

## #4 – ROOTED IN LOVE... ROOTED IN CHURCH (Pete Greig)

- Where have you seen God at work in your life this week? (Share any brief examples and encouragements).
- Was there anything from Sunday's message which you found particularly inspiring or challenging?
- Was there anything else you particularly noticed?

### Ephesians 3:14-21

*For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. 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, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge – that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.*

*Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.*

1. Paul uses three images to describe our relationship to God and other people. The first is that of a father and his **family** (in Greek a *patria* is unimaginable without a *pater*). The second comes from farming (... rooted... in love). The third from the founding and fabricating of a building (established/grounded in love). Or, if you prefer: ancestry, agriculture, and architecture. As Christ dwells in our hearts by faith, the family of God comes to share the loving character of the loving Father – 'we love because he first loved us'. A building is only as strong as its foundation. The flavour of wine is determined not only by the grape but also by the ground in which it grows.
  - *What does it mean to you to be 'rooted in love'?*
  - *What else are you rooted in?*
  - *Is there anything in your soil that is spoiling your soul? (Fear? Anger? Doubt? Cynicism? Unforgiveness? Etc.)*
  - *What can we do to improve the soil? (Would compost or manure help? And can we learn anything from what goes into the manufacture of such natural soil additives?! What kinds of 'artificial fertilizers' might we want to avoid?)*
  - *What does it mean to say that 'the flavour of our life is the soil of God's love'?*
2. Pete contrasted the Canadian Sugar Maple, which he described as "about as pretty and sweet as a tree can be", and from which we derive delicious, sweet and sticky maple syrup, with the rather scruffy looking Shepherd Tree of the Kalahari Desert. The first has shallow spreading roots, well suited to wet soil conditions, which may penetrate less than 20 cms. The latter, which can thrive in arid conditions, has roots which may go as deep as 70 metres.
  - *How deep are your roots?*
  - *What do you think Pete Greig meant when he said that 'Love is what we do'?*
3. To be rooted in God's love is not just a vague and trite cliché to bandy about. Love must be embedded in the day-to-day reality of our lives. It must be down to earth and real. **ONE** If you are rooted in God's love, you must be Rooted in Place – one particular place. You cannot root yourself everywhere. You are limited and human, so embrace your place! **TWO** You must be Rooted in People in a particular church and a particular community, meeting together in order to 'spur each other on' (Hebrews 10:24-25). Love is always outworked in community. **THREE** Rooted in Purpose for life is fragile, our days are uncertain, and our mission is urgent.
  - *Where are you rooted? Have you embraced your place, or are you restless for where the grass looks greener?*
  - *Who are your people? Or are you restless for a community where you hope you might 'fit in' better?*
  - *What if you are exactly where God wants you to be?*
  - *What is your purpose? How does it fit in God's mission? Or are you still waiting for your big opportunity?*
  - *What if your real best purpose is actually already right in front of you? Is that a scary thought?*
4. At Emmaus Rd there are practical opportunities to help you to become rooted in Place, People and Purpose! As part of the Welcome Team, Youth & Kids' Team, the Lighthouse Social Transformation Team – helping in the Cosy Tea and Coffee House, the Men's or Women's Style Studios, or eating cake with older people at Barnesbury.
  - *What is stopping you from volunteering today?*