

FOCUS ON THE ROOTS!

There was once an old tree in my grandmother's yard that died and had to be cut down. However, there was a stump left in the ground. It was an imposition but not a monumental presence. Somewhere, over Saturday donuts and coffee, I volunteered and accepted the job to remove that stump. I was proud to have the job. Little did I know.

I recall utilizing four to five shapes and sizes of shovels, a pick-axe, and a small hand saw from my grandmother's garage. After a few days of digging, chopping, and prying, I still hadn't removed that dumb old stump. I begged for someone with a truck and chain to help me out. I even considered explosives, but I couldn't get those either. It was at that moment I appreciated the root structure of a tree.

Roots are important. However, we often only focus on the visible. Our spiritual lives aren't any different. We often focus on the exteriors (presence and practice) to the neglect of the unseen spiritual rootedness that our lives are founded on and upheld by.

Psalm 1:4

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.

John uses the word ABIDE, meaning *stay, live, dwell, lodge, remain*. My translation would be camp out and put down roots!

1 John 3:24

Whoever keeps his commandments abides in God, and God in him. And by this we know that he abides in us, by the Spirit whom he has given us.

Being "rooted" in Jesus, as evident by his Spirit living in us, creates fruitfulness.

John 15:5

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.

No wonder Paul said it so powerfully.

Galatians 5:22-23

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

This is the truth: there is no fruit unless there are roots. If you focus on the roots, you will get fruit. If you focus on the fruit, your life might not stand when the wind comes, and there won't be much fruit to speak of.

Psalm 1:1-2

Blessed is the man...his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night.

Focus on the roots!

Ryan