

THE INSIDE RUNNING

Words associated with scripture are love, joy and peace. As Christians, living these qualities should be our goal.

Geoff's article talks about love and forgiveness. These are active concepts, not passive. We need to decide to consciously live these out if we are to enjoy the power of these words.

Love is a lot more than a feeling. It needs to be nurtured and expressed through word and action. A note, text or call to verbalise our love is reassuring and initiates a positive reaction. Acting towards others in the power of Christian love makes people better and society better.

Unforgiveness is letting someone you don't like live rent-free in your head. It deprives you of your peace and joy but probably does not affect them at all!

There are often things in our past that we need to deliberately let go of, or even renounce. We don't want to be captive to wrong things in our heritage.

Forgiveness brings healing and the freedom to love people. Then we can experience true peace, joy and contentment.

Keep short accounts and look for ways to be kind to others.

With gratitude



John Subritzky



Grounded in Love

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by Geoff Wiklund

Paul writes these words in Ephesians 3:15-19, *"...from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, **being rooted and grounded in love**, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height — to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God."*

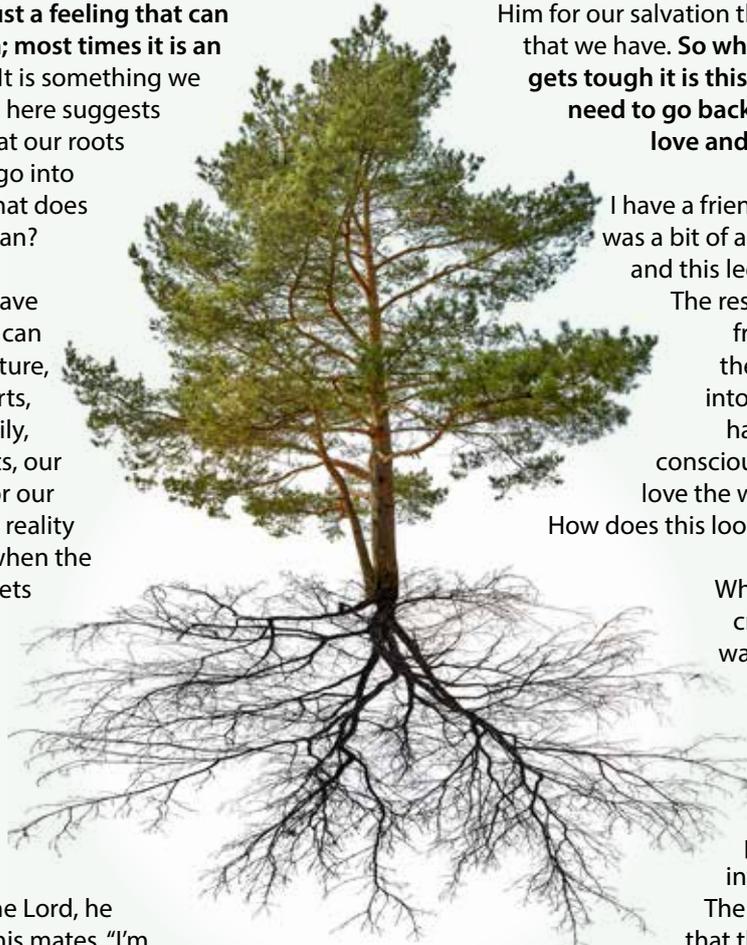
It is a great prayer and as men we like the part about being strengthened. But today I would like to explore this thought of being rooted and grounded in love. We have to understand that **love is not just a feeling that can happen; most times it is an action.** It is something we do. Paul here suggests to us that our roots should go into love. What does that mean?

We all have roots. It can be a culture, our sports, our family, our traits, our habits or our job. The reality is that when the going gets tough we go back to our roots. It is who we are. When Peter failed the Lord, he said to his mates, "I'm going fishing". His roots went back to his profession. Fortunately for him Jesus was already on the beach with some fish and toast and ready to give him a second chance to fulfil his call.

This love Paul talks about here is the action of Jesus saving you. It is the love that our heavenly Father felt for you and as a result He sent His Son Jesus to die for you. When we accept this and trust Him for our salvation this is the root that we have. **So when the going gets tough it is this root that we need to go back to. A root of love and forgiveness.**

I have a friend whose dad was a bit of a perfectionist and this led to criticism. The result is that my friend also put their root down into criticism. We have to make a conscious decision to love the way Jesus did. How does this look for us men?

When Jesus was crucified there was a centurion named Gaius Cassius Longinus. He was the one that put his sword into Jesus' side. The legend has it that the mixture of blood and water splashed on his face restoring his vision which had been failing. The circumstances surrounding Jesus' crucifixion had such a profound effect on Longinus that he later >



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- NELSON MANDELA -
SYMPHONY OF LOVE



> sought out the surviving Apostles so he could learn from them the way of salvation. He later moved to Caesarea of Cappadocia where he was eventually condemned to death for being a Christian.

If we are rooted and grounded in faith we can love and forgive and even heal the person who is sticking us in the side! When we are grounded in love then we can show the same love and forgiveness that was shown to us when we were in sin and in the mire. Jesus' act of healing him demonstrated His love, resulting in forgiveness and salvation. For most of us we desire revenge. But Paul in another place says we should overcome evil with good. Again he says do not give evil for evil and reviling for reviling, but blessing!

As I am writing this I am right now being challenged to live this out in my life. Not to respond as I would like to, but to respond as Jesus did. **I have to change my thinking and my actions, to bring them into line with the love actions of Jesus.**

In the end I just forgave the people that I felt had wronged me and went a step further and showed them love and prayed blessing for them. Immediately I experienced peace in my life. I knew I was free.

If we do great things and have not love we are nothing. In fact *"the only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love"* (Galatians 5:6).

Are you there yet? Here is the test: 1 John 2:3, *"Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He who says, 'I know Him,' and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him. He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked."*

As His love is perfected in us, our walk will become more like His walk!

Forgiveness: Letting go of grudges and bitterness

Nearly everyone has been hurt by the actions or words of another. Perhaps your mother criticized your parenting skills, your colleague sabotaged a project or your partner had an affair. These wounds can leave you with lasting feelings of anger, bitterness or even vengeance - but if you don't practice forgiveness, you might be the one who pays most dearly. By embracing forgiveness, you can also embrace peace, hope, gratitude and joy. Consider how forgiveness can lead you down the path of physical, emotional and spiritual wellbeing.

What are the benefits of forgiving someone?

- Healthier relationships
- Greater spiritual and psychological well-being
- Less anxiety, stress and hostility
- Lower blood pressure
- Fewer symptoms of depression
- Lower risk of alcohol and substance abuse

As you let go of grudges, you'll no longer define your life by how you've been hurt. You might even find compassion and understanding. Move away from your role as victim and release the control and power the offending person and situation have had in your life.

Excerpt from the MayoClinic.com article "Forgiveness: Letting Go of Grudges and Bitterness" www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-living/adult-health/in-depth/forgiveness/art-20047692?pg=1 © Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research. All rights reserved.



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