

ReFocus 2019
Deep Roots pt 2 Principles and Vital Practices
Psalm 1

I do a series each year that reminds us of these principles because we need YOU to help us stay on track. If you see me or the leadership veering off of these traits, please speak with us – immediately and appropriately.

What are the tracks that we need to stay on – ROOTS, BRANCHES, FRUIT – Psalm 1; John 15

Psalm 1

**1 How blessed is the man who does not walk in the counsel of the wicked,
Nor stand in the path of sinners, Nor sit in the seat of scoffers!
2 But his delight is in the law of the Lord, And in His law he meditates day and night.
3 He will be like a tree *firmly* planted by streams of water,
Which yields its fruit in its season And its leaf does not wither;
And in whatever he does, he prospers.**

Deep roots- ongoing growing relationship with Jesus Christ. Everything else flows from that. While we do have a relationship with the church and the people, the primary relationship is VERTICAL
Branches- Significant Community. The Christian life can't be done alone. It takes a church to raise a Christian. Along with that is our Natural sphere of influence – job, neighbor, family
Fruit- Salty lives: not just “clean” living but living in a way that can only be explained by the Holy Spirit and creates a thirst for God. A life that catches people off guard so that others are blind-sided by grace. A normal part of the Fruitful life is that each believer would take what they learn and pass it along to someone else who can in turn pass it along -222 Model of discipleship

Today we are Continuing with some biblical principles regarding DEEP ROOTS along with some Vital Practices. There are two ways of hearing this :

- 1) Just another guilt trip about “spending time with God. Blah, Blah”
- 2) This is an invitation to come and drink from the soul reviving presence of God.

It's a struggle, yes. I spoke about that last week. It's a real struggle because we are in a real spiritual war. Satan doesn't want you to draw near to God from the heart. You can be as outwardly religious as you like, you can volunteer for everything, you can tithe and memorize scripture, share your faith like Billy Graham, as long as your heart is far from God.

Jesus summarized the whole package this way, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and mind; love your neighbor as you love yourself.”

Love for God is more than having feelings for God, but it's not less than that. The Bible is full of the language of the heart, delight, and emotions when it comes to God. (Edwards – Treatise on Religious Affections)

What does delight look like for YOU?

Whether you admit it or even recognize it, you experience or express delight in something in your life. The question is, “Does that delight have a parallel when it comes to your walk with God?”

We're not all going to be King David writing poetry to God. The issue isn't one of being someone else. The issue is whether you are giving yourself to the delight of growing deeper in your walk with God.

Review from last week #1-3

1. **God desires intimacy with us more than service from us.** –Rev 2 Church of Ephesus – they lost their first love.
2. **Knowing God is the greatest prize we can experience - Jer 9:23,24**

3.) Spend time alone with God because we want to – Jer 31. In the depth of the new heart is a desire and longing for God. It is His spirit bearing witness with our spirit by which we cry, “Abba Father.”

The most impactful believers have two traits – depth in scripture and warmth towards Christ. Too often in the church you get one or the other. To create a culture of life transformation, you must have both. They are not in opposition. Let’s consider one additional principles and then move to some VITAL PRACTICES.

4. All significant ministry is the overflow of DEEP ROOTS

I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. John 15:5

<https://www.desiringgod.org/messages/george-muellers-strategy-for-showing-god>

[George Muller was incredibly busy and fruitful in his ministry to the orphans in his city, but his primary work was vertical not horizontal.](#)

“I saw more clearly than ever, that the first great and primary business to which I ought to attend every day was, to have my soul happy in the Lord. The first thing to be concerned about was not, how much I might serve the Lord, how I might glorify the Lord; but how I might get my soul into a happy state, and how my inner man might be nourished.” George Muller

** SIDE NOTE: If and when you have young children give yourself grace, God does. You won’t have the time alone with God that you might like. There are seasons of life. Go hard after God, but there are seasons of life when your best plan is to put one foot in front of the other and just don’t do anything stupid. That is not an excuse to ignore God, but it is a recognition of real life. As a parent you can’t afford to ignore God because the main thing your kids need is to see that you love God. The second priority is that you love your spouse. Those won’t happen if you ignore the vertical relationship with God. **

WHAT ARE SOME VITAL PRACTICES THAT HELP US CREATE DEEP ROOTS?

David Brooks- “fall in love with something and build structures and habits around it that will carry you through when the love falters.” Doing it in community makes it easier. PROXIMITY PRINCIPLE.

This is not the usual list that you might expect – pray, read the bible, fellowship, maybe fast, corporate worship, etc.

Those practices are the utensils we use to draw from the banquet table of grace. This is where gluttony is actually approved as we feast on God.

I want to highlight some practices that may not show up on the typical list:

1. In everything give thanks – Eph 5, Col 3, 1 Thess 5

Eph – context of the spirit- filled life 5:20always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father;

Col 3:17 Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father.

1 Thess 5 16 Rejoice always; 17 pray without ceasing; 18 in everything give thanks; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.

Nothing has been more important for my spiritual growth than learning and struggling to “give thanks in everything”; especially when I don’t feel like it and in times of trial.

“BUT ISN’T THAT HYPOCRISY?” NO, it’s faith.....faith that is moving past the feelings of the moment to sink its roots into the living God. If we are only thankful when things are going well, then we don’t need deep roots. The water is all on the surface and anyone can find it.

When our souls are in a dry and weary land we have to press on and make the effort to sink our roots into God. That’s how we develop a stronger root system.

