

Song Suggestion's (Key of A)

Beautiful One - Tim Hughes
Our God Saves – Paul Baloche
Endlessly – Desperation Band
Rescue - Jared Anderson

Announcements

1. I know it's a long way off but start planning now for Winter Camp! Youth Convention is going to rock and Winter Camp is going to be powerful – Lets get everyone to both! See ya there!
2. Be sure to be checking in on the SOCALYC.COM website and also the facebook, myspace and twitter page! Lots of information is being posted there and it's a great way to connect with all that's happening at ROOTED Youth Convention!
3. This year's youth convention will have some really cool late night options on Saturday night!!! Check your hand out for more information!
4. Don't forget your can of food for the Anaheim Food Bank! We will be giving them in the Friday night and Saturday morning services!

Game

What you need: Two or three (or however many groups you want) cereal boxes and some scissors.

(Divide the group however you want... and according to how many cereal boxes you have. Divide them by grade or sides of the room or boys vs girls. Really however you want.)

We have been talking about trees having strong roots. Today we are testing to see who has strong roots... but instead of roots we are using your legs!!!!

All you have to do is bend down and pick up this cereal box... with your mouth!!!!

Have them give it a shot, the first one is pretty easy. Cut the box in half and have them try it again. It gets harder and harder but there is always one or two who are just amazing at this!

Watch it on youtube - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RPwM08Mg6Tg> to get the idea... by the way, youtube has been one of my favorite resources for youth ministry games.

I have played this game several times and it's been a hit every time!

Offering

God, as we give back to you we remember those who have very little around the world. We pray that you would be with our missionaries who serve in poverty stricken areas. We ask that you would nourish families who only get a meal or two a day. We recognize that we are blessed through your grace and we pray, God, that this offering would go to help this church and the missionaries we support to be an example of your grace to those who are in desperate need of you.
Amen.

INTRO

Water is so important to trees

In fact, trees in front yards are known to damage houses with their roots!

The roots go looking for water, they get close to pipes and the roots will destroy the pipes trying to get water.

Roots can be aggressively dangerous because their job is so important!

Without roots below, everything above is in a state of hopelessness.

But what about a tree planted not in a yard, but right next to a stream? These are powerful trees. They have deep and solid roots and they bear much fruit and they are a joy to everyone. These last couple of weeks we have looked at our Roots as our Christian heritage and we have looked at Roots as being important. Today we look at where roots grow because you belong where your roots are.

ROOTED - YOU BELONG WHERE YOUR ROOTS ARE.

Perhaps one of the most famous plant stories in scripture is told by the Psalmist...

¹ Blessed are those

who do not walk in step with the wicked
or stand in the way that sinners take
or sit in the company of mockers,

² but who delight in the law of the LORD
and meditate on his law day and night.

³ They are 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 TNIV**

How many of you have known others who have been rooted in the ways of the wicked?

Now, I'm not just talking about those who "hang out with the wrong crowd" I'm talking about people who just seem bent on wickedness. They are selfish and full of pride. They are quick to step on others to get ahead. Does anyone know these kinds of people?

Here is an interesting thing, they seem to plant themselves in spots where they and their wickedness can thrive. They surround themselves with people that will tell them they are right or cool or consequence free even. They tend to avoid those who want to do good, those who will sacrifice coolness for righteousness.

But, those who do choose to delight in the law of the LORD they are like a tree planted by streams of water! So, I ask this... where are you today? Are you planted somewhere far away from water? Do you struggle to find righteousness? Or are you regularly meditating on the laws of God? On who He is? Surrounded by others who do the same?

Now wait... this isn't a message guilt you into going to church and stop hanging out with those "other friends" This is about where you are planted, what nourishes you...

When you think about the soil you are planted in, what comes to mind?

Fill in the blank #1.

Where you are is – IMPORTANT-- .

Notice the beginning of Psalm 1 again

¹ Blessed are those
who do not **walk** in step with the wicked
or **stand** in the way that sinners take
or **sit** in the company of mockers,

See the progression the Psalmist is making – Walking, Standing, Sitting.... This is how it happens isn't it. I seriously don't believe anyone wakes up one morning with the intent of being a selfish jerk. Instead, a short walk with another selfish person and we discover that if we walk in those steps we can satisfy some of our own desires. Then we start to stand around with those who make bad decisions and before you know it we are making bad decisions too! And then, the door to being a full blown mocker of the faith is open.

