



Ephesians 3:17

# Gathering

## ROOTS

**A**s believers, we're expected to be constantly growing into the image of Christ. But where do we start? Paul says in Ephesians 3:17, we start by being rooted and established in love:

*"So that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love,"*

God is love. We may think His love flows naturally in us once we've accepted Jesus into our hearts. But like roots, our understanding of God's love takes time to form and strengthen in us before it can flow from us steadily and increasingly bearing fruit all around showing Christ is alive in us.

Roots are the first sign a seed has started its growth process. Healthy roots are extremely important. Let's look at the mesquite tree. It grows wildly under desert conditions because of its strong roots. All parts of this tree have beneficial uses, from its wood used for furniture and BBQ smoking to its sap and flowers used for honey and medicinal purposes. Its tap roots are known to reach almost 200 feet down into the soil. This allows them to locate enough moisture to keep them alive under harsh droughts. Its roots can also regenerate even if the tree is chopped off above, making it a tough tree to get rid of.

Our spiritual growth must be well rooted too. We must be constantly deepening our knowledge of God and communion with God so that our souls will get the spiritual hydration needed. Healthy spiritual roots will help us to not only survive but to thrive under harsh conditions. We will then experience His fullness and grow into the image of Christ.

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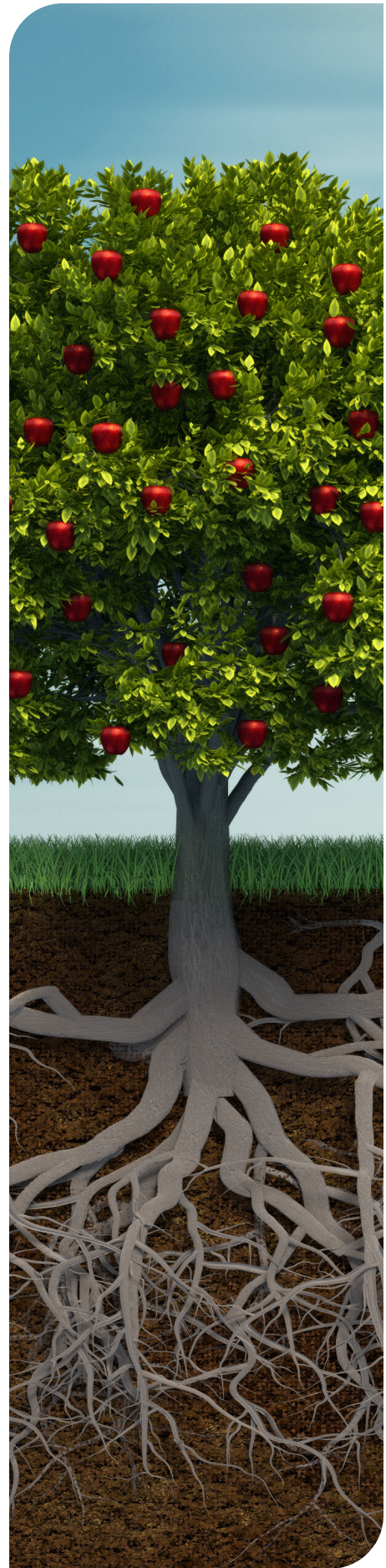
## ROOTS continued

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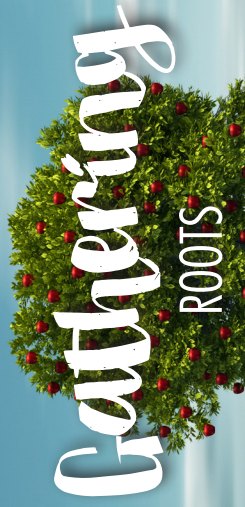
After reading scripture, consider these questions

- Using the mesquite tree analogy, what's the relationship between our growing into the image of Christ and the development of healthy roots?
- Share examples of Daniel's life that evidence he had strong spiritual roots.
- How has your understanding of God's love grown this year, especially after seasons of droughts?
- What insight regarding your spiritual roots is the Spirit revealing to you?

*Complete your monthly report and turn it in to the Corps Officer.*








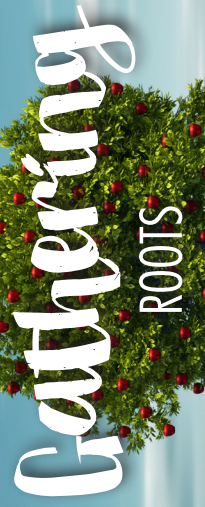
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Today's scripture is part of Paul's prayer for the Ephesians so that they could grow spiritually and get to experience God's fullness. Explore the following portions to further discuss the relationship of establishing spiritual roots and growing into the image of Christ.



### **EPHESIANS 3:14-21**

Explore the components of this prayer and their importance in establishing us as believers rooted in God's love. What is the difference Paul makes between understanding God's love and just knowing about God's love as a condition to experience God's fullness?

### **1 CORINTHIANS 13**

This is known as the love chapter. What components are explored there that provide light into what Paul is saying to the Ephesians as needed to experience God's fullness.



*Written by Major Janet Gonzalez,  
Territorial Women's Ministries Department*

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