bad fruit, and a bad tree can't produce good fruit. 19) So every tree that does not produce good fruit is chopped down and thrown into the fire. 20) Yes, just as you can identify a tree by its fruit, so you can identify people by their actions."**

- You and I must distinguish ourselves from the world....how? FRUIT!

- Fruit on the vine or in the tree, is a result of what is taking place in the roots and branches. In other words, how you develop yourselves and your character is vital, essential, to producing fruit.

***"The most critical formation in the life of those who desire to finish faithfully and well is the cultivation of godly character. And within this attention to character formation, the embracing and claiming of our identity as beloved sons and daughters of God is a most fundamental development."***

- Last week we talked about this idea that you might have leaves, you might look like a tree, but are you producing fruit?

#### **Old Testament Story: 2 Chronicles 34 - King Josiah**

- Followed one of the most evil kings in the history of the world, Manasseh
- Watch his character & heart
- See the fruit of his life
- What drives him to lead and reign the way he does?

**1) Josiah was eight years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem thirty-one years. 2) He did what was pleasing in the Lord's sight and followed the example of his ancestor David. He did not turn away from doing what was right.**

- I am trying to imagine my eight-year-old son as king!
- Eli is such a good kid, but...I don't know that he could handle the pressure!
- Eli is a lot like me: Taco Bell on every corner! Video game consoles for everyone!
- Mandatory MW2 Time
- We can read in **2 Kings 22** - that his mother is mentioned and I believe had a healthy influence in his life!
- It took 13 generations that Josiah had to go back to find a role model like David
- It was predicted that he would come: **1 Kings 13:2**

**3) During the eighth year of his reign, while he was still young, Josiah began to seek the God of his ancestor David. Then in the twelfth year he began to purify Judah and Jerusalem, destroying all the pagan shrines, the Asherah poles, and the carved idols and cast images. 4) He ordered that the altars of Baal be demolished and that the incense altars which stood above them be broken down. He also made sure that the Asherah poles, the carved idols, and the cast images were smashed and scattered over the graves of those who had sacrificed to them. 5) He burned the bones of the pagan priests on their own altars, and so he purified Judah and Jerusalem.**

**6) He did the same thing in the towns of Manasseh, Ephraim, and Simeon, even as far as Naphtali, and in the regions all around them. 7) He destroyed the pagan altars and the Asherah poles, and he crushed the idols into dust. He cut down all the incense altars throughout the land of Israel. Finally, he returned to Jerusalem.**

- 16 years old and goes on a holy rampage!

- These false gods and idols and worship services took the people away from the one true God

- Cleans House!

**- The first thing he did to grow strong roots...Eliminated the distractions!**

- What is distracting you?

- I spend most of my free time doing \_\_\_\_\_

- If I had to choose between my Bible and \_\_\_\_\_ it would be a hard choice

- I come to church every week except for when \_\_\_\_\_

- I spend lots of time each week on \_\_TV \_\_Video Games \_\_Movies \_\_Other Books

\_\_Music \_\_Phone \_\_Sports \_\_Hobbies \_\_Entertainment \_\_Facebook / Internet

- You and I can't say we don't have an idol worshipping problem if we are not giving God the time of day!

- Give up a show!

**8) In the eighteenth year of his reign, after he had purified the land and the Temple, Josiah appointed Shaphan son of Azaliah, Maaseiah the governor of Jerusalem, and Joah son of Joahaz, the royal historian, to repair the Temple of the Lord his God. 9) They gave Hilkiah the high priest the money that had been collected by the Levites who served as gatekeepers at the Temple of God. The gifts were brought by people from Manasseh, Ephraim, and from all the remnant of Israel, as well as from all Judah, Benjamin, and the people of Jerusalem.**

**10) He entrusted the money to the men assigned to supervise the restoration of the Lord's Temple. Then they paid the workers who did the repairs and renovation of the Temple. 11)**

**They hired carpenters and builders, who purchased finished stone for the walls and timber for the rafters and beams. They restored what earlier kings of Judah had allowed to fall into ruin.**

**12) The workers served faithfully under the leadership of Jahath and Obadiah, Levites of the Merarite clan, and Zechariah and Meshullam, Levites of the Kohathite clan. Other Levites, all of whom were skilled musicians, 13) were put in charge of the laborers of the various trades. Still others assisted as secretaries, officials, and gatekeepers.**

- 26 years old!!!

- Josiah engaged others in this process of cleansing the land!

- Rebuilt the temple

- Inspired generosity, trust, diligence, mission and leadership

**-The second thing he did to grow strong roots...Got connected!**

- Who are you connecting with?

- Relationships are so important...I'm an extravert, meaning I skim relationships...very, very very, shallow!

