

From Beginning to End: Part 3

Taking Root

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Philippians 1:6 NLT

6 And I am certain that God, who began the good work within you, will continue his work until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns.

In part 1 we spoke about in the beginning of how God separated the light and the dark and that throughout scripture we have been called to walk as the light and forsaken the darkness.

Part 2 we explained that roots are vital to a beginning and that roots serve two purposes. Roots are the source of how feeding takes place.

We showed the mandate of what growing roots must look like, it is worth the few moment to bring this back into sight.

1. Repentance of Sin
2. Turning To God
3. Baptism
4. Laying on of hands
5. Resurrection from the dead
6. Eternal Judgement

These six things are vital to grow roots. And we stated last week that roots serve a dual purpose. The first use of roots is to eat. And we listed some practical ways of how we are to eat or feast upon God's Kingdom. And they are :

1. Staying connected to Jesus
2. Crave God's word like food
3. Don't grow alone
4. Stay planted where God can grow you
5. Live out the Grace that saved you

These are intentional but practical implications that will cause our roots to grow and thrive. But today we will spend some time on the next thing that roots do. Roots bring stability to our lives. Not the beginning roots but the ones that grow deep and wide. Roots are the anchor that holds our position for bearing fruit.

Colossians 2:1-7 NLT

1 I want you to know how much I have agonized for you and for the church at Laodicea, and for many other believers who have never met me personally. 2 I want them to be encouraged and knit together by strong ties of love. I want them to have complete confidence that they understand God's mysterious plan, which is Christ himself. 3 In him lie hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. 4 I am telling you this so no one will deceive you with well-crafted arguments. 5 For though I am far away from you, my heart is with you. And I rejoice that you are living as you should and that your faith in Christ is strong. 6 And now, just as you accepted Christ Jesus as your Lord, you must continue to follow him. 7 Let your roots grow down into him, and let your lives be built on him. Then your faith will grow strong in the truth you were taught, and you will overflow with thankfulness.

Paul commended their faith. Their acceptance of the mysterious plan that can only be found within knowing Jesus. But he urged for the Colossians and the Laodiceans to continue to move forward. That they would not only grow roots but to grow deep roots! Roots that expanded the foundation of their faith. Paul said "Let your roots grow deep down into him, and let your lives be built on him." These roots build our relationship with Jesus. We will not ever experience a harvest until we are rooted and grounded in Jesus. And the only way to be rooted or vested is to love the same way

He loves. Remember that Jesus said that this is the kind of love the world cannot receive. The very one that laid down His life so that we could have eternal life.

These roots that grow deep down holds us firm because Jesus truly becomes our anchor. Notice Jesus stated in John 15 that we are the branches. And branches is what bears the fruit. But before we were branches we were only twigs. “From Beginning to End”, we will not always be a twig because we become branches and from branches we bear fruit. It is a process but we must be pruned from the very things that steal our nutrients. It is from His love that we are pruned. It is His love that anchors us.

Ephesians 3:17 NLT

17 Then Christ will make his home in your hearts as you trust in him. Your roots will grow down into God’s love and keep you strong.

Depth of roots is seen by our love for Him. Jesus said if you love me, you’ll keep my commandments. Love is signified by obedience. Not the part we like or agree with but all that His word speaks. So you’re saying I have to be perfect, Pastor? God didn’t call us to be perfect, he commanded that we are holy. Well what’s the difference you may ask...Perfect is to be without flaw, holy is to be set apart. The Holiness God calls us to is to His character. The very things that make up His holiness.

Romans 11:16–18 NLT

16 And since Abraham and the other patriarchs were holy, their descendants will also be holy—just as the entire batch of dough is holy because the portion given as an offering is holy. For if the roots of the tree are holy, the branches will be, too. 17 But some of these branches from Abraham’s tree—some of the people of Israel—have been broken off. And you Gentiles, who were branches from a wild olive tree, have been grafted in. So now you also receive the blessing God has promised Abraham and his children, sharing in the rich nourishment from the root of God’s special olive tree. 18 But you must not brag about being grafted in to replace the branches that were broken off. You are just a branch, not the root.

If we are connected to God then we are partakers of His Holiness. His character becomes our character. How well are we replicating His holiness? How much does our character reflect His character?

We must be lovers of righteousness and haters of lawlessness. When we tolerate, we condone. When we compromise we are ultimately lovers of self more than we are lovers of God.

