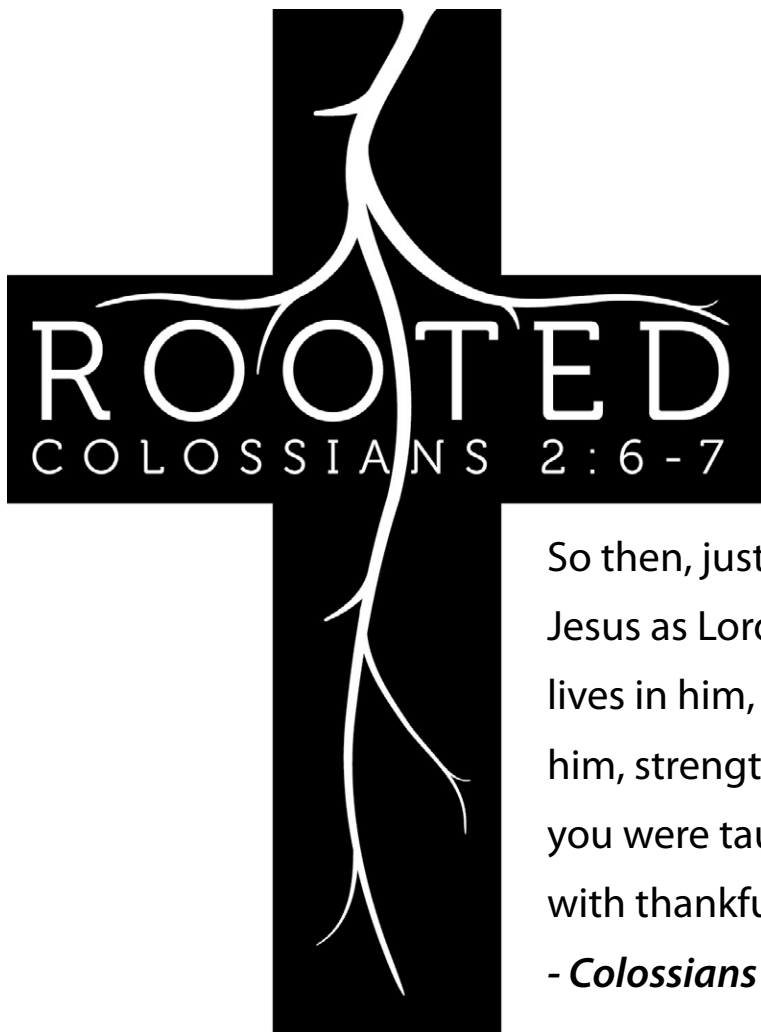


2011-2012

**Pre-Event Bible Study
Additional Adult Leader Information**



So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.

- Colossians 2:6-7

Additional Leader Information

Youth Encounter's theme for the 2011-2012 Event year is ROOTED, drawn from the imagery found in Colossians 2:6-7, of being "rooted and built up in [Christ]". The Pre-Event Study is the first of three thematic Bible studies through which your group will have the opportunity to engage in conversation around the theme and theme verse. The Pre-Event study (as the name suggests) will help your group prepare for the Quake. During the Event, members of Captive Free will lead a thematic Bible study Trek. And when you return home from the Event, you may choose to reflect upon your experience using the Post-Event Bible Study.

Below are some notes about the set-up of the Pre-Event Bible Study, and about the theme and theme verse, to assist in your facilitation of the Bible studies, and of conversation and reflection at the Event. You do not need to share all of these leader notes with your participants. These pages are for you, to inform your understanding of ROOTED and (we hope!) to aid you in your leadership before, during, and after the Quake!

SUPPLIES – each section lists which supplies are needed, however, below is a comprehensive list, should you like to see it ahead of time.

- Bibles for everyone
- Copies of "What Makes Me ME?" for everyone (included at the end of the lesson)
- Copies of "Looking Ahead" for everyone (included at the end of the lesson)
- Paper
- Writing utensils
- Crayons or colored pencils
- DVD of The Nanny Diaries or the Wingclips.com clip of the scene (See "Film Clips" below the link.) (optional)
- A DVD player and monitor (optional)
- A dry erase board or large writing surface, markers (optional)

DESCRIPTION OF VARIOUS ACTIVITIES IN PRE-EVENT BIBLE STUDY

- **Small Group Discussion and Reporting:** At times, participants will be asked to work in small groups. If you have a dry erase board or a large writing surface available, you may wish to have them write some of their responses on the board when suggested. Or you may wish to have a volunteer serve as the "scribe" to write keywords from each group's report as they share. It's also fine if you don't use a dry erase or other board at all.
- **Movie Moment:** The Bible study begins with a journaling opportunity. To spark thought and conversation, there is a suggestion of a film clip from The Nanny Diaries (2007, PG-13) which you may wish to use before the journaling. This film is usually shelved in the "Comedy" section of most video stores. The time code for the scene is noted in the description for this activity.

