

5<sup>th</sup> week of July/Beginning of August

“Roots”

Ephesians 3:14-21

### Your Story

Today's Scripture is all about our roots growing in God's love. How do you feel about your life's roots? Have they grown deep in God's love? Share with your family things you feel have deepened your relationship with God and have made you stronger. If you are working to make those roots deeper, share things you are doing to help them grow.

### My Story and the Bible Story

Read Ephesians 3:14-21. From the *New Living Translation*: “When I think of all this, I fall to my knees and pray to the Father, the Creator of everything in heaven and on earth. I pray that from his glorious, unlimited resources he will empower you with inner strength through his Spirit. 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. And may you have the power to understand, as all God's people should, how wide, how long, how high, and how deep his love is. May you experience the love of Christ, though it is too great to understand fully. Then you will be made complete with all the fullness of life and power that comes from God. Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think. Glory to him in the church and in Christ Jesus through all generations forever and ever! Amen.”

This is one of my favorite passages of Scripture. I love picturing our lives as trees with roots growing in God's love. Have you ever seen the giant oak trees in places like Savannah and St. Augustine? Those trees have lived through hundreds of years and their roots are huge. They have survived things like tornadoes, hurricanes, and other storms. But they didn't survive those simply because they clung to life. They survived those storms because their roots were deep enough that they could not be uprooted. The only way for us to survive life's storms (heartbreak, illness, job loss, death, etc.) is for us to be rooted in something. That way when the terrible times come and threaten to blow us away, our roots will hold. Ephesians reminds us of where our roots should be. Instead of anything from this world, we should be rooted in God's love. God's love is what keeps us strong. That love, which is “too great to understand fully,” will keep us rooted when everything around us is falling apart.

What great news that is! But how are we to grow the roots of our lives deep into God's love? The writer of Ephesians has an answer to that as well. It says that Christ will make his home in our hearts as we trust in him. As you give more things over to God, recognizing that God is so much bigger and more powerful than we could ever be, your roots start to grow

deeper in His love. Praying in the good times and in the bad also helps our roots grow deeper because we are talking to God, trusting Him with our lives, with our problems, and with our joys. Worshiping God also helps our roots grow down deep. Singing praises to God for who He is deepens our roots. Reading the Bible and learning more about God also helps our roots grow. Hearing from others what God has done in their lives helps our roots grow too.

The thing about roots is that they don't grow overnight; it takes time for roots to cling to the soil and to grow big enough to hold a plant in place. It takes years for roots to grow deep enough so that no matter what storm comes, the tree is safe. It's the same with us. Our lives won't be immediately rooted deep in God's love through one prayer. It takes time. But as we trust God, as we pray to Him, worship Him, and learn more about Him, our roots will begin to grow into His love. And our loving God will protect us from the storms. Bad things in life will still happen, but God will help us make it through.

### Action and Discussion

- Find a large tree and show your children how big the roots are. If you are gifted in growing plants (or if you'd like to try), buy a small tree or other plant/flower to plant in your yard. As a family, plant it and take turns caring for it. As it grows, talk about how our roots grow the longer we follow God.
- Ask your children ways that they learn more about God.
- Make a plan for the rest of the year of ways you and your family can grow your roots in God's love.

### Prayer

Thank God for helping each of you get through the storms of life. Ask God to continue to grow your roots deep in His love. Praise God that He is able to do so much more in us and through us than we could ever imagine!