Proverbs 12:3 NLT

3 Wickedness never brings stability, but the godly have deep roots.

Wickedness in the Hebrew is resa (rā·šā'). Its meaning

The Complete Word Study Dictionary: Old Testament 7562. עֲשָׂה reša' wickedness, injustice, and unrighteousness. It embodies that character which is opposite of the character of God.

This is what John describes as lawlessness or sin. Sin will cause us to be unstable while living by God's character institutes deep roots. And so now all of a sudden it becomes very obvious what many "Christians" are fruitless! They are unstable. Their character displays this. James said that a double-minded or half hearted person is unstable. It is only by the godly character of God that we operate that brings forth the depth of roots. This is what "From Beginning to End" must look like within us. When it is within it becomes outwardly. Our body does not do an action that our brain didn't signal for it to do. It must be inwardly to become outwardly. "From Beginning to End"!

As we move on a little deeper into scripture we must mention the parable of the sower!

Matthew 13:3–6 NLT

3 He told many stories in the form of parables, such as this one: "Listen! A farmer went out to plant some seeds. 4 As he scattered them across his field, some seeds fell on a footpath, and the birds came and ate them. 5 Other seeds fell on shallow soil with underlying rock. The seeds sprouted quickly because the soil was shallow. 6 But the plants soon wilted under the hot sun, and since they didn't have deep roots, they died.

Matthew 13:18–21 NLT

18 "Now listen to the explanation of the parable about the farmer planting seeds: 19 The seed that fell on the footpath represents those who hear the message about the Kingdom and don't understand it. Then the evil one comes and snatches away the seed that was planted in their hearts. 20 The seed on the rocky soil represents those who hear the message and immediately receive it with joy. 21 But since they don't have deep roots, they don't last long. They fall away as soon as they have problems or are persecuted for believing God's word.

I know we left some of this parable out but you will have to come back next week for that. But the seed that fell on rock soil had roots...but it lacked depth. Its faith was superficial. Its roots were shallow. It was the rock that prevented depth. The seed has everything the mother plant has. And because the mother plant has fertile soil and deep roots it produced a harvest of fruit that yield seeds so that Kingdom may continue. So why are we not preaching holiness and coming out from among the world? Why are we not declaring the word from Ezekiel over the hardness of our hearts. It was that hardness of the rock that prevented depth of roots. Our heart posture prevents us from growing in depth.

Ezekiel 36:25–27 ESV

25 I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. 26 And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. 27 And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules.

A heart of stone prevents us from loving like God loves. A heart of stone prevents us from walking in his statutes. A heart of stone prevents us from obeying his decrees. A heart of stone dwarfs our roots causing us to be unstable. Shallow roots—produced by unrepentant sin—create instability that manifests as inconsistent character. Believers with shallow roots are spiritually unstable—one month they're on fire for God, the next they're off the radar, often getting caught up with the winds of strange doctrines or losing their tempers when adverse situations arise.

We did not read the entire parable of the sower but none of the seeds planted produced a harvest. And rocky soil within our lives will prevent us from producing a harvest. How we plant the word of God within our lives determines how fruitful or fruitless we will be. We are the deciding factor of this outcome. Simply because the seed has everything it needs to produce...we just have to plant it in the right place.

James 4:6–7 NLT

6 And he gives grace generously. As the Scriptures say, "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble." 7 So humble yourselves before God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.

Here is how we will thoughtfully and carefully plant the word of God so that our roots can be placed within His love. Humility: A word that we find hard to welcome. Humility takes the attention off of us. Humility means that we surrender. Humility is letting it be so. Humility is no longer resisting but submitting. Submitting to God's heart. Jesus showed us this. "From Beginning to End". It was not a one-time thing. It is continual! Jesus said at His baptism, let it be so. A relinquishing of His will and submitting to the will of the Father so that heaven could come to earth. We also saw this in the garden of Gethsemane . Jesus brought His will back into alignment with God. The only place within scripture where Jesus' will and God's will looked differently. But it was by submitting through prayer that He humbled himself. So being humble before God means that we must be prayerful.

In closing:

James 4:8 NLT

8 Come close to God, and God will come close to you.

Who determine our closeness with God? How do we get closer? We make the intentional step towards God. We walk in his character in everything we do.

Let me pray with you today!