

Harris Creek Baptist Church  
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Series: Soundtracks  
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The Deeply Rooted Christian

Psalms 1

**Blessed is the man<sup>[a]</sup>  
who walks not in the counsel of the wicked,  
nor stands in the way of sinners,  
nor sits in the seat of scoffers;  
<sup>2</sup> but his delight is in the law<sup>[b]</sup> of the Lord,  
and on his law he meditates day and night.  
<sup>3</sup> He is like a tree  
planted by streams of water  
that yields its fruit in its season,  
and its leaf does not wither.  
In all that he does, he prospers.  
<sup>4</sup> The wicked are not so,  
but are like chaff that the wind drives away.  
<sup>5</sup> Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment,  
nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous;  
<sup>6</sup> for the Lord knows the way of the righteous,  
but the way of the wicked will perish.**

Well, don't think of me any differently but I did celebrate Halloween growing up. I know there's some like, emotions around Halloween here. My family was a Jesus loving family. We just weren't a fall festival type of family. And you know, whenever the kids dress up for Halloween, they want to dress up as something big and creative and someone impressive and successful. Somebody like Superman or Olaf or Mickey Mouse. These are the types of people that kids want to look like for Halloween. Who did y'all dress up, for Halloween, as a kid. Anyone remember? What was your favorite Halloween costume growing up? Batman. Anyone else? Davy Crockett. Man, I just learned I need to stop asking questions to people. I heard some things that I did not want to repeat. You want to be somebody impressive, as a kid you want to walk out into the neighborhood and be like, 'I look awesome today!'. Which is why one of my first Halloween costumes was an interesting one.

Here's one of my first ever Halloween costumes. (Picture of Nate as a small child dressed up like a tree is on the screen. Crowd and Nate are laughing.) It is a tree! Apparently, I told my mom, "Hey, I want to be a tree." And she just said, "Hey, what else would you want to be?" And I said, "I want to be a tree." And she is like, "What else?" And I was like, "No, I really, really want to be a tree." Man, I just look at that picture now and I'm just like, 'Buddy, reach higher man! Have some bigger goals, some better goals. Be Spiderman! Be a football player! Be Larry the Cucumber! Be anything but a tree.' I also look at this picture of me as a three-year old... There's

something that this 3-year-old knew that this nearly 30-year-old needs to know now. You see this 3-year-old placed a very high value on stability. Today, that same person, he places a very high value on success. I want to be seen. I want to be the best. I want to be impressive. I want to walk into a room and have people be like, "Wow, there is Nate!" I have placed a high value on success. But I've learned this week, as I've been wrestling with this text, I've realized that a stable life is a successful life.

I think not many of us have a stable soul. I've been in ministry long enough to realize that there's just not much stability within most people. Because, for most people, their emotions go up and down on a daily basis. For many of us, your anxiety or your peace goes up and down based on how much is in your bank account that day. For some of you, your self-worth goes up and down based on how you feel like when you see yourself in the mirror that day. For some of you, your temper with your spouse and kids goes up and down based on how your job went that day. And there's no stability within your soul because your happiness is tied to your happenings. It doesn't have to be that way.

On this Father's Day, I'm the dad of a daughter - she's a little over two years old. We also have another daughter coming in October, which we are thrilled about. We're so excited. (Crowd randomly claps.) Yeah, yeah. Thank you for that pity applause. I appreciate that, not very strong.

Here is what I have learned as a dad of a daughter though. I have learned that my daughters don't need a successful daddy nearly as much as they need a steady daddy. They need a dad who is going to do the same thing every day. They need a dad who is going to be the same man every single day. They need a man who is going to be planted. They need a dad who they know what they're going to get when they when they get to me. They need a dad who is going to look a whole lot like that tree. So today that's what we're going to talk about. We're going to talk about how to be a tree.

I just want to get clear, I'm not just talking to Dads today. This is a message for anybody and everybody, because a lot of us struggle with having a stable soul. A lot of us look a whole lot more like tumbleweed than we do trees. And it's because our roots are planted in things that aren't grounded. Our roots are planted on things that can shift and change. So how can we have a soul that doesn't shift or change? How can we have a steady soul? How can we be a tree?

We're going to find out today by going to Psalm 1. So, if you have your Bibles open them up to Psalm 1. Here's a trick to find the Book of Psalms, open up your Bible to about halfway, maybe a little bit closer to the front of your Bible, and you're likely going to be in the Book of Psalms. It is in the Old Testament.

