

## Roots

### What's your heritage in Christ?

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July 2020

#### This message covers

- Christian heritage (those who went before you).
- Christ the root of Jesse and hope of our salvation.
- Christian tradition (the anchor for our generation).

#### Information notice board

- 1) **About me.** Before I became a devoted Christian, I spent 20 years of my life being a hedonist – one who seeks pleasure for the sake of it. I was all leaves but no roots! Since God humbled me to turn me into his servant and I got baptized in May 2017, he has now overhauled my life to seek to be grounded in him to live by the Holy Spirit. You can read my full testimony [here](#):
- 2) **About these series.** The Lord Jesus gave me a single word “Blossom” as I was praying for a word for this season and series. This word will define a series of 12 topics he has also given me to tell his church about and build Christian character in his Holy Spirit. This lesson is one of those messages, but what does it mean to blossom?
- 3) **Pray for us!** Without the Lord, our effort is in vain. Pray that we remain faithful, humble servants.
- 4) **Subscribe to** our [YouTube Channel](#) and keep up with our videos which support the website.
- 5) **Looking for a ministry to partner with (pray, volunteer, give, subscribe to)? Consider supporting:**

<https://www.naacp.org/>

**The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)** is the largest and most pre-eminent civil rights organization in the United States.

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## Part 1: Basics

### Purpose of roots

When I was living in the Caribbean, one chap once deridingly called me “Kunta Kinte”. This name is taken from a book called *Roots*, also made into a TV series in which Kunta was a slave taken from his home among the Mandinka Tribe of Gambia in West Africa to America. The book tells of the generations from the daughter of Kunta Kinte, Kizzy and that of its author, Alex Haley, a 7th generation descendant of Kunta Kinte.

The question we ask ourselves, why was the author so concerned about finding his roots from his ancestor Kunta Kinte?



When we read the bible, in books like Luke, we are presented with detailed genealogies, which many of us skip over. For example, the one of Jesus.

*Now Jesus himself was about thirty years old when he began his ministry. He was the son, so it was thought, of Joseph,*

*the son of Heli, the son of Matthat,*

*the son of Levi, the son of Melki*

*..... the son of David, the son of Jesse,*

*.....the son of Judah, the son of Jacob,*

*the son of Isaac, the son of Abraham*

*....the son of Seth, the son of Adam,*

*the son of God.<sup>i</sup>*

The question we ask ourselves, why was the author so concerned about showing us Jesus' roots right up to Adam and God?

Kunta Kinte rejected the new name his slave owners gave him because He and his descendants knew that knowing who you are and your heritage are critical for your success and those who come after you. Likewise, in order to blossom, you have to know who you are:

*I am an orange tree of the family Rutacea. I am primarily of the Citrus Sinesis type, also called Sweet Orange as distinguished from Citrus aurantium, referred to as bitter orange. I originated from the region of South China, North East India and Myanmar and it can take between 5 and 7 years for me to bear fruit. <sup>ii</sup>*

Roots are your identity system, how you anchor yourself. Who are you in Christ? What is the origin of your seed?

### **The series so far..**

So, we are in a series called "Blossom" in which the Holy Spirit is teaching us how to bear Fruit. To understand the process, in these series we are using an example of an orange tree. For an orange tree to bear fruit, there is a period of about 5 years in which it goes through several stages:

1. Planting;
2. Sprouting;
3. Growing;
4. Blossoming (flowering);
5. Pollination; and
6. Bearing fruit.

Thus far, the Lord is building for us the tree of our season and in 6 parts so far he has shown us that:

- **Part 1:** The Lord gives us joy when we start blossoming. This is where the journey begins.

- **Part 2:** To blossom and to bear fruit in the Lord, first you must be hungry. The hunger stage is therefore a precursor, it is the stage at which a person realizes their dependence of God, then they cry and then he fills them.
- **Part 3:** For the orange tree there is a period of 5-18 months from the time of blossoming to bearing fruit. Reaching fruitfulness could last years, decades. What do you do in between? You let the LORD teach you patience and self-control.
- **Part 4:** One of the first problems that arises when trying to grow fruits is the problem of weeds! Why does Jesus in this series call money “weeds”? How do you steward money like you control weeds?
- **Part 5:** So, when I was receiving the word of the Lord for this Blossom series, I was really surprised that the Lord wanted me to cover his second coming again, particularly in a season about blossoming! How should we be fruitful until he returns?
- **Part 6:** The season of blossoming is beautiful! So what do you do during this time? How do you handle the fame? The lights, cameras, action? There is a big sin to watch out for in this stage.

So we all know that a tree has the parts we see – the stem, the branches, the flowers, the leaves, the fruit. But of course, we also know that what we see is supported by that which we don't see – the roots. The root is the part which as it grows, downwards, unseen, causes the tree to blossom to maturity? This is the subject of this lesson, let's get to the heart (seed) of the matter.

