

**Spring Training Series**  
“Becoming (Being) a Person of Influence”  
March-May 2007

**Introduction**

This class is intended to provide a biblical basis for the ministry of members at EPC Newark. Our vision for ministry is expressed in the following two statements. (1) *We envision all of our people having a solid foundation in the gospel, a real experience of the transforming grace of Christ, and a genuine sense of joy that Jesus Christ is the hope of the nations, just as he is our hope.* (2) *We envision our church being a place where the families and individuals of our community are touched in a transformational way by the gospel of grace, through the practical, loving involvement of our members in their lives.* Part I of the class will focus on life in Christ, corresponding generally to the first vision statement. Part II of the class will focus on how we can minister to others in Christ, corresponding generally to the second vision statement. Paul David Tripp’s book *Instruments in the Redeemer’s Hands* is recommended for further reflection on this material.

**Session Topics**

Part I—Life in Christ

1. Rooted in Christ
2. Transformed In Christ
3. Joy in Christ
4. Christ’s Pattern for Ministry

Part II—Ministry in Christ

1. Paul’s Example
2. Love
3. Know
4. Speak
5. Do

**Session 1: Rooted in Christ**

**Objective**

To understand that God has rooted us in Jesus Christ, and to become sensitive to the ways that we do not live according to this wonderful truth.

**Biblical Texts**

Colossians 2:6 So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him, 7 rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness. 8 See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ. 9 For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily

form, 10 and you have been given fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority.

Ephesians 3:17 And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, 18 may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, 19 and to know this love that surpasses knowledge-- that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

### Observations

1. Colossians 2:6-10 is Paul's *instruction* to the church in Colossae; Ephesians 3:17-19 is Paul's *prayer* for the church at Ephesus. Prayer and instruction ought to be together in our ministry.
2. These passages are the only cases where this word for *rooted* is used. In each case, it is a perfect passive participle, which means that there is an emphasis on the ongoing significance of the single past act (perfect) that God himself has done (passive) in Christ for the believer. In other words, Paul is not telling the Colossians to "root themselves" nor is he praying for them to "be rooted."
3. In Colossians 2:7, *built up* and *strengthened* refer to an ongoing past work of God in their lives, rather than a single past act of God (as in the case of *rooted*).
4. In Ephesians 3:17, Paul speaks of the believers being *rooted* in love, and then goes on to pray for them in verse 18 to *grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ*. To be rooted in love is to be rooted in Christ himself. Christ love should be at the foundation of our Christian experience! *Ministry flows from this well of Christ's love, ministry leads others to this well of Christ's love.*
5. Christ gives you his blessings: His righteousness (2 Corinthians 5:21), His Sonship and Inheritance (Galatians 4:4-7)
6. An aspect of sin is drawing on other root systems. A life of faith and repentance is a life of returning to one's roots in Christ, so to speak.

### Discussion and Implications

1. Illustration: Laying rebar is hard work! Tripp speaks of God's rebar: Sovereignty, Grace and Glory. Are you laying your own rebar? Are you trying to "root yourself?"
2. What is the function of a root system in plants? What happens if the root system is interrupted?
3. How are we nourished as believers? What does it look like to be malnourished?
4. What does Paul's prayer in Ephesians (3:18-19) indicate with regard to the struggle that we face as believers? What does his instruction to the Colossians (2:8-10) indicate with regard to our struggle as believers?
5. How can your personal influence on others make this struggle worse? Better?
6. Implication: Our corporate and personal ministry should lead people to Christ, not to (root) systems, processes or programs. Are you feeling nourished or drained?