We're starting off a brand-new sermon series called Soundtracks on the book of Psalms. So, for the next 150 weeks we're just going to take a Psalms a week and we'll just keep going for 30 years. There we go! (Crowd laughs.) We are not going to do that. We are going to take this summer and we're going to go through a different Psalm each and every week. We want to make sure that you get a taste of a wide variety of the Psalms. You see, we're calling this sermon series soundtracks because the book of Psalms were actually songs that would be sung by the people of God. The word Psalms means hymns of praise.

If you haven't spent much time in the book of Psalms, you might not realize that all the songs sound very different. There are some Psalms that are written that sound like songs that you hear on K-Love. There are some Psalms that are written where it's like, I'm not even really sure if that's Christian. There are some Psalms that are songs of lament and mourning and frustration and complaining. There's Psalms of thanksgiving and praise and gratitude. There's a lot of different variety within the Psalms, because the book of Psalms sounds a whole lot like our life feels. There's a lot of ups and downs in our lives.

Today, we're going to start in in Psalm 1 and just for some more background, typically we think that David wrote the entire book of Psalms. That's actually not true, he wrote about half of them - or at least half of them have his name on it. The other half are either written by somebody else or it doesn't say who wrote those Psalms. You kind of have to make an assumption about who it was, and Psalm 1 is one of those chapters. It doesn't say that it was of anyone, but it's widely assumed that this was of David.

We're going to start with Psalm 1 because it's the start of the book of Psalms and because it's believed to be the start of the book of Psalms for a reason. It's believed that it was placed at the beginning because it's believed that if you can understand Psalm 1, if you can live out Psalm 1, you can better understand Psalm 2 – 150. Psalm 1 is going to say, 'Here's how you can be steady,' and the rest of the Psalms are going to show you the ups and downs of life. It's saying if you can live out Psalm 1, you'll be ready for the rest of the book. So that's where we're going to go today - Psalm 1:1. We will start reading there.

It says, **Blessed is the man...** OK, stop there. If you're like me, you like to make decisions in your life like this. You like to go, "Hey God, I'm going to buy this car. Would you please bless this purchase?" Or "God, I'm going to make this move. Would you please bless this move?" Or "God, I'm going to date this person. Would you please bless this relationship?" That's not how we should primarily view God's blessing. When we think about God's blessing, we should not choose the way in which we're going to live and ask God's blessing. Instead, we should study and find out the way of living in that which God blesses, and then live into that. Are you following me here? We should not choose the way in which we live and ask God to bless it. We should figure out the way in which we should live that God blesses and then live into it. And God's going to tell us here, 'Here's the way of life that I bless. Here's what you can do.' This is what it says, **Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers.** So, it seems like He's saying the same thing here three times. It seems like He's saying blessed is the person who doesn't sin, who doesn't sin, who doesn't sin. But He's actually not saying the same thing over and over and over again, because there's a movement to this passage. There are three phrases in this passage. He says, **Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers.** Within those three phrases there are three words that parallel with one other three separate times. Those words are going to show you the movement of this verse.

Let me show you how. The first words are this: walks, stands, and sits; this is what the passage is describing. He's saying, This person is like a person who's walking alongside the road of sin. They're testing it out. They're going on a brief journey with it and then eventually they stop, and they look around and they stand in that path and decide, 'Hey, is this the way in which I want to

go? How is this going for me?' And eventually they sit down in that path and say, 'This is the way I'm wanting to live.' See, there's movement here with this passage. The next words are this: council, way, and seat. What's happening here is David is saying this person is someone who takes counsel from the wicked. They're taking advice from the wicked. They're listening to the wicked and eventually, as they listen to the wicked, they begin to live in the way of the wicked. They try out the way of the wicked. And then eventually the more that they live within the way of the wicked, they become one of the wicked. They're in the company of the wicked. Really, what that progression is saying, is you go from taking counsel from the wicked to being a wicked counselor. You go from listening to the wicked to giving wicked advice. There's movement here.