EX: Joni Erikson Tada perspective

Deep roots are cultivated when we meet God in our trials, even or especially, when it is a trial that calls us to forgive someone else or to bear someone else's sin.

We are never more like Christ than when we are forgiving those who sin against us. That is what Jesus did for us!! Those are moments when we can grow DEEP ROOTS of faith, if we'll sink them in the grace that He has shown us. The alternative is to see our spiritual roots shrivel and dry up.

CASTING CROWNS – Oh My Soul

Oh, my soul
Oh, how you worry
Oh, how you're weary, from fearing you lost control
This was the one thing, you didn't see coming
And no one would blame you, though
If you cried in private
If you tried to hide it away, so no one knows
No one will see, if you stop believing

Oh, my soul
You are not alone
There's a place where fear has to face the God you know
One more day, He will make a way
Let Him show you how, you can lay this down
'Cause you're not alone

Giving thanks in all things, even the things we fear is how we sink DEEP ROOTS into God.

Are you sitting on an issue in your life when you need to give thanks by faith?

2. Brokenness and Confession – only broken men and women fully appreciate and enjoy God. Is 57:15
15 For thus says the high and exalted One
Who lives forever, whose name is Holy,
“I dwell *on* a high and holy place,
And *also* with the contrite and lowly of spirit
In order to revive the spirit of the lowly
And to revive the heart of the contrite.

Not primarily anguish of heart, but primarily with absence of confidence in self
It involves knowing our hearts and the hidden sin that we don't easily see. –

It were an easy thing to be a Christian, IF religion stood ONLY in a few outward works and duties, But to take the soul to task, and to deal roundly with our own hearts, and to let conscience have its full work, and to bring the soul into spiritual subjection unto God, This is not so easy a matter, because the soul out of self-love is loath to enter into itself, lest it should have other thoughts of itself than it would like to have. – Richard Sibbes p. 72 The Soul's conflict with Itself

Deep Roots are cultivated through repentance and confession as we lay hold of the grace of God in Christ. DWJND – it doesn't mean that we need to go out and commit some big sin so we can repent. It means that we ask God to show us the depth of the “little acceptable sins” that we commit daily.

Part of growth is seeing that our own sin is deeper than we ever thought. Even the things that our well-disciplined flesh can pull off are as filthy rags. God does this work in us so that we might understand what Jesus says in Matt 5, “Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

The world says, "Believe in yourself, follow your heart, you've got what you need, have it your way, if it feels good do it, only you know what's right for you, build your self-esteem, etc..."
Our problem is not a lack of self-esteem. We are entirely too engrossed in ourselves. We make ourselves the ultimate reference point for life. We quietly set ourselves up as the object of faith. We arrive in this world convinced that we are the center of it (PARENTS, if you foster that myth in your child, then you are all in for a rough ride). We define "good" as what pleases, satisfies, entertains us, or makes us feel better about ourselves. We can't find deep roots in God by sinking our roots in ourselves.

We want to meet God on the mountain top. We want to meet him in success because we think we deserve it. In reality He is waiting for us in our brokenness, confession, and repentance, if only we'll draw near to Him. (Chad Bird- paraphrase)

A life of deep roots is ongoing brokenness. Paul displays an ongoing awareness of his own sin – least of the apostles – least of the saints – chief of sinners.

As we grow in grace our desperation factor should grow as well. ARE YOU WILLING TO CONFESS YOUR BROKENNESS?

3. Honest questioning and struggle before the throne of God. – Numbers 11:10-15

The people of Israel were complaining about only having Manna to eat. The people were weeping, God's anger was kindled, and Moses was displeased...

¹¹ Moses said to the Lord, "Why pick on me, to give me the burden of a people like this? ¹² Are they *my* children? Am I their father? Is that why you have given me the job of nursing them along like babies until we get to the land you promised their ancestors? ¹³ Where am I supposed to get meat for all these people? For they weep to me saying, 'Give us meat!' ¹⁴ I can't carry this nation by myself! The load is far too heavy! ¹⁵ If you are going to treat me like this, please kill me right now; it will be a kindness! Let me out of this impossible situation!"

In general, being angry with God is not a good place to be, but the only thing worse than being angry with God is not being able to admit it. That's a real problem.

Forrest Gump and Lt. Dan who is angry. Dan ties himself to a mast during a storm and yells at God. The next morning, he is a different man.

Casting Crowns – O MY SOUL

Here and now

You can be honest

I won't try to promise that someday it all works out

'Cause this is the valley

And even now, He is breathing on your dry bones

And there will be dancing

There will be beauty where beauty was ash and stone

This much I know

Oh, my soul

You are not alone

There's a place where fear has to face the God you know

One more day, He will make a way

Let Him show you how, you can lay this down

If you don't let your fears face the God you know, then you'll never have deep roots and you'll stunt your growth in terms of knowing God. ARE YOU HIDING YOUR ANGER WITH GOD

Grow deep roots by being deeply honest with God. Are you confused or upset with God? You're not the first. Get in line. HE CAN TAKE IT. Put all the cards on the table. Put your heart on the table so that you can sink your roots into God.

The Psalms are full of this kind of heartfelt cry of the soul. Use them as guides in your own times of grief and pain.

Look to Jesus who cried out to God when he was deeply distressed and look to Jesus who was so rooted in the knowledge of the Father that he was able and willing to trust Him even though it meant the Cross.

He took the cross so that we don't have to.

He took the cross so that we might have ultimate hope even in the midst of our trials.

He took the cross so that we can be honest with ourselves

He took the cross so that we can be honest with God.

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