You have all heard stories about some high schooler who heads to college. They are surrounded by a party crowd... and they step in there. And then a college professor talks them out of their faith... and it's not that hard because the new college kid would rather party than pray. And then they return home... they walk into church and church just seems like a joke. Becoming a mocker isn't something you can trust won't happen to you. Becoming a mocker is a gradual process that begins with a short walk in the ways of the wicked. Where you are is important... and this isn't just a nice church sermon... this is a warning about watching your walk because you take your roots with you and walking with the wicked is walking away from the stream! There is a path that leads to death.

Ok – don't look at like I've gone all hell fire and brimstone on ya.

There is a huge piece of great news right here... look where you are at right now!

You are in church.

You brought your roots with you!

I have a question about streams and God stuff... does anyone remember the Garden of Eden from Genesis Ch2? God walked there! AND there were four streams!

How about the descriptions of heaven from Revelation 22? STREAMS!

There is this connection between where God is and where streams are! Now some of you are saying, God is in the wilderness and the desert too. –You are correct!

But the desert isn't a place of comfort and delighting in the Lord... the desert is a time of testing when we walk closely with God. Right...

OK – So here is a question for you....

Question , is there a better place to delight in the Lord than RIGHT HERE?

Seriously, right here you are surrounded by something better than even the people making up this group. You are surrounded by God Himself. Sure you are surrounded by God at school and at home but something special happens when His people gather. God shows up in a powerful way and maybe that feels like something and maybe it doesn't feel like anything but the truth is God shows up!

I want to get back to that but first lets look at this practically.

WHEN YOU SHOW UP TO CHURCH, YOU ARE SURROUNDED BY...

- People who CARE--.

I want you to think about this.

There are leaders here who simply love you. We aren't concerned about how smart you are or what a great athlete you are or how stylish you are... we just love you like crazy. Most places you go to are not fans of teenagers. Have you ever walked into a store and the people just give you an eye... they mad dog ya the whole time! But here... at church.... Put some roots down because you are surrounded by people who love you no matter what you do to your ears or how many times you pierce an eyebrow... in fact, even talking back isn't going to make us stop loving you. We believe that teenagers are great people and God loves you all so much and He has given us the privilege of loving you for Him and we Love it!

OK – You all get it... OK – Lets move on from the mushy stuff.

YOU ARE ALSO SURROUNDED BY...

- People who DELIGHT-- in the Lord with you.

Don't underestimate this.

Few things are more powerful than being with someone who will honestly look at a sunset with you and say "Isn't God Great!" The sad news is eventually each of us will walk through a personal tragedy. At that moment, you will want to know you are surrounded by people who love you, who will lift you up and who will point out even then that God is great.

You will not want to be surrounded by selfish people.

Church is a place where we can gather, as good soil... we can be there for each other,

Leaders there for students,

students there for students,

students there for leaders...

We delight in the Lord together!

That leads us so well to the next point...

YOU ARE SURROUNDED BY...

- People who want to see you – SUCCEED--

We aren't grading you. We simply want the best for you. Perhaps you are here today and you want to be a firefighter! Good! We want to see that happen for you. Maybe an actor, an American Idol winner, right here with us. We want to see that happen. Maybe a missionary, youth pastor, or church planter. Whatever your dreams, we want to see you be successful.

Look, if you want to be successful, the best start you can have is being planted next to the stream of God.

A place where it's safe to fail. A place where love flourishes and a place where your success is important.

This is the exact opposite of being selfish.

This is a place where people gather and work for your success... and you work for the success of others.

Sure, the truth is there are -BENEFITS--...

Verse 3...

³ They are like a tree planted by streams of water,
which yields its fruit in season
and whose leaf does not wither—
whatever they do prospers.

Next time, we will look at bearing fruit.

It's good to have a promise that you won't wither.

Even more so, how would you like to know that whatever you do will prosper?

See, this isn't some made up message this some made up message. This is the Word of God encouraging us to plant ourselves by the river... delight in the Lord, that's what we do here... and we want you here because we would love to see each of you experience these benefits... but its really not about the benefits.

Also, we want you here because we -LOVE-- you.

It really is that simple.

I hope you are rooted in this youth ministry because we love you here. It's not so I can say "I have this many at youth" Its not because I have nothing to do one night a week. Its because I love you so much and these leaders love you so much.... We are willing to make the case, be rooted here. Be rooted in Christ. Be rooted together with people who love you and love God with you and want to see you be successful.

Perhaps there are a few of you here tonight that feel as if you have been walking away from the stream.

You may feel like the wicked have been calling you to walk, stand and sit with them.

You don't need to stay rooted there.

You can transplant yourself right here today.

There is a spot for each of you in this youth ministry.

There is a spot for each of you in the Body of Christ.

Your Roots are where you belong, and you belong here...

Lets pray.