Thirdly, the three words of this: wicked, sinners, and scoffers. Seems like all the same word, it's not. In Hebrew that word for wicked would be used in a court of law. Whenever someone was accused of doing something wrong, breaking a rule, they would be brought into the court of law and if they were deemed guilty, then the word would be they were wicked. They have broken a law, one time! Next that word for sinners is talking about something else. This isn't someone who did something wrong, it's someone who's doing a lot of things wrong. They haven't committed one crime; they've committed a lot of them. And really the difference there is someone who committed one theft versus a career criminal - that's the distinction between those words. Then lastly the word is scoffers. So, this isn't just someone who sins, this is someone who brags about sinning. They enjoy their sin, they love their sin, and they love to tell other people about their sin. More than that, they try to bring other people into their sin. They look at the righteous and they try to tear them down. See again there's movement here in this passage. You go from sinning a little bit to loving your sin, because there is movement and momentum to the life of sin. Sin will always snowball. This is the first thing we can learn in this passage.

1. *The wicked life is slippery.*

Once you engage in sin, it's so easy for one sin to turn into two and then to turn into three and four and five and six, because sin will always snowball. Because of that, sin will always destabilize your life. And here's what it can look like, a couple weeks ago I was at a conference and a Christian man was on stage, and he was sharing about the last few years of his life. He shared that a few years prior he had gotten engaged with online gambling and it wasn't that big of a deal, he was just kind of gambling a few dollars here and there. No one really knew about it, but it wasn't like ruining his life because it was just kind of like this side hobby. He began to fall in love with online gambling because it was just this thrill of really, really easy money. And as he began to indulge in that, he just loved that thrill of easy money a lot and it just kind of stayed there in his life until he and his company went on a business trip. He and his coworkers went out to eat one night at dinner and they had their meal; the bill came by. Everyone else there, the other nine coworkers had cash to pay for the bill. They took out the cash and put it in the middle of the table to pay for their individual meal. He did not have cash, so instead he pulled out his wallet and he said, "Guys, this is on me. I'll take what you paid for your meal and then I'll just pay for the rest." And he pulled out his wallet and he had a choice - am I going to put this on my visa or my company's visa? In that moment, he pulled out his company's visa and handed it to the server, and he took everybody else's cash, meanwhile the company paid the bill. It was thrilling for him because he got \$200 easy.

After that moment, he continued to pursue the thrill of easy money and as the months and years went on, he would go on to take \$250,000 from his company. How do you end up stealing \$250,000, a quarter of \$1,000,000 from your company? Here's how! It starts alone with technology in your room, enjoying online gambling and not telling anyone about it. It's just kind of a few dollars here and there. And then it grew until he got to that point at dinner, and it really took off in that moment when he said, 'I'm going to pay for this with not my money and I'm going to take everyone else's money.' And that \$200 theft turned into a \$250,000 theft. Why did that happen? Because sin always snowballs! Which is why Scripture says, in Ephesians 4, **Do not give the devil a foothold.** Don't give the enemy a little bit of your life. Because if you give the enemy a little bit of your life, he's going to walk away with a lot of your life!

Satan is up to no new tricks. The devil's doing the same thing. All he wants to do is have a little bit of your life. He just wants you to have the door open just a little bit, because if you give him a little bit, he's going to walk away with a lot. What he wants you to do, is he wants you as you're walking along, to take that second lustful glance - because if he can get you comfortable with those "little sins," he can really get you comfortable with really big sins. That sin will snowball in your life because here's what Satan wants to do, he wants you to go to Chipotle and grab the water cup and get lemonade instead. I'm serious! He loves that. He really wants you to tell your boss that you worked until five, when really you left at three. He wants you to get comfortable with sitting at home, pulling out your remote and going, 'Yeah, there's just a little bit of nudity in this show.' 'Yeah, there's just a little bit of cussing in this show.' He wants you to get comfortable with the little bitty sins because if you can get comfortable with the little bitty sins, he can get you comfortable with a lot of sin. That sin will snowball and eventually destabilize your life.

Eventually your life will look like this. Do you know who this is? (A picture of a bear cub shows on screen.) Take a look at this picture. This is Indie or Belle, I'm actually not sure. It is one of the new bears that Baylor has. Man, I've never seen an Instagram post shared more than when Baylor announced these two new cubs. I mean, it's just all over the place because they're incredibly cute. Since they're incredibly cute, man there is nothing that my daughter would like more than for me to bring this bear home today. (Crowd laughs.) She would love to have this baby bear as a pet. Why is that a bad idea? That baby bear is not going to stay a baby bear. That baby bear is going to grow. And if it was in my house, it would go from being my pet to the next day I would be it's lunch. You see, the same is true for your "pet" sins. "Pet" sins make bad pets because "pet" sins grow up. And when "pet" sins grow up, they want to kill you.

