

Rooted in Love

Rotten fruit comes from rotten roots, and good fruit comes from good roots.

As human beings we are created by God to be happy and to feel good about ourselves. As a matter of fact, we must feel good about ourselves, or eventually we will develop some sort of uncontrolled behavior that produces the good feelings we crave.

Think about it. A person who is addicted to drugs probably began using them because his pain was so intense he felt compelled to get rid of it, even if only temporarily. The same thing is true of drinking. Many people use food as a comfort. If we do not get good feelings from the inside, then we attempt to create them through outside means.

It is important to realize that our behavior comes from somewhere. A person who is violent is that way for a reason. His behavior is the bad fruit of a bad tree with bad roots.

You can spend your entire life dealing with outward symptoms, but the bad fruit will be manifest somewhere else if the root is not eliminated. The principle never fails—rotten fruit comes from rotten roots, and good fruit comes from good roots.

In my own life there was a lot of bad fruit. I experienced regular bouts of depression, negativism and self-pity. I had a controlling, domineering spirit.

I was harsh, hard, rigid, legalistic and judgmental. I held grudges and was fearful—especially of being rejected. I was one person on the inside and another on the outside.

I pretended to be confident. But I had low self-esteem, and my so-called confidence was not based on who I was in Christ but on the approval of others, my appearance and accomplishments, and other external factors. I was miserable, confused and filled with inner turmoil.

Still, I pretended everything was fine. I worked hard at trying to behave correctly.

It seemed that no matter what kind of bad behavior I tried to change, other problems popped up somewhere else. My life was like a field of dandelions. I kept pulling off the visible parts of my problems but was not getting to the hidden root. The root was alive and kept producing a new crop of weeds.

I didn't realize how miserable I was until I started spending time in the Word and began to experience emotional healing. I had to stop pretending and face the truth.

I could not change what had happened to me in the past, and it was unfair to make those around me suffer for something they didn't do. I had to follow the admonition of Paul to the Colossians: "Have the roots [of your being] firmly and deeply planted [in Him, fixed and founded in Him], being continually built up in Him, becoming increasingly more confirmed and established in the faith, just as you were taught, and abounding and overflowing in it with thanksgiving" (Col. 2:7, The Amplified Bible).

You may need to carefully examine your own roots. If they were unpleasant, harmful or abusive, don't be discouraged; you can be uprooted from that bad soil and transplanted into the good soil of Christ Jesus, so that you become rooted and grounded

in Him and in His love.

Have you ever opened the refrigerator and noticed an unpleasant odor? Something in there was spoiled, but to find out what it was, you had to remove everything. The same principle applies to your personal life.

If you are having emotional problems, it may be because there is something spoiled deep within you. You may have to do some searching to get to the source of the problem and remove it so that everything will be fresh.

Remember, uprooting can be painful. Being replanted and becoming rooted and grounded is a process that requires time and effort. It is by faith and patience that we inherit God's promises.

My prayer for you is Paul's prayer for the Ephesians: "May Christ through your faith [actually] dwell (settle down, abide, make His permanent home) in your hearts! May you be rooted deep in love and founded securely on love" (Eph. 3:17).

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