## From what seed are you descended?

When planting an orange tree, it is critical that the seed chosen comes from good parent stock.

When growing up, do you remember how they always asked you, whose son are you? Whose daughter are you? Why? You typically could know how someone would turn out, on account of their heritage, their roots, their parents, but likewise knowing roots, helped the descendants know what they are made of. Likewise, as Christians it is critical to know our roots, the seed from which us as the seed of Abraham are descended. So you get to know basic truths like:

- You are of the seed of Abraham - so Faith is your core.
- You are of the stock of David so praise is your outer garment, your covering.
- You are in the family of Joseph so in patience and enduring through suffering you obtain your inheritance.
- Your father, ELOHIM is the gardener
- Your Lord Jesus is the vine and you are the branch. Without him you can do nothing.
- If you don't bear fruit you are uprooted and thrown into the fire. To uproot means not even a stump left to regrow, not a chance to re establish.

When you understand the purpose of roots to a plant, you start knowing that:

- **Growing roots is a lonely time.** You are often alone when doing your bible reading, doing your fasting, doing your giving. It is in the dark and you might not know what the purpose is, but God the gardener knows. He knows why he prunes, why he planted you in the particular spot, why he digs and gives you fertilizer, why he gives you other Christians around you to give you nutrients. **Growing roots is a time of great effort. See that you don't lose heart, becoming unfruitful when your faith isn't in God.**

*“For soil that drinks the rain which often falls on it and produces crops useful to those for whose benefit it is cultivated, receives a blessing from God; but if it persistently produces thorns and thistles, it is worthless and close to being cursed, and it ends up being burned.”*

*Hebrews 6:7-8 AMP*

- **Growing roots is the only time you sink lower for the Spirit to be manifest.** You remember what John the Baptist said: He must increase, but I must decrease.”<sup>iii</sup> This is one of the times where God’s commands might make no sense but you know that it is in humility that he will lift you up, as you seek to become like him.
- **The deeper your roots go, the higher the chance of finding the river.** During the time of growing roots, you are continually searching for that never-ending stream, where once found, you know that you are finally safe and in and out of season - you blossom, then bear fruit, you blossom then bear fruit some more. This is the river is the Holy Spirit who flows out of every believer. This is the river about which the Lord says:  
*“The LORD will guide you continually, And satisfy your soul in drought, And strengthen your bones; You shall be like a watered garden, And like a spring of water, whose waters do not fail.” Isaiah 58:11 NKJV*
- **Watch out that you don’t lose the reward.** Many of us start off good but then get tired, or bitter or act immorally. The bible warns:

*“See to it that no one falls short of God’s grace; that no root of resentment springs up and causes trouble, and by it many be defiled; and [see to it] that no one is immoral or godless like Esau, who sold his own birthright for a single meal. For you know that later on, when he wanted [to regain title to] his inheritance of the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no opportunity for repentance [there was no way to repair what he had done, no chance to recall the choice he had made], even though he sought for it with [bitter] tears.” Hebrews 12:15-17 AMP*

## What the root of Christ teaches us.

When you come to faith in Christ, you know that he himself is the original root and our roots really grow from him for the bible declares about him:

### He is the original root – the one with the first fruits of the Spirit

*“Then a Shoot (the Messiah) will spring from the stock of Jesse [David’s father], And a Branch from his roots will bear fruit. And the Spirit of the LORD will rest on Him— The Spirit of wisdom and understanding, The Spirit of counsel and strength, The Spirit of knowledge and of the [reverential and obedient] fear of the LORD —”*

*Isaiah 11:1-2 AMP*

The Spirit speaking through Isaiah is showing us here that Christ is the root, we are the branches or sub roots coming from him and it is only a branch from his root that bears fruit. It means any other roots you make outside Christ are fruitless.

### IF he suffered – we like him will suffer as we put down roots

“For it was fitting for God [that is, an act worthy of His divine nature] that He, for whose sake are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, should make the author and

founder of their salvation perfect through suffering [bringing to maturity the human experience necessary for Him to be perfectly equipped for His office as High Priest].” Hebrews 2:10 AMP

The Lord is encouraging us today that in order for us to become perfect in our fruit bearing, for us to be thoroughly equipped and perfect like Christ our High priest, we will have to suffer as part of the process. Fruit is perfected through being pressed.

**But.. we will overcome just like him.**

“This hope [this confident assurance] we have as an anchor of the soul [it cannot slip and it cannot break down under whatever pressure bears upon it]—a safe and steadfast hope that enters within the veil [of the heavenly temple, that most Holy Place in which the very presence of God dwells], where Jesus has entered [in advance] as a forerunner for us, having become a High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.”