Some of you are wondering, why do I feel so unsteady? Why do I feel so anxious? Why do I have no stability in life? It's because you're cohabitating with something that wants to steal, kill, and destroy you. Of course, you feel destabilized! You're living with something that's trying to take you out. You can't have steadiness or sturdiness within your soul when you are living with something that's trying to kill you, that's trying to destroy you - which is why you cannot have a steady life when you're sitting comfortably in the midst of sin. It's simply not possible.

In a second we're going to read a couple of verses later where in Psalm 1 it says that the wicked are like chaff. Chaff is on the outside of a kernel of grain and what a farmer would do is he would gather up all the grain, put it into a basket, and just toss the grain up into the air. If there's a gentle breeze going by the chaff would be removed from the kernels of grain simply just by a

gentle breeze. Scripture says that this is what the wicked look like - there's no firmness to them, there's no steadiness to them. There's no peace to them because they're grounded in things that promise stability, but don't have the essence of stability. You can't have a sinful life and a steady soul, but it's easy to get there. Point #1, the wicked life is slippery.

So, we've read who is not blessed, here's who is blessed. It says this in the next in this chapter. It says, **Blessed is the one whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and on His law, he meditates day and night. He's like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers. The wicked are not so, but are like chaff that the wind drives away.** You see, while the wicked are like chaff that gets blown away by the wind - the righteous are like trees planted by water. That tree is not going to be affected by a little bit of wind. This is the second thing we can learn in this passage.

## *2. The righteous life is steady.*

The righteous life is steady. So, let's talk about trees for a minute here. I brought some seeds with me; these are watermelon seeds. I don't know much about agriculture. I didn't go to A&M, so I don't know much about it, but I do know enough to know this. Let's say I take two seeds here. And this is embarrassing, but this is true. I picked out watermelon seeds cause I'm like, man, watermelons are big. I bet these are big seeds. That is not how it works. I have got small seeds.

OK, let's imagine I take two seeds here and I plant one very intentionally, right here. (On the stage floor.) And then let's say I take another seed and I plant it very intentionally, right there. (In a jar of dirt.) Which ones going to grow? This one (pointing at the jar), you said this one. Here's the thing I know about seeds and plants and stuff like that, apparently if you speak to your plants and encourage your plants, they'll actually grow faster. Scientifically proven, I think. So, what if I get to the scene (Nate is kneeling by the seed on the floor) and I'm like, "Come on buddy! You can do it! July 4th is right around the corner, I need you. I need a watermelon. Come on grow, grow, grow!" It doesn't matter how much I encourage that seed. It doesn't matter how much water I pour on that seed. It doesn't matter how much sunlight gets shown onto that seed. It's not going to grow, because it's not planted in an environment that's conducive to growth.

Some of you are wondering, "Why am I not growing? Why is my soul not getting healthier and stronger and steadier? Why am I not growing?" It's because you're planted in an environment that is not conducive to growth. Whenever you've got free time, the first thing you do - without thinking - is you pull out your phone and you plant yourself in social media. Or you spend a long hard day at work, and you get home, you're exhausted so you plant yourself on the couch and you just consume news and Netflix. Some of you, your mind is continually planted on work. You cannot stop thinking about work. Some of you, your mind is continually planted on your kid's performance. Some of you are planted around people who do not love Jesus and who will not help you love Jesus. It's no wonder you're not growing, you're not planted in an environment that's conducive to growth.

Here's what's true. Whether or not you are growing is dependent upon where you are going. Where you go determines if you'll grow. If you're continually going to bad soil, you're not going to get good growth. So, what is the good soil that will grow us well? It tells us in this passage. It

says this, verse two, **...but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water...** So, the person that looks like a tree is the person that's planted in the Word of God. It says that person meditates on the law of the Lord, day and night. And to meditate, in the Hebrew, that word meditate actually means to murmur to oneself, to talk to oneself. So, this is what it would look like to meditate on the law of the Lord. Let's say you're trying to memorize Psalm 23. That means you're saying that all throughout your day - as you're picking your kids up from practice, as you're washing the dishes, as you're sending that e-mail under your breath - you're just saying, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want." And the more you say it, the more you meditate on it, you're pushing that verse down into your soul. And really, what you're doing when you're meditating is you're just remaining in the good soil. You're saying, "God, I don't want to go anywhere else. I don't want my mind and my heart to drift anywhere else. I just want to stay in the good soil." And the more you meditate on the Word of God, the more your roots go down into that good soil.

