

The Potter's Christian Life Center

SERMON NOTES
with Pastor Greg Formey



Roots Before The Storm

Colossians 2:6-7

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“And now, just as you accepted Christ Jesus as your Lord, you must continue to follow him. 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.”

One of the great dangers in the Christian life is looking strong while being shallow. A tree may appear tall and healthy, but if its roots are weak, the first serious storm will expose it. In the same way, a believer may look established on the outside, yet lack the depth needed to endure pressure, delay, or suffering.

In the ancient world, people understood this clearly. Farmers in Israel depended on deep roots because rain did not fall evenly throughout the year. When dry seasons came, only deeply rooted plants survived. Paul draws on that image to teach that spiritual strength is developed beneath the surface before it is revealed in public life.

GROWTH THROUGH DAILY DEPENDENCE

Paul instructs believers to “let your roots grow down into him.” The Greek word in this verse for roots shows that we have been planted in Jesus, but that we must continue drawing life from Him. Growth is not instant; it requires a connection and dependence.

The early church did not think of faith as just a one-time decision. They knew that it was a daily walk. In Jewish culture, disciples followed their rabbi so closely they were said to be “covered in the dust of their master.”

Psalm 1:2-3

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 that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers. ESV

This tree does not chase water, it is planted by it. It's very positioning guarantees that it will achieve stable growth.

A person who exercises once a month will not build strength. This kind of vigor comes from regular, intentional training. In the same way, spiritual depth is not built in moments of crisis but in the establishment of a rhythm of focus on the body.

When the high officials of Babylon attempted to entrap Daniel through a new law that forbade prayer to any god or man for thirty days, he had a choice to make.

Daniel 6:10

When Daniel knew that the document had been signed, he went to his house where he had windows in his upper chamber open toward Jerusalem. He got down on his knees three times a day and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as he had done previously. ESV

What is interesting is that because of Daniel's consistent display of godly character, they were confident that they would catch him being faithful in his spiritual practices.

Daniel remained steady in Babylon because he had already built a pattern of prayer. When the decree was signed to throw him to the lions, he didn't start a new prayer life; he simply continued the one he already had.

Are you trying to stand strong in public while neglecting the private practices that build deep roots?

STRONG ROOTS ARE PROVEN IN THE STORM

Paul connects being "rooted" with being "built up." This shows that God establishes us over time. Stormy seasons do not cause us to be rooted; they reveal what is already rooted.

Scripture warns against making permanent decisions in temporary distress.

Ecclesiastes 7:10

Say not, 'Why were the former days better than these?' For it is not from wisdom that you ask this. ESV

In tough, the temptation is to panic, compare, or make rushed decisions. But wisdom says that we should endure, learn, and wait.

James 1:2-4

Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing. ESV

High in the White Mountains of California grow the Bristlecone Pines, some of the oldest living organisms on Earth. They do not live in lush valleys; they live in harsh, high-altitude, rocky terrain. They are gnarled and weather-beaten, but they have a secret: Slow growth and deep anchors. Because the environment is so harsh, their wood grows incredibly dense; so dense that rot and insects cannot penetrate it. Their roots wrap around the very rocks of the mountain. When the great storms come, the "prettier," faster-growing trees in the valleys are snapped or uprooted. But the Bristlecone stands because it spent centuries growing deep into the rock.

Conclusion

The storm you are facing today is not the time to begin your root system. It is the time to rely on the roots you have been growing in the quiet, mundane moments of daily obedience. If you find yourself shaking today, do not make an impulsive decision in your distress. Turn back to the source.

May the Lord plant you deeply in His grace, establish you in His truth, and keep you steady through every wind of change. Amen.