

Roots Before Fruit

With God, depth always comes before destiny.

Time:

15-20 minutes

Focus:

Growth, Purpose, Trust

Scriptures

Mark 4:30-32

John 15:5

Mark 4:16-17

Colossians 2:7

Matthew 6:6

Proverbs 12:3

Psalm 1:3,

James 1:2-4

2 Corinthians 1:8-9

Ephesians 3:17-19

Mark 4:27-29

John 16:12

Proverbs 16:9

Romans 12:15-16

Proverbs 15:1

Ephesians 4:15-16

1 Corinthians 3:6-7

Parking lot

Write down distracting thoughts here:



Settle in

Take a deep breath. Turn off notifications on your phone. Ask God to relieve any pressure you feel to appear stronger than you are, and ask him to help you trust his growth process for your life.



Thought starter

Mark 4:30-32 NLT

Jesus said, "How can I describe the Kingdom of God? What story should I use to illustrate it? [31] It is like a mustard seed planted in the ground. It is the smallest of all seeds, [32] but it becomes the largest of all garden plants; it grows long branches, and birds can make nests in its shade."



To grow, plants need time and careful attention. A well-developed plant will grow, thrive, and bear fruit season after season.

Jesus often used plants as metaphors to help us understand spiritual truths. Sometimes, we feel like we are starting small, like the mustard seed described in Mark 4. But God helps us grow in unseen ways until we eventually mature into a strong, impactful life.

This frees us to stop stressing about how our lives look on the outside and start focusing on who we actually are on the inside. God wants to build a foundation in our lives that is unshakeable and packed with his love. If we focus on growing our roots deep, God will take care of how—and when—we bloom.

Here's what we'll learn in this Quick Quiet Time:

- **The hidden work matters.** Roots grow under the surface. If we are in a quiet, unnoticed season, it's not wasted. God often builds the strongest foundations when no one is watching.
- **We should choose character over clout.** Pressure makes our roots deeper. Rather than trying to look impressive on the outside, we should embrace the storms that make us stronger on the inside.
- **There are no shortcuts to growth.** Spiritual maturity isn't something we can hurry—in ourselves or others. Real fruit takes time.



Depth comes before destiny.

John 15:5 NIV

"I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing."



View on web ↗

Notes:

Mark 4:16-17 NLT

The seed on the rocky soil represents those who hear the message and immediately receive it with joy. [17] But since they don't have deep roots, they don't last long. They fall away as soon as they have problems or are persecuted for believing God's word.

Colossians 2:7 NLT

Let your roots grow down into him, and let your lives be built on him. Then your faith will grow strong in the truth you were taught, and you will overflow with thankfulness.

Matthew 6:6 NIV

"But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you."

 **Truth bomb:** Depth is what God builds in us before anyone sees anything.

- Roots form before fruit appears.
- We often want the platform, the influence, or the visible success before we have the character to sustain it. God will first build a solid spiritual foundation that won't crack under the weight of future responsibilities.
- The most important growth in our lives is unseen—until it isn't. Our private prayer life and our hidden choices to do God's will are the true engine of our spiritual lives.

Metaphor moment

Young plants burn under full sun. They need shade until their roots are deep enough to sustain them. Similarly, hidden, quiet seasons are vital for foundational strength.

The "no plastic apple" principle

Imagine taping plastic apples to a brittle branch and telling yourself you have an apple tree. It might look okay temporarily, but it will fall apart when a storm comes and it won't produce the satisfaction of a real piece of fruit.

God isn't impressed by or interested in surface-level outward appearances. He doesn't want our lives to be like fake apple trees that look okay from a distance. He's invested in our roots—the hidden parts of our lives and hearts that determine our strength and make our lives produce real fruit.

Additional scriptures:**Proverbs 12:3 NLT**

Wickedness never brings stability, but the godly have deep roots.

Notes:

Psalm 1:3 CEV

They are like trees growing beside a stream, trees that produce fruit in season and always have leaves. Those people succeed in everything they do.


Reflect

- What roots is God trying to help me grow right now?
- What hidden work do I need to do to develop those roots into God's love?
- Am I focused on growing roots, or looking good?

 Pressure deepens our roots.
James 1:2-4 NLT

Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles of any kind come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow. So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be perfect and complete, needing nothing.

2 Corinthians 1:8-9 NIV

... We were under great pressure, far beyond our ability to endure, so that we despaired of life itself. [9] Indeed, we felt we had received the sentence of death. But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead.

Ephesians 3:17-19 NLT

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.** [18] 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. [19] 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.



***Truth bomb:** Resistance builds resilience.

- Trials, pushback, and heavy seasons serve a purpose for our faith. Trees that are exposed to wind develop the physical capacity to withstand it. Likewise, being exposed to spiritual pressure makes us stronger.
- Spiritual pressure forces us to anchor ourselves deeper into God's love and power. Paul also explains that pressure teaches us to stop trying to handle everything on our own and learn to rely completely on God.
- It is dangerously easy to appear spiritual or faithful without having the depth to back it up. If our outward image outgrows our inner reality, a sudden crisis or storm will cause a complete collapse.

