**A Story to Tell**



**They Way Church**

**Brother David S. Wilson**

When we cut down a tree we learn much about the history of the tree. We learn things like the age, the climate conditions during growth (drought, heavy rain, cold, severe heat etc.), stresses put on the tree, and many other things as science advances and new technology emerges. This morning I want us to look at the story a tree tells. It is kind of neat so permit me for a moment to teach you a little about dendrochronology, which is the science or technique of dating events, environmental change, and archaeological artifacts by using the characteristic patterns of annual growth rings in timber and tree trunks. I want us to then apply these things to our walk with Jesus Christ. A tree grows in three directions, downward towards the water and nutrients in the soil and upward towards the sun reaching for the light it desperately needs to grow and outwardly to establish a strong foundation to support added mass of the tree. We should grow in these same directions. We should grow deeper in the Word of God. We should stretch our arms out in an act of surrender looking upward to Jesus Christ growing everyday. Finally, we should grow outward as we proclaim the gospel to those around us and they come to know Jesus.

When a tree is cut down, the growth rings in the tree reveal much about the tree. First, the number of rings indicates the age or maturity of the tree. Count the rings and you can determine the age. It should be noted the age does not always equal the number of rings because some trees deposit more than one ring per year. Secondly, the width of the growth rings indicates climate conditions during the growth. Wide rings indicate much growth and good conditions. There was a plentiful supply of water and nutrients during this growth. Narrow rings mean lean years, difficult conditions, and not as much visible growth. Finally, stresses on the tree are revealed through asymmetrical rings. The tree tells a story. We are to tell a story. We much like the tree have a story to tell. We must tell our story, as well as the stories God provides. Friday, I had the joy of working in the shop with my father and my son. I could not help but thinking about what was represented in the shop that day. Three generations of stories. Three men with a story to tell and a great deal of love that abounded through the stories told. My dad always has a story to tell. He tells stories of his days in Dothan as a little boy, he tells stories about growing up in Bibb City. He tells stories about the military. I know a great deal about my father and can tell you a great deal about his life through the stories he tells. We went to lunch Friday at the Fort Mitchell, Grill and as we sat there we told stories, all of us. Luke, me, and my father each telling stories of times past and the impact it had on our life. I love to hear my father talk about his father. He lights up, he smiles different, he laughs different, and his stories are different. I have never heard my father say anything negative about his father. My grandfather was a loving man and a man my father obviously loved dearly and felt loved by him. I never met my grandfather, but through the stories my father tells, I feel like I know him. His name was Luther Wilson, but everyone who knew him called him “Luke,” so I named my son Luke. Three generations telling stories in a shop, in a restaurant, loving one another feeling loved. God wants us to tell stories. He is asking you to tell His story. He wants you to tell the story of how He used to walk in the garden with Adam, how He told Noah to build an ark and prepare for water to fall from the sky. He wants you to tell people about how He told Abram he would become a father of many nations and how Sarah his wife in her old age laughed at the proclamation she would have a child of her own. He wants us to tell the story of how He spoke to Moses through a burning bush. He wants you to tell people how the bush burned, but was not consumed. He wants you to tell how He used Moses to deliver His people from Egypt and how they took a 60-day journey for 40 years. He wants you to tell how a little shepherd boy stood before a giant ready to fight unto death with a sling and a few stones. He wants you to tell how the stone was laser guided by God Almighty, defeating the giant and bringing victory for His children. He wants you to tell the story of how His children would lose their way and how sacrifices were a required practice to bring things in order with God. He wants you to tell how He loved us so much that He became flesh, and dwelt among us, living perfectly and providing the perfect sacrifice for all of mankind. He wants you to tell how He was beaten, whipped, and crucified on a tree, to pay the price for your sins. He wants you to tell the story of how he poured His life out for three years ministering to 12 men. He wants you to tell the story of how one of those men, Peter, stepped out of a perfectly good boat and walked on water to His Lord. He wants you to tell how He fed 5,000 with a few fish and a little bread. He wants you to tell how He touched the leper and the leper was cleansed. He wants you to tell how the lame walked and the blind gained sight just by His touch and His Words. He wants you to tell how, after they killed Him and placed Him in the grave, the grave couldn’t hold Him and He arose from the grave; conquering sin and paving the way for your God Story. He wants you to tell How Saul became Paul and how a man went from killing those who claim the name of Jesus, to proclaiming the name of Jesus as Lord, Savior, King, and Almighty God. Then He wants you to tell your story, how did you meet this King? How and when did you give your heart to Jesus? Oh you must tell your story. It is absolutely necessary. GO TELL YOUR STORY! TELL IT LOUD AND TELL IN WITH THE LOVE OF JESUS CHRIST! IT IS IMPORTANT! IT IS REQUIRED!

