

1 2  **The Tree Sermons**3  **Introduction**

- Began at Family Camp last year
- At home in the woods of East Texas
- God reveals Himself and His ways to us often through creation
- He showed some powerful lessons on courtship, character, and commitment in those woods.

4  **Desire to build strong families**

- A strong nation depends on strong churches
- Strong churches depend on strong families
- Strong families depend on strong marriages

5  **2 most important decisions you will make**

1. Whether you will receive Christ into your heart.
2. Whom you will marry
- 3.

6  **GENERAL REVELATION**7  **Romans 1:19-20**

- *For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse.*

8  **Psalm 19:1-3**

- *The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handywork.*
- *Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge.*
- *There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard.*

9  **SOLOMON SPOKE OF TREES**10  **1 Kings 4:29-30**

- *And God gave Solomon wisdom and understanding exceeding much, and largeness of heart, even as the sand that is on the sea shore.*
- *And Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the children of the east country, and all the wisdom of Egypt.*

11  **1 Kings 4:31-32**

- *For he was wiser than all men; than Ethan the Ezrahite, and Heman, and Chalcol, and Darda, the sons of Mahol: and his fame was in all nations round about.*
- *And he spake three thousand proverbs: and his songs were a thousand and five.*

12  **1 Kings 4:33**

- *And he spake of trees, from the cedar tree that is in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall: he spake also of beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes.*

13  **TREES IN THE BIBLE**14  **Cedar of Lebanon**15  **The olive tree**16  **The fig tree**17  **LESSONS FROM THE EAST TEXAS WOODS**

18  **THE COMMITTED TREE**

The kind of trees God wants His children to be

19  **Characteristics of commitment**

- Useful lumber
- Productive (fruitful)
- Unified
- Reacting differently to the wind, but moving together
- Share common roots
- Strengthened by difficulty

20  **THE CORRUPT TREE**21  **Before the fall**

- Tree started tall and straight
- Decay within started without being seen
 - Hidden sin (pine beetle)
 - Often through wrong friendships (heart rot caused by fungi)
- Lack of deep roots

22  **After the fall**

- Decay is now plainly visible; permanently leaning the wrong way
- A discerning arborist could have foreseen the danger
- A wise authority protects you from a “bad tree.”

23  **Secrets damage us**


- Wrong friends, wrong music
- Wrong possessions (battle of Ai)
- Pornography
 - Failure of parents to control Internet access
 - Failure to put multiple levels of protection in place
 - Failure to keep all computer use out in the open
 - Failure to control smart phones

24  **THE CHEATING TREE**25  **Trees that are sharing?**

- Growing next to a giant pine
- Root systems intertwined
- Branch between these trees

26  **Hypocrisy**

- Appears to be growing pine cones, but that isn't possible
- Standing close enough to the pine tree so that its cones fall on it










27  **Imitation and association aren't enough**

- You can imitate fruit (outward results) but without a change in character, the fruit isn't real.
- Association isn't enough

28  **Why courtship is imperative**


- As for me and my house....
- Wise authority discerns true character
- God's will can be confirmed through authorities
 - We are often deceived into believing that what we want is God's will
 - But it isn't God's will unless it lines up with His Word and with the authorities God gives us.

29  **THE CARELESS TREE**

- 30  **The Careless Tree**
- A lesson in irresponsibility
 - Responsibility: Being a trustworthy and faithful steward of resources and opportunities which God and others have put in my care.
- 31  **Irresponsible to wager on chance**
- Evolution (perhaps shoes just evolved there)
 - Gambling
 - Hoping for right outcome without working on it
- 32  **Irresponsible to waste resources**
- What do shoes cost?
 - Who provided the shoes?
 - What does money truly represent?
 - What resources do people waste?
 - Money
 - Time
 - Talents
 - Trust
- 33  **Irresponsible to wreck reputation**
- What would you have thought of the person trying to hang his shoes in the tree?
 - A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches.
- 34  **How to protect your reputation**
- Be on guard
 - Never be alone with a person of the opposite gender
 - Never be flirtatious
 - Never succumb to the devil's lie ("It won't hurt you.")
 - Never fail to keep your word
- 35  **James 1:14**
- *But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.*
 - Drawn away = fishing lure
 - Enticed = animal trap
 - In each case, the animal sees the bait and only considers the "good" it will do him
 - In each case the animal fails to see the trap
 - Satan deceives us into believing that secret sins, friends, communications have no consequence.
- 36  **Irresponsible to want what God does not will for you**
- Should that tree have coveted a pair of shoes?
 - What will it do with them?
 - Do you just want a companion?
- 37  **Determine God's will BEFORE the relationship begins**
- Do my parents bless this relationship?
 - Do the other person's parents bless this relationship?
 - Does this line up with God's Word?
 - Does this line up with God's purposes for my life?
- 38  **Irresponsible to walk without protection**
- Common dangers
 - Grass burrs
 - Scorpions
 - Copperheads
 - Bull nettle
 - Poison ivy / poison oak
 - Hidden dangers

39  **Irresponsible to weaken others by a bad testimony or legacy**

- You've seen shoes on telephone lines.
- Why do some people throw shoes over the telephone or electric line?
 - It is because they have seen others do it.
 - What testimony do you have?

40  **Irresponsible to work foolishness**

- Bad company corrupts good morals
- It took a lot of effort to get those shoes into the tree (repeated efforts)
- Why waste your life on that when you could have been walking with God?

41  **Where we've been**

- The tree examples
 - Committed tree
 - Corrupt tree
 - Cheating tree
 - Careless tree
- If the goal is strong marriages to build strong families to build a strong church...
 - Then courtship is an essential process

42  **Where we're going**

- The biblical basis of courtship
- Making courtship work
- Keys to successful marital communications
- The danger of anger
- Why your children are like olive plants around the table