



February 2023 News

Deeply Rooted

“That they may be called trees of righteousness, The planting of the Lord, that He may be glorified.” Isaiah 61:3 NKJV

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When I was a child we lived in a tiny house, small as a dollhouse. The trees on the property were of towering proportions. Behind our house, way up at the top of the property was a small stream. Too small to call a creek or even a brook, it flowed all year round, never drying up. Beside that tiny, steady stream stood a beautiful, looming tree that looked completely different to all the others. When I asked my mother kind of tree it was, she told me it was a Weeping Willow, and that they usually grew near water, so their roots could receive nourishment all year round, in all the seasons.

I thought of that tree many years later, when I came across the imagery of the believer as a tree ‘planted by streams of water, yielding fruit in its season, whose leaf does not wither. Ps.1:3. I imagined myself sitting beside that tall tree, shaded from the hot summer sun, and from the spring rains. Meanwhile, this tall tree was getting its never ending sustenance from that tiny flow of water beside it. Its roots were tended by that water all year round.

In scripture we see the imagery of trees and branches, roots and streams. The Holy Spirit is spoken of as a stream of water flowing from our innermost beings. In John 15 Jesus said He is the vine and we are His branches. Paul writes in Eph 3:17 that

we are to be rooted and grounded in love as we are empowered by the indwelling of Christ in our hearts. He also writes in Col. 2 we are to walk in Christ, rooted and built up in Him.

Another thing to know about roots is that for as tall as a tree measures in height, the roots of that tree grow and expand beneath the ground, providing strength and stability to that tree so that it does not topple over in storms. The depth of the roots provide the strength to that tree.

What do all of these things mean? It means that just as that Weeping Willow, I have roots. Those roots provide me strength; and those roots need nourishment. Not just once in a while. Not just from certain years in my life. But in order to be truly sustained in my life in Christ, I must stay near the Stream. Jesus, the Giver of the Living Water desires to water my roots, so that when the onslaughts of heart ache and grief and trials come to test me, I can stand secure.

Deeply rooted in His love, we remain loving. Rooted in Him, we are able to receive grace and give grace. These are the secrets to our hidden lives in Christ. Deeply rooted in Him we flourish in future seasons.



WRITTEN BY,
DEBBIE ECKER

On A Personal Note ...



WRITTEN BY,
DEBBIE ECKER

In the beginning of this year, both Dan and I have experienced the loss of a brother. My younger brother, Ted Graham, age 59 passed away Dec. 31st, and Dan's oldest brother, Chuck Ecker, age 69 on Jan.13. Both men loved Jesus and in fact were in the same class in Bible School in the '80's. They are sorely missed by all who loved them. We thank you for your continued prayers for our families.

On Christ Alone



WRITTEN BY,
DAN ECKER

As I read the Scriptures I am constantly reminded of the need to be centered [and/or] to recenter my life on Christ and on the things that matter most. And there are many reasons for that. Life is short. Life is fragile. Life is precious. Life has meaning and purpose. Life has value. Our life in Christ is eternal. You can live it for the here and now and lose it or you can live it for the life which is to come and find it. (See Luke 9:23-25) The choice is yours.

Paul uses an analogy of himself as a wise master builder. We are to build all of who we are and what we do on the Foundation of Who Christ is. He says "I lay a foundation and another comes and builds upon it". (See I Cor. 3:8-10)

The foundation that Paul is referring to is the foundation of Christ. There is only one foundation upon which we are to build and that foundation is Christ. Our lives; our families; our businesses; and our churches must all be built or founded on Him - He alone is a *sure* foundation. We shall not be moved!

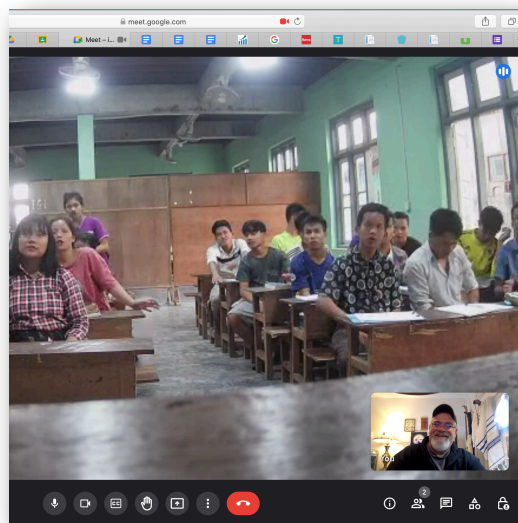
Bringing Christ to Fatherless Homes



Every month throughout this year children and families like these from fatherless homes are being reached in selected areas across Thailand. Project Families Without Fathers (FWF) is bringing hope towards a brighter future.

Weekly visits to homes and area schools are taking place through a network of local Thai churches in each of these locations. Through FWF school fees and related supplies are being provided to every child involved in the program.

Global Training Platforms



On a regular basis we are teaching online classes in the Emmanuel Theological Seminary, (ETS) in Kalaymyo, Myanmar. Live lectures, class room discussions, daily reading assignments, and group projects.

This Online Classroom is providing an opportunity for students like these to learn from a wider range of teachers and trainers. This month another nine students will graduate with a Bachelor Degree of Ministry and Applied Theology.

Prayer Points

“Behold, the former things have come to pass, Now I declare new things; Before they sprout I proclaim *them* to you.”
Isaiah 42:9 NASB

1. Pray for our Global Training Platforms in Thailand, & Myanmar this year!
2. For our Care For Kingdom Families Projects: REAP: and the FWF in Thailand, during the 1st quarter of 2023.
3. Ministry plans to unfold for all of Firstlight to be strategically placed in 2023 and beyond! *projects, *people, *places, *increased funding!
4. For God to arise in all that we do!

Step Into Your Now!