

Family Devotional

From July 10, 2016

Connect: Jimmy was outside shooting hoops on Tuesday evening. His mom was digging away in the garden, preparing the flower beds for the roses they picked out at the store earlier that day. 'Can I help?' Jimmy asked.

"Sure, I'm pulling out all the weeds." His mom showed him what to pull and how to grab it from the roots.

"Why can't we just pull off the top part that you see? That would make it so much easier. You can't see the stuff under the dirt anyway. "

"You're right that would be easier right now. It would look the same today, but do you think it would still look that way in a few weeks?"

'I guess not." Jimmy responded hesitantly.

"What do you think would happen if we just pulled off the tops of these roses and planted them without the roots?"

"They would die!"

"Why? It would still look the same today wouldn't it? And we wouldn't have to worry about digging a very deep hole?"

"Yeah, but without the roots it wouldn't be able to get any food or water it needs from the soil.....ohhh." The light bulb was coming on.

"You got it!" Mom encouraged. "We want to grab the roots of the weeds for the same reason. We don't want them to get the nutrients they need to grow back and crowd out the plants. This is true in our life too."

"Explain!?" Jimmy said doubtfully, thinking his mom might have spent too much time in the sun.

"We want to let the roots of our hearts dig deep down into who God is so we can draw our strength and nutrients from him. There are lots of little "weeds" in life that want to steal out time and attention. Often we spend more time worried about what we look like to others above the surface and we just pluck at what is showing in order to please them, rather than letting God really weed our hearts, removing the root of what is keeping us from being all he created us to be." Mom explained.

Jimmy thought about that while they continued to pull of the weeds. "It's kind of like that verse you and dad pray a lot. It talks about being rooted in Christ's love so we can know just how deep, wide and long God's love is!!"

"You're right! That was a prayer the Apostle Paul was praying for the church in Ephesus and we pray for our family too! Do you know the coolest thing about it?" Jimmy shook his head. "No matter how deep our roots get, we will never outgrow God's love! It's that deep and amazing!"

Read: Ephesians 3:14-21

Plant: Plant a small seed in a clear cup or pot so you can watch as the roots grow (Or outside if you prefer). In the coming days talk about what it takes to keep your plant alive and growing. (Water, good soil, sunlight.)

Connect that to we can do as Christians to help our roots grow deep into Christ's love (Prayer, Bible reading, Christian community, etc.)

Challenge: Ask God to show you the weeds in your hearts: the things that try and steal your attention, resources and joy. Ask God to remove the weeds and replace it with deeper roots and understanding of Christ's love for you!

Remember: Work together as a family to memorize/meditate on Ephesians 3:17b-18 this week.

And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power,
together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide
and long and high and deep is the love of Christ.

Ideas: Write this passage down and hang it on the refrigerator. Say it together as a family during meal time each day. Write it on a chalk or white board and erase a couple of words each day until you can say it by memory.

Respond: "Dear God, thank you for how deep, and wide your love is for all your children. Help me to grow deep roots in your love! Show me the weeds in my life that I need to let you pull out by the roots..... Amen!"