**John 1:35-41**

**35 Again, the next day, John stood with two of his disciples. 36 And looking at Jesus as He walked, he said, “Behold the Lamb of God!” 37 The two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. 38 Then Jesus turned, and seeing them following, said to them, “What do you seek?” They said to Him, “Rabbi” (which is to say, when translated, Teacher), “where are You staying?” 39 He said to them, “Come and see.” They came and saw where He was staying, and remained with Him that day (now it was about the tenth hour). 40 One of the two who heard John *speak,* and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother. 41 He first found his own brother Simon, and said to him, “We have found the Messiah” (which is translated, the Christ). 42 And he brought him to Jesus.**

**Now when Jesus looked at him, He said, “You are Simon the son of Jonah. You shall be called Cephas” (which is translated, A Stone).**

Learn from Andrew:

1. Andrew was a seeker.

He was a disciple of John the Baptist.

**John 1:35 Again, the next day, John stood with two of his disciples.**

He was seeking the truth. He found the truth in John the Baptist and followed John.

2. Andrew was a great student.

**John 1:36-39 And looking at Jesus as He walked, he said, “Behold the Lamb of God!” 37 The two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. 38 Then Jesus turned, and seeing them following, said to them, “What do you seek?” They said to Him, “Rabbi” (which is to say, when translated, Teacher), “where are You staying?” 39 He said to them, “Come and see.” They came and saw where He was staying, and remained with Him that day (now it was about the tenth hour).**

John taught he was not the Messiah but the Messiah was coming. When John the Baptist pointed out Jesus as the Lamb of God who would take away the sins of the world, Andrew knew that this man was the Messiah prophesied of Old.

3. Andrew told his story.

**John 1:40 One of the two who heard John *speak,* and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother. 41 He first found his own brother Simon, and said to him, “We have found the Messiah” (which is translated, the Christ).**

He was certain Jesus was the Messiah; therefore, he immediately began to tell others. He did not sit around after this and ask, “What am I to do?” He knew and thus he led others to Jesus Christ.

4. Andrew started at home and didn’t quit.

**John 1:41-42 He first found his own brother Simon, and said to him, “We have found the Messiah” (which is translated, the Christ). 42 And he brought him to Jesus…**

Andrew first tells is the one who he is closest to, his brother Simon. Family is a difficult place to witness, but the first place Andrew went. What about you?

5. Andrew’s witness leads to Simon’s decision.

**42 And he brought him to Jesus.**

**Now when Jesus looked at him, He said, “You are Simon the son of Jonah. You shall be called Cephas” (which is translated, A Stone).**

Do your families know about Jesus? Are you timid about going to them about their salvation? Andrew wasn’t. We must never become so focused on the salvation of others that we fail to take the gospel to our families.

I have a question for you this morning; do you have a story to tell? Have you surrendered your life to Jesus Christ? Have you admitted to Him that you are a sinner? Do you believe Jesus Christ is the Savior of the world, that He died on the cross for the very sins you commit? Have you asked Him to forgive you, to cleanse you of all unrighteousness, to take over your life? Have you cried out to Him in repentance and said you will follow Him? Is Jesus Christ Lord of your life? If not then today you need to surrender you life, heart and soul into His hands. If you have are you telling your story? Are you telling His story? Do you know His story? Do study God’s Word so that you can know His story so you can tell His story? Are willing to shout His story from the roof-tops? Are you living His story in such a way that you truly feel you have a fire shut-up in your bones and you MUST TELL IT? Today is the day that you start telling you story.