

## Tree of Life - Growth Takes Time

May 20-21, 2017

### Community:

1. Do you enjoy gardening, working in the yard, and landscaping? Share a story about your like (or dislike) for these things at home.
2. When you hear or read about the *Fruit of the Spirit* (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control), which of these resonate the most for you, and why?

### Core:

1. Ben defined **love** as *"an act of the will; it displays faithfulness and commitment to the object you love"* and **joy** as *"a depth of spiritual assurance and confidence that ignites happiness; a deep-down sense of well-being in the heart of someone who knows that 'all is well' between them and God"* and **peace** as being *"derived from a verb that means 'to join or bind together that which has been broken, divided, or separated. An action to build wholeness."* Looking at those definitions, who are some people in your life that bear this fruit consistently?
2. Which of the *love, joy, and peace* trio do you see most in your life? Do you exhibit all three or none at all? How do you think your life would look (or change) if God grew these in you?
3. **Read John 15:1, 4-5.** What do you think it looks like to *"remain in God"*? When Jesus says *"apart from me you can do nothing,"* what do you think this means?
4. **Read Philippians 1:6.** Focus on the phrase *"began a good work."* What does that mean to you? Have you confused slow and steady growth for no growth at all?
5. Ben made an analogy using two trees. Even though they were the same trees at their roots, one was much larger than the other. However, neither is in charge of its own growth—they both need time and the right gardener to grow. How does this apply to you, as a follower of Jesus? Which of the two trees do you relate to most?
6. The theme of Ben's talk was: *Growth Takes Time*. Consider where your life was six months ago, last November. Can you see growth in *love, joy, and peace*? What about from one year ago? Three years ago? Five years ago? How is your life different?

### Challenge:

Ben shared that slow and steady growth is hard to recognize in our own lives and we need help. This week, find someone you know and trust who is going to be honest with you, and ask them this tough question: *"Is there any part of my life where you can see real growth and change in Jesus?"* Ask God to help you find that person, and to give you the courage to ask that question.

**(Please let us know if you are using these questions, and if they're helpful.**

**Email us at: { [HYPERLINK "mailto:community@flatironschurch.com"](mailto:community@flatironschurch.com) } to give us your feedback)**