You can also find this scene on the website www.wingclips.com, which provides hundreds of clips for free with their Basic subscription (which is also free!). Go to www.wingclips.com/movie-clips/nanny-diaries/who-am-i on the site to find this scene, entitled "Who Am I?"

If you choose to use the clip, please preview it before your group meets, and have it set up and ready to go before the study begins. If you are unable to show the film clip, simply skip to "So, Who Am I Anyway?" with the journaling activity (see below) that follows.

- **"What Makes Me ME?":** Participants will have the chance to journal about their own identities as individuals, which will set the stage for talking about Colossians 2:6-7, and the exhortation to God's people to find and "root" their identity in Christ. There is a master sheet included at the end of the Pre-Event Bible Study to use if you wish to make and distribute copies of the journaling questions.
- **A Quick Vocabulary Lesson** In the section entitled "Digging Into Our Quake Theme," participants will be asked to construct a definition for "root," as they begin to think about what ROOTED means. Below is a compilation of meanings (paraphrased, in some cases) to which you may wish to refer. These are from Merriam-Webster's online dictionary (www.merriam-webster.com) and Dictionary.com (www.dictionary.com) (both sites accessed on July 6, 2011). Take note especially of the final definition at the end of the verb "to root."

Root (noun)

- *the (usually, but not always) underground part of a plant that absorbs, stores and delivers nutrients, and that anchors and supports the plant; roots differ from stems in that they lack nodes, buds and leaves.*
- *the part of the tooth within the socket*
- *the enlarged, basal part of a hair, within the skin*
- *the part of an organ or physical structure that attaches to the body (the root of the tongue)*
- *something that is an origin ("the love of money is the root of all evil")*
- *a quantity taken an indicated number of times as an equal factor (2 is a fourth root of 16)*
- *a number that reduces an equation to an identity when it is substituted for one variable*
- *the simple element inferred as the basis from which a word is derived*
- *the lowest tone of a chord*
- *one's "true" home, or home of origin*
- *a sense of connectedness to one's culture of origin, or with relationships formed over time (establishing "roots" after moving to a new city)*

But wait! Check this out!

For our purposes, with regard to our theme verse, the following definition of the verb "to root" might be the most useful:

Root (verb):

- to implant or establish deeply (in the thing that is the object of the verb. For ex. "to be rooted in tradition.") (Cool, huh!)
- **"Looking Ahead":** At the end of the Pre-Event Bible Study, you will all have a chance to journal again about your hopes and expectations for the Event. A master copy of the journaling page is included at the end of the Pre-Event Bible Study. Please be sure to have the participants fold their paper and perhaps even have tape available for them to tape the paper closed then write their name on the outside or you may choose to offer envelopes for them to seal their sheets. However you do it, please collect the sheets so that you can redistribute them later during the Quake Post Event Bible Study, should you choose to do that. Please be sure to respect the privacy of the participants and do not read their sheets. Keep them in a safe place until they are needed again.

At the event, participants will have the opportunity to join Captive Free in the Event Bible Study; after the Event, you may choose to use the Post-Event Bible Study. Each of these studies will build on ideas introduced here in the Pre-Event Study, as well as in materials used at the Event.

And Finally, Just For Fun

If you wish to add yet another media format to the Pre-Event Bible Study, there are numerous cool online images on Google, and instructional videos about planting, soil, roots, etc. on YouTube. A few for your consideration, if you wish to add a visual aid or two:

Photo of several trees with large, above-ground, interwoven root systems:
www.deborahshanetoolbox.com/wp-content/uploads/2010/03/roots1.jpg

Photo of juniper tree with roots exposed due to soil erosion:
namibsands.files.wordpress.com/2009/07/newlands_forest_roots.jpg

Instructional video about planting trees. A bit dry, but the part about how the roots are not meant to be kept in the bag could lead to an interesting discussion about healthy growth, constraints on our growth, etc.
www.youtube.com/watch?v=541EoRwhHqo

Video of a tree that's grown up through the flooring of a building. Could spark compelling conversation about adapting to surroundings (notice the square-shaped growth around the tiles), blooming where you're planted, constraints on abundant life, etc.
www.youtube.com/watch?v=08dCVZ-ufwE

A WORD ABOUT THE THEME VERSE

There are many directions that Colossians 2:6-7 could take our thoughts. This year, at Youth Encounter Events, we will be focusing on the imagery in verse 7, where we find the exhortation to be "rooted and built up in [Christ]."