Notes:

 Metaphor moment: The tree in the store vs. the tree in the storm

Trees in the store look nice, but they have no roots. All it takes is a little nudge to topple them over. Trees planted in the ground experience all kinds of weather, prompting growth and strength. They stand by themselves.

We are the same. Without wind, we stay fragile. With wind, we become unshakeable.

 Metaphor moment: pruning

Gardeners often cut off branches and leaves of trees. Sometimes it's because a branch is diseased, or taking too much energy from the plant. Sometimes it's to train the plant to grow in the way it's meant to. A strong pruning at the end of the growing season allows the plant to focus its energy on growing roots. The result of all pruning is the same: a healthier, more fruitful plant.

God does the same for us. Circumstances, friendships, and ways of thinking all have the power to influence our heart condition and destiny. Even though it can be painful, God will cut back whatever isn't helping us reach our full potential.

**Reflect**

- What difficulty has pushed me to grow?
- How am I responding to that difficulty?

**Timing is essential to thriving.****Mark 4:27-29 NLT**

Night and day, while he's asleep or awake, the seed sprouts and grows, but he does not understand how it happens. [28] The earth produces the crops on its own. First a leaf blade pushes through, then the heads of wheat are formed, and finally the grain ripens. [29] And as soon as the grain is ready, the farmer comes and harvests it with a sickle, for the harvest time has come."

John 16:12 NLT

[Jesus said,] "There is so much more I want to tell you, but you can't bear it now."

Proverbs 16:9 VOICE

People do their best making plans for their lives, but the Eternal guides each step.

Notes:



Truth bomb: Rushing growth ruins growth.

- Growth is sequential. Just like a seed in the ground that grows to be ready to harvest, we can't skip steps in our growth.
- Trying to bypass the messy, slow, middle stages of spiritual growth results in a fragile faith. We must trust God's timeline and accept the current step we are on.
- God withholds what would overwhelm us.
- Though winds and pressure are necessary for growth, total exposure too soon will wither a developing soul. God uses quiet seasons to protect us, making sure we grow strong enough to handle the heat of big responsibilities and leadership later on.



Metaphor moment: Shaded trees

Very young or recently moved trees often need to be protected from the sun. Later in their lives, sun will help those trees thrive, but a young or freshly planted tree needs shade to keep from burning its leaves.



Reflect

- What step in the growth process am I trying to skip?



Rooted people help others grow.

2 Corinthians 1:3-4 NIV

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, [4] who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God.

Romans 12:15-16 ERV

When others are happy, you should be happy with them. And when others are sad, you should be sad too. [16] Live together in peace with each other ...

Proverbs 15:1 AMP

A soft and gentle and thoughtful answer turns away wrath, but harsh and painful and careless words stir up anger.

Ephesians 4:15-16 ERV

No, we will speak the truth with love. We will grow to be like Christ in every way. He is the head, [16] and the whole body depends on him. All the parts of the body are joined and held together, with each part doing its own work. This causes the whole body to grow and to be stronger in love.

Notes:

 **Truth bomb:** Deep roots produce deep empathy, but shallow roots lack it.

- Going through seasons of sadness and joy helps us empathize with others when they go through hard times.
- We can't help others grow or experience God's comfort if we are not deeply experiencing it ourselves. Being rooted in God helps us give others the comfort and growth they need.
- Empathy teaches us how to balance important truths with gentleness and thoughtfulness.
- Correct information given without deep friendship and love can sometimes scorch people rather than build them up.
- The way we talk to our friends plays a key role in helping them grow and mature spiritually.

Metaphor moment: Truth as sunlight

Truth is like sunlight that is good for us, but we're not ready to handle all truths right away. While telling our friends the truth is good, it's important to consider where these friends are in their faith. Some truths can wait until our friend is spiritually ready, or can be told in a loving and gentle way.



Reflect

- Who in my life may need shade right now?

Final thoughts

1 Corinthians 3:6–7 NIV

I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God has been making it grow. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow.

Ultimately, true spiritual depth is not something that can be manufactured or rushed; it is the natural, inevitable overflow of a hidden life deeply rooted in God.

Just as a tree must endure the silence of the soil, the weight of the wind, and the pain of the pruning shears before it can safely bear fruit, our souls require quiet seasons of preparation to sustain future growth.

When we stop striving for immediate visibility and instead surrender to the foundational work God is doing beneath the surface, we shift from a fragile, superficial faith to an unshakeable strength. Depth is always the prerequisite for destiny—if we take care of the roots, God will take care of the fruit.



Humor break!

Why did the plant try out a new hobby?
It needed to branch out!

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