- I have to work at developing deep relationships
- I'm horrible at that!
- Every instinct I have says...okay, that's enough.
- Develop some stronger, deeper, trusting relationships
- Be a Barnabas, pursue a Paul and influence a Timothy

**14) While they were bringing out the money collected at the Lord's Temple, Hilkiah the priest found the Book of the Law of the Lord that was written by Moses. 15) Hilkiah said to Shaphan the court secretary, "I have found the Book of the Law in the Lord's Temple!" Then Hilkiah gave the scroll to Shaphan.**

**16) Shaphan took the scroll to the king and reported, "Your officials are doing everything they were assigned to do. 17) The money that was collected at the Temple of the Lord has been turned over to the supervisors and workmen." 18) Shaphan also told the king, "Hilkiah the priest has given me a scroll." So Shaphan read it to the king.**

**19) When the king heard what was written in the Law, he tore his clothes in despair. 20) Then he gave these orders to Hilkiah, Ahikam son of Shaphan, Acbor son of Micaiah, Shaphan the court secretary, and Asaiah the king's personal adviser: 21) "Go to the Temple and speak to the Lord for me and for all the remnant of Israel and Judah. Inquire about the words written in the scroll that has been found. For the Lord's great anger has been poured out on us because our ancestors have not obeyed the word of the Lord. We have not been doing everything this scroll says we must do."**

**22) So Hilkiah and the other men went to the New Quarter of Jerusalem to consult with the prophet Huldah. She was the wife of Shallum son of Tikvah, son of Harhas, the keeper of the Temple wardrobe.**

**23) She said to them, "The Lord, the God of Israel, has spoken! Go back and tell the man who sent you, 24) 'This is what the Lord says: I am going to bring disaster on this city and its people. All the curses written in the scroll that was read to the king of Judah will come true. 25) For my people have abandoned me and offered sacrifices to pagan gods, and I am very angry with them for everything they have done. My anger will be poured out on this place, and it will not be quenched.'**

**26) "But go to the king of Judah who sent you to seek the Lord and tell him: 'This is what the Lord, the God of Israel, says concerning the message you have just heard: 27) You were sorry and humbled yourself before God when you heard his words against this city and its people. You humbled yourself and tore your clothing in despair and wept before me in repentance. And I have indeed heard you, says the Lord. 28) So I will not send the promised disaster until after you have died and been buried in peace. You yourself will not see the disaster I am going to bring on this city and its people.'"**

**So they took her message back to the king.**

- Where has the "Book of the Law" been?
- Over the years of these horrible, ungodly king...it was neglected, ignored and forgotten.
- Neglected, ignored and forgotten
- Josiah has not heard these words!! Oh, some things were obviously passed on to him. He began cleaning up the Kingdom early on...but now, the very WORDS of God convict him!
- He needs to understand what God wants from him now.
- Because of his fervent, humble, remorseful, repentant reaction to the Word of God...God spares him, the city and the people while he is king.

**- The third thing he did to grow strong roots...Fervent Prayer!**

- When is the last time you read God's Word and became mad at the world!! Devastated with yourself?

- When was the last time God's Word drove you to your knees?
- As you read God's Word, it should at times take you to your knees...
  - ...in repentance
  - ...interceding for others
  - ...asking God for help
- Our Elders
- Fervent Prayer is something we'll talk about this summer.

**29) Then the king summoned all the elders of Judah and Jerusalem. 30) And the king went up to the Temple of the Lord with all the people of Judah and Jerusalem, along with the priests and the Levites—all the people from the greatest to the least. There the king read to them the entire Book of the Covenant that had been found in the Lord's Temple. 31) The king took his place of authority beside the pillar and renewed the covenant in the Lord's presence. He pledged to obey the Lord by keeping all his commands, laws, and decrees with all his heart and soul. He promised to obey all the terms of the covenant that were written in the scroll. 32) And he required everyone in Jerusalem and the people of Benjamin to make a similar pledge. The people of Jerusalem did so, renewing their covenant with God, the God of their ancestors. 33) So Josiah removed all detestable idols from the entire land of Israel and required everyone to worship the Lord their God. And throughout the rest of his lifetime, they did not turn away from the Lord, the God of their ancestors.**

- Renewed promises
- Pledges to obey
- Finished faithfully!!

**- The fourth thing he did to grow strong roots...set Spiritual Goals!**

- Using God's Word he made plans for the future!
- You and I are kings and queens over who?
  - Our own lives
  - Our children (remember to delight!)

**- The five areas of goal setting I did for the summer:**

- the word (read whole bible)
- generosity (consistent with church & 3 specific moments)
- serving (serve 1 person someone everyday)
- faithfulness to God (worship, personal time with Him)
- outreach (witness to 1 person about Christ - nonpastoral related!)

**Conclusion:**

- Sad thing about Josiah - he's remember as making so many significant changes, but its too late for Judah, God had already decided they had gone to far and needed to be punished.

- Many people say that America, the land where we are free to worship, so we worship everything, the land we are free to pray, but we only do when we are desperate, the land that we each have 3 bibles that we won't read, they are neglected, ignored and forgotten...many people say America is on a path to destruction...but can we change that? What did Josiah do when he was given the news that Judah would be destroyed? As a man of character, with strong roots, he produced fruit, impacting a generation of people. We spend a lot of time talking about what could happen, but not enough time on what we can truly affect...us!