It also says here to do it day and night. In order to stay planted in the soil, you have to do it at all times. You can't just take one day on and take another day off. But here's why some of you aren't growing. For some of you, your life looks like this: on Sunday morning you take your seed and you plant it in the word of God. And then you leave here and you plant yourself in the world. You don't think about the message. You don't think about the scripture. You don't think about the songs that we sang. And you just move from planted in God's word to being planted in the world. Then a few days go by and you're exhausted and anxious. So, you go to life group and once again you plant yourself in the Word of God. The next day though, you go out golfing with your drinking buddies and you plant yourself in the world. Then you get exhausted and anxious. So you're like, man, I should probably pick up the Bible. So, you read the Bible that one time a week and you plant yourself again in the Word. Then after you read your Bible and have a great quiet time, you plant yourself again in the world. You can't grow like that! You can't grow roots like that because roots are only grown through routine. Routine is the only way to grow roots. Staying planted and doing the same thing over and over and over. You can't grow roots if you're planted here one day and then there the next. You have to stay planted in good soil if you're going to grow roots and roots are essential to growth. A tree cannot grow up if it isn't first growing down.

I didn't know much about trees before this week, but I looked this up. Tree roots are fierce. Tree roots will get to what they need. In fact, you know this if you've ever walked down the sidewalks of Austin Avenue. You know this because tree roots will literally move aside concrete sidewalks. Because if that concrete sidewalk is in the way to good soil, well, then that sidewalk has got to move. That is what we have to look like. If we know we need the Word of God to live, if we know we need the presence of God to live, then whatever is in the way between me and the presence of God - well it has got to move. If it's my phone, it's got to move. If it's extra sleep, I'm thinking I'm needing, it's an extra alarm I really do need. Whatever is keeping you from the Word of God is keeping you from growing in God. In other words, whatever is keeping you from good soil is keeping you from a steady soul.

So let me just show you what happens when you are firmly planted. It says it like this in the passage. It says, **He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its**

**season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers.** So it says it yields its fruit in season. Well, which season is it? Well, it says right after this **leaf does not wither.** That leads me to believe it's all seasons. Because you see that stream of living water, it doesn't take an off-season. The spirit of the living God, He doesn't take an off-season. In fact, Jeremiah 17 says it even more clearly. Jeremiah 17 is actually a commentary on Psalm 1, and this is what he said in Jeremiah 17. **Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose trust is in the Lord. He is like a tree planted by water, that sends out its roots by the stream, and does not fear when heat comes, for its leaves remain green, and it is not anxious in the year of drought, for it does not cease to grow fruit.**

In the season of spring, fruit. In summer, fruit. In fall, fruit. In winter, fruit. In cancer, fruit. In healing, fruit. In the breakup, fruit. In the wedding day, fruit. In the promotion, fruit. In job loss, fruit. You can develop fruit in every single season of your life. You might be thinking, 'Nate, I am in a drought season right now. I'm in a hard season, a tough season, a season where it feels like there is no water. How could I possibly grow fruit in this season?' You can't, but God can. I'm so thankful it's not called the Fruit of the Nate, it's called the Fruit of the Spirit. And the Spirit does not take off seasons! You have to understand this, producing fruit is God's role and planting yourself is your role. Growing fruit is not primarily about the quality of the seed, but about the quality of the stream.

So, the good news today is you don't have to be the steady one, you just have to plant yourself next to the One who is. You have to plant yourself next to the one who is the shade in the storm. The one who is the stream in the desert. The one who is the healer in the midst of hurt. The one who is the strong hand when it feels like you're about to drown. The one who is the provider when it feels like there is no provision. The one who is the calm in the chaos. The one who is the stability for your soul. Because growing fruit is not your job, it's His. And before we close this point, I just want to show you an example of what this can look like. How to grow fruit in every single season.