Every Biblical passage comes to us from a larger context, and understanding that original context informs our interpretation of the passage. Here are some quick notes about the epistle to and the community of the Colossians which may help you and your group interpret our theme verse for your own context and community.

COLOSSIANS: A QUICK LOOK

The “nutshell” version:

- The Epistle to the Colossians was **written around 60 – 80 CE, 30 to 60 years after Jesus’ ministry.**
- Members of the Colossian congregation were **mostly Gentiles** who had heard the gospel of Jesus Christ through Epaphrus (Col 1:7), one of Paul’s close associates. Paul himself never visited Colossae (2:1), although he was familiar with the community, presumably through Epaphrus. (Among the members of this congregation was Philemon, to whom Paul wrote his short letter, found in the New Testament.)
- **The Colossian congregation was enthusiastic, “holy and faithful” and renowned for their “faith in Jesus Christ” and “the love [they had] for all the saints”** (1:3-4). (See also 1:6). Wouldn’t you love for those to be the first adjectives that come to mind when people describe you?! (And maybe they are!!)
- **The Congregation was also young.** “Young” in experience and identity formation, not in the ages of the parishioners.

SLIGHTLY LONGER (BUT STILL WORTH READING) REFLECTION UPON THE COLOSSIANS AND THEIR EPISTLE

- It can be difficult to imagine first century believers as people struggling to figure out who they were as followers of Jesus. Difficult because we so often imagine that they were like us – members of a 2000-year-old tradition, one that is now a major world religion. But in fact, the earliest believers (think of the first disciples – Peter, Mary Magdalene, Andrew, Mary and Martha) were **Jews, trying to figure out what believing in Jesus meant for them – members of the many-many-thousand-year-old tradition of Judaism**, which was not just what they did in the synagogue on Sabbath, but was culture, family, community, and life through and through. Religious belief and practice wasn’t one aspect of a person’s being as it can be for us today; it was wholly enmeshed in, **and defining of**, one’s being. The roots of Christianity – our roots - are in this sect of Judaism that grew up around Jesus Christ, and that endured and grew after his death, resurrection and ascension, until ultimately, in the second century, people started calling it “Christianity.”
- So...back to the Colossians. The second generation of believers – Gentiles to whom the disciples and early Jewish leaders evangelized – had always (as in for all of known history) been “outsiders” to the Jewish community. And Jews were “outsiders” to them, too. **It’s no wonder that many of the earliest writings of the church, like the Epistles, dealt with questions of orderly worship, new traditions and, in general, belonging, as these two groups came together.**
- **The letter to the Colossians was written to help this Gentile congregation sort out their identity.** In particular, the letter addresses some heresy which was challenging Epaphrus’ teachings. We don’t know what the problem was: whether it was some specific heretical idea that was taking root in the Colossian congregation, or more of a general challenge for the believers, perhaps related simply to figuring out how to be true to the way of Christ as new converts.
- Either way, the Colossians were, like every other congregation of believers, people who lived in a larger community. **(As Christians are in the world today!)** Their neighbors, even their families, didn’t necessarily share their beliefs. So what happens when one person leaves the tradition he/she grew up with, the tradition of his/her family for hundreds of years, and becomes a follower of Christ? **What happens when one starts living in a way that rejects the common culture and embraces a new way of living?** How does one still live day to day beside friends, family and neighbors? How does one attend the local theater or a sporting event where, to kick off the event, sacrifices were made to other gods? (We sing our national anthem, they poured libations....) How does one sit down to dinner with one’s family for a meal, and what do they talk about over dinner?

You see the challenges faced by the early believers? In Colossae, the congregation was trying to find the balance between faithfulness in religious practice and belief, and life within the community. Not unlike us today, in many ways. How do we live with integrity as believers when doing so means that we often don’t fit in? How do we live in a way that is compelling and inviting, and not simply weird (or worse: elitist, arrogant, or alienating) to others who live by different beliefs?

How do we live the Gospel of Christ, when that Gospel is completely counter-cultural in the society in which we live?

Welcome to ROOTED!