Hebrews 6:19-20 AMP

Our Lord God is in heaven with the Lord and he has gone before us, and he is right now interceding for us, so we know our hope is 100% certain and this is what we base our hope on – whether the season of putting down roots is lonely or hard.

## What is the tradition of roots for our generation?

Jude urged the Christian brethren to “earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered” (Jude 3). What did he mean? Faith in this context is not referring to the trust and confidence we must all have to be pleasing to God, but to the embodiment of doctrine which was given to the church through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. In this letter, Jude includes doctrinal departure as a serious consideration of the last days.<sup>iv</sup>

Because the gospel that was handed to us once and for us through the church fathers – the apostles and the saints is complete for our generation to develop roots and go on to be fruitful like those who went before us – with whom we share a heritage, we need to contend for the faith and this means doing what they did:

- **Take one day** at a time, tomorrow isn’t guaranteed. Grow by small steps but regularly.
- **Build a prayer list** (for example read the psalms to help you learn to pray)
- **Build a praise list** (ministries like *elevation worship, Bethel and Hillsongs* specialise in this). The saints of old sang songs to God as part of worship. Do not abandon this tradition, God is the same yesterday today and forever and the bible says in Psalms 22: 3 “Yet you are holy, enthroned on the praises of Israel.” Another version says: “But thou *art* holy, *O thou* that inhabitest the praises of Israel.”
- **Have a war room.** This is a secret place you go daily to pray, like Daniel did. *Daniel always prayed to God three times every day. Three times every day, he bowed down on his knees to pray and praise God. Daniel 6: 10 (ERV).*
- **Have a prayer routine.** When you regularly pray, you learn to pray for different things, not just family and friends. Paul for example prayed for<sup>v</sup>: God’s people, for wisdom and knowledge, for peace and unity, for spiritual power and for growing in love.
- **Have a bible reading plan.** You need to consistently read the bible to learn how to handle it. Paul urged Timothy. *Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who*

*does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth. 2 Timothy 2: 15.* You cannot correctly handle the word of God, which is a sword, unless you train in its use.

- **Have a spiritual journal.** The bible shows many times when God specifically instructed people to write things down. For example, for Moses to leave writings to Joshua (Exodus 17:14) and Daniel writing down his dreams (Daniel 7: 1). Likewise, develop this spiritual discipline for it will serve as a reminder to you.
- **Meet with the saints.** As the days of Christ's return draw nearer, it is especially more important that we continue meeting. The bible says: *let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near. Hebrews 10: 25 (NLT).*
- **Do the sacraments.** Jesus told us to do Holy Communion regularly "in remembrance of him" (Luke 22: 19). Likewise, He commanded that all believers get baptised, this being one of the foundations or elementary or "baby milk" of the faith (Hebrews 6: 1-2).

This stuff seems boring or mundane but this is the gospel that was handed to us by the Apostles, this is the gospel that was delivered by a revelation of Christ himself, these are the roots upon which your faith is built and so should be kept. How do you grow these roots? Through constant practice!

*For everyone who lives on milk is still an infant, inexperienced in the message of righteousness. But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained their senses to distinguish good from evil. Hebrews 5: 13 (BSB).*

For our generation to grow its roots in Christ, it needs to graduate from milk for. Roots means you go beyond the basics of just knowing your name and parents. It means you go deeper, you know your heritage: Dickson, the son of Wasake, son of Gafali, son of Emare, son of Abraham, son of Enoch, son of Adam, son of God.

The root goes right to the Lord. There is a river coming from the throne of God, the lamb provides the light and the fruit is for the healing of the nations. This fruit is that 9-fold fruit of the spirit, the one we long for when we are fully mature, the fruit of:

*"...love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law." Galatians 5: 22-23 (NIV).*

Amen!

## Next steps

Therefore, knowing that the faith has been handed to us once and for all, what are some of the daily spiritual disciplines you will develop, to grow your roots, as you continue in the lineage of your brethren, those saints of Old. Consider especially:

- **Build a praise list.** The saints of old sang songs to God as part of worship. Do not abandon this tradition.
- **Have a war room.** This is a secret place you go daily to pray, like Daniel did. *Daniel always prayed to God three times every day. Three times every day, he bowed down on his knees to pray and praise God. Daniel 6: 10 (ERV).*
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## Notes

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<sup>i</sup> Paraphrased and extract from Luke 3: 23-34 (NIV)

<sup>ii</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orange\\_\(fruit\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Orange_(fruit))

<sup>iii</sup> John 3: 30 (ESV)

<sup>iv</sup> <https://www.bethelcog.org/religious-deception/what-is-the-faith-once-delivered/>

<sup>v</sup> <https://churchleaders.com/daily-buzz/277022-10-powerful-prayers-the-apostle-paul-prayed-over-gods-people.html>