There's a pastor and an author that had impact on my life. I bet he maybe had an impact on yours. His name was Tim Keller and he passed away just a few weeks ago. I just want to read a couple of his last words; these are in the last days of his life. This is what he told his family as he's about to die. He said,

*I'm thankful for all the people who prayed over me over the years. I'm thankful for my family that loves me. I'm thankful for the time God has given me, but I'm ready to see Jesus. I can't wait to see Jesus. There is no downside for me leaving, not in the slightest. Send me home.* ~ Tim Keller

Even in the valley of the shadow of death, fruit. How? Because he planted himself in the presence of God, the Lord produced a good harvest in him. And since he remained planted all his life, at the end of his life he was still steady. This is possible for you and for me, because point number two, the second thing we can learn is the righteous life is steady.

Let's finish off the chapter, it says this verse 5. **Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous; for the Lord knows the way of**



**the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.** So, I just want to clarify the word 'knows' here and what that means. It says the Lord knows the way of the righteous. This is not like a 'Hey, I know a fact.' This is not an informational type of knowledge. This is an intimate type of knowledge. In fact, that word would be used elsewhere in the book of Genesis where it would say Adam knew his wife Eve and they bore a child. This is the type of knowing that it's talking about. It is not a far-off knowledge, it is an intimate knowledge.

What God's saying here is He's not saying, "Man, I know where they're going because I'm pulling out Find My Friends on my phone. That's how I know they're driving South on 35." What he is saying here is, "I know where they're going because I'm in the car with them. I'm not watching them from far off. I don't know it because I see it from a distance. I know it because I'm in it with them. That's how much I care about the righteous. I love them and care for them, and I'm intimately involved in their life, which is why I will bring a good ending to their life."

Not so for the wicked. They have a different ending to their story, and this is the third thing we can learn from this passage.

### *3. The judgment of life is sure.*

Verse five says, **Therefore the wicked will not stand in the judgment...** It doesn't say if there is judgment, it says when there is judgment. Here's the reality for all the paths that we're walking down today, every single one of us, we are walking towards the same day, the day in which we will be judged for what we have done. On that Day of Judgement, there's going to be two paths. The way of the wicked will lead to destruction and the way of the righteous will lead to eternal life. If that's true, we had better make sure we're righteous. If that's true, we had better make sure we're found righteous. If that's true, we had better do enough good things to be declared worthy of getting into heaven. If that's true, that the righteous people are the only people that get into heaven, we better give to the church; we better serve those in need; we better be nice to our neighbors. We better do enough good things so that we can be declared righteous, so that we can have eternal life.

Only problem - Romans 3 - **As it is written: there is no one righteous, not even one.** So, hold on. This is what scripture is teaching. This seems contradictory. Psalm 1 says, the righteous people are the only people going to heaven. Romans 3 says, there are no righteous people. If that's true, there is only bad news. If the righteous people are the only people getting in and none of us here are righteous, we are without hope! We are destined for destruction... at least we were destined for destruction. Let me explain what happened next.

This reveals a lot about me, but I like garage sales. I don't know why, but whenever I see a garage sale sign, I just have to pull off. I like exploring garage sales. Recently, I've been to a lot of them, but here's one recently. I just walked in and I took a look around the garage and when you go to garage sales, you just see some shocking things. There were a few buckets of golf shoes that I think were invented before the game of golf was invented. I mean, it was dirty and nasty and slimy. And then I went over to another table and they had some decorations to put up in your house. We, uh, we just had different likes or different time frames in which we would like our house to look like. And then the next I went over to another table and... If you like these

things, that's great. I don't. There's like this huge set of porcelain dolls and trolls to set up in your house. Man, those things are creepy and I don't want them anywhere near my house! I just left that garage sale going, 'Do they really think anybody would want that? Do they really think anyone was going to buy that stuff? All that stuff should just be thrown out, not sold. There's nothing here that anybody would want. Do they really think anyone would want this stuff?'

Here's the truth. When you and I approached God, this is a whole lot of what it looks like. When we go to God with all of our successes, with everything we've done, and we say "God, here's what I have to offer." It looks a whole lot like this. Isaiah 64 says this, **...all our good deeds are like filthy rags.** Even the best things you've ever done are covered in filth and sin and brokenness, so even the best things you have to offer look disgusting.

So, if you saw everything that I had to offer: all my sin, my lust, my lies, my pride, my desire to perform. You would look at me and you would go, 'Who wants that? Who wants what he has to offer? Who wants what he's selling?' And I bet this thing would be true of you too. If I saw everything that you had to offer, everything you've done in your life, I would say, 'Who wants that? Who would ever buy that? Who wants that?'

