

WHAT WORKS BEST ON DEEP ROOTS

One day recently while I was spending some time in my backyard trying to get rid of dandelions my neighbour happened to come over to chat. If you are wondering, yes it was the neighbour who is a Montreal Canadiens fan. I was using one of the claw tools you may have seen that allows you to stand over the dandelion and twist it around until you pull up the weed and hopefully the root. After watching me dig up a few dandelions with this tool, he said to me, "What I find works best on dandelions is getting down on your knees and digging them out!" I have done that before and agree that it works best at getting the entire root out. The problem for me is I have a 300-foot-deep backyard by 70 feet wide. I have a lot of dandelions that appear at this time of year in