

The ROOT Source of our Behavior

Within the heart of everyone are roots. Roots are specific ideas within the belief system that grow and bear fruit when specific circumstances and conditions are met. Roots can produce good fruit or bad fruit. The study of roots will help us understand how our hearts work and why we habitually practice certain behaviors. Heb 12:1-15 will show us an example of a root springing up in specific conditions.

Heb 12:1-15

Vs1-2 – Witnesses - opportunity - victorious faith life

Cloud of witnesses – large number of life testimonies – OT heroes; take off hindrances and habitual sin (roots); opportunity - run the race like Jesus the greatest witness of the faith life; endured and finished His race.

- Each of us has the opportunity to win our own race – victoriously live the faith life
- Witnesses are reliable evidence that God has empowered His children to live the victorious faith life

Vs 2-4 – Weariness – opposition – difficulty of victorious faith life

Think of Jesus who faced great opposition from sinners; so that you don't grow weary (sick, tired, exhausted) and faint (come apart); not yet shed blood in your resistance against the opposition.

- Each of us who try to live victoriously will face opposition from the world – sinners
- The temptation under opposition is to grow weary and fall apart.

Vs 5-11 – Way – ongoing process – training/discipline for victorious faith life

5-6 (Prov 3:11-12) Forgotten the encouragement (became discouraged); don't reject or fall apart when God trains you with discipline; He trains all His kids because He loves them; Analogy: Human fathers and children are trained and disciplined for their benefit; training is difficult but profitable; partake of His holiness and peaceful fruit of righteousness for those trained by God's discipline.

- God has to train us and correct us to bring us to the victorious faith life – allows adversity and opposition
- Opposition God allows in your life is part of His training program – opens the wall of fire
- 2 responses to God's training – make light – rejection and push on; faint – fall apart and become discouraged
- Under persistent adversity we forget that God's purpose is to bless us by causing growth
- God's training is necessary to enable us to overcome opposition and rise above our old nature.
- The writer is addressing Jewish bel's who had become discouraged during the process

Vs 12-15 – Warning – offended – fail to accept God's grace

Strengthen arms and legs; lame not go astray but be healed; pursue peace with others; be holy – perceive the Lord; be careful - miss grace of God (fail to accept); root of bitterness spring up, offend and defile many.

- God's training/discipline using the opposition has discouraged the bel's in this passage
- They have failed to accept the grace of God – refused to see their adversity as a blessing from God

- Rather than use the adversity for growth, they became bitter toward others, circumstances – perhaps God
- They angry deep in their hearts because life was not serving their own agenda – planted a root of bitterness
- Whenever a similar circumstance occurs, their bitterness springs up and lashes out at those they blame.
- Everything God allows into your life is meant for blessing – accept God’s grace of training/discipline

Roots

1. Definition – literal, figurative, Hebraism

- Literal – Mk 11:20, Jude 1:12 – roots of a tree -The hidden, underground base of a plant
- Figurative – Heb 12:15, 1Tim 6:10 - the core of an issue; the source or origin of something
- Hebraism – Isa 11:1,10; Rom 15:12 – root of Jesse – descendent; Rev 22:16 – root and offspring of David
- Figurative - a hidden source of thinking and behavior; a hidden belief that is the source of thinking and behavior.
- Root beliefs in the heart are hidden and often unknown to us until they bear fruit in our lives – generally unconscious ideas hidden deep.
- Root beliefs are the source of many of the feelings and behaviors we can’t explain and that surprise even ourselves.

2. Root beliefs, depending on their content are the source of either +R or sin.

- Root of +R - *Prov 12:3 No one finds security by wickedness, but the root of the righteous will never be moved. - Prov 12:12 The wicked covet the proceeds of wickedness, but the root of the righteous bears fruit.* A root of +R is a deep belief in the heart that motivates us on to +R living – bible doctrine
- Root of all kinds of evil - *1 Timothy 6:10 For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, and in their eagerness to be rich some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pains.* A wrong belief about money à love of money à produces all kinds of evil fruit and much pain in our lives.
- Root of bitterness - *Heb 12:15 See to it that no one fall short of the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springs up and causes trouble, and through it many become defiled.* Fail to utilize God’s grace in adversityà choose a wrong belief about the people involved in the adversityà grows bitternessà troubles many.
- The content of the root belief determines the fruit - *Mat 12:34 You brood of vipers! How can you speak good things, when you are evil? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.*

3. GHS plants spiritual roots of truth in the heart of growing believers - foundation

- Rooted & grounded in love - *Eph 3:17 and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love.*
- Rooted & built up in Him - *Col 2:7 rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.*

- Parable of the soils – Mt 13:6 - rocky soil – withered because it had no root – the word was not planted as a belief deep enough to withstand the pressures of life.

4. Root of bitterness – caused by rejection of grace and reaction to adversity.

- Heb 12:15 – watch closely – don't fail to utilize grace; don't allow a root of bitterness to spring up – defiles many.
- Grace for dealing with adversity and hostility – faith and forgiveness
- Root of bitterness – hurt, anger and hostility in retaliation because of wrong thinking about adversity
- Roots are hidden in the heart and spring up in similar situations – old feelings occur – defense kicks in
- Roots must be dug up and removed – cannot just deal with the symptoms – take off old man

5. The content of your heart affects all of your relationships – give what is in you

- Heb 12:15 – defile many – bitterness in one person affects those in their environment
- Defile – *miaino* – stain, dye with paint, sully – your spew your own garbage onto everyone around you
- Root of righteousness – righteousness influences others; root bitterness – bitterness influences others
- Words have the least influence – true heart determines your attitude/actions – attitudes / actions shout