And here's the good news of the Gospel - your God steps up and says I do. I want all of that. I want all of their brokenness, not because there's anything impressive here, but because I'm impressive. Not because there's anything lovely here, but because I'm the loveliest of them all. Not because anything here can do anything for me, but because I've already done everything for them. I want to take it all. I want all of them, and I want to pick them up, clean them off and take their unrighteousness and make them righteous. And here's how He does that. He sends his one and only son to live a perfect life, a righteous life, and He died on the cross and three days later he rose again. And if you place your trust in Him, on that day of judgment He won't see your unrighteousness, He'll just see His Son's righteousness. On that day of judgment, you'll be able to stand tall like a tree because Jesus Christ died on one. That's the good news of the gospel!

So in summary: #1 - The wicked life is slippery. #2 - The righteous life is steady. #3 - The judgment of life is sure.

Well to close, I just want to show you the last time I dressed up for Halloween. This is more recent than I'd like to admit - a couple of years ago. So, Waco Mom's blog, apparently it's still a thing. They asked me to come and dress up as Spiderman. So, I did. I was not a very good Spiderman for a number of reasons. One, I have got a large head so the costume wouldn't zip up. It just looked like I had a big neck. But I was a bad Spiderman for another reason. I think that I traumatized some kids that day. I didn't mean to. Here's what happened, unfortunately multiple times.

They would come up to me and I'd say, "Hey, what's your name?" They would tell me their name and I'd say, "That's fantastic! My name is Nate." And they would be like, "Woah! No, no, no, you're supposed to be Spiderman." See, here's the problem that day. On the outside I looked like one thing, but on the inside I felt like somebody else. I had all these kids who were expecting me to be the person I was portraying on the outside, but I couldn't live up to it because on the inside I was somebody else.

And on this Father's Day, I want to say this kindly and gently, but also forcefully. Some of you dads, you've got kids that are looking up to you and expecting you to be the person you're portraying to be, and you're not living up to it because you're not on the inside what you claim to be on the outside.

Some of us in this Christian culture, we have portrayed ourselves to be Christians, loving Jesus. We like to portray on the outside that everything's good and meanwhile not all is well with our soul. And here's why, it's because in Southern Christianity and in the Bible Belt, we have learned to perform rather than to plant. There is a big difference. If you're performing for God, if you're performing to be somebody, you will never be that person. You can never bear fruit on your own. Instead, if you don't perform but you plant yourself in the good soil, the person you want to be on the outside will become the person you want to be on the inside. The Holy Spirit will be alive and active and moving in your life.

So today, if that's who you feel like you are, you feel like there's a misalignment between who you want to be on the outside and who you are on the inside - you know that your roots are dying right now, today's a good day. It's a good day for you because you don't have to pick yourself up and clean yourself off. You don't have to work, work, work, work, work so that you can start to bear fruit. All you need to do is you need to stop the performance and start the planting. You see the only way to a steady soul is through planting yourself next to your steady Savior. The only way I know how to get there. Let me pray that I do that and that you will do that.

Father, I just ask that the person that we want to be on the outside is who we actually are on the inside. That we wouldn't be people who are dying on the vine, but instead we would be people who are firmly planted in the Word of God, firmly planted in your presence. Firmly planted in good soil so that you can grow good fruit within us. God, anyone who feels anxious or dry or weary - I've been there, and I feel that. I just pray that you would just allow them to feel your Holy Spirit. Fill them with the living water, so that in a dry and weary land they would not grow thirsty. God, I do just want to thank you for specifically all of the dads here in this room that are trees firmly planted by living water. That every single day they have been a steady man. A man who does the same thing. A man who is the same man at work and at home and at church. God, I just want to rejoice and thank you for them. God, I just pray for their kids, all the kids represented in this group today. I pray that they would know Jesus because they watched their dad know Jesus. And I pray that as their dads are firmly planted along the streams of living water, seeds would fall from them that would fall into good soil. That those seeds would grow up and never live a day apart from your presence. God, I don't just pray for the dads, I pray for all of us here. That your Holy Spirit would allow us to stay planted in good soil. God, I know that my soul can be so prone to wander. Would you keep us from wandering? Would you keep us planted in your Word rather than the world? God, would you grow good fruit in us so that others could taste and see that the Lord is good. That they could experience a good God who is alive and with us and for us. It's in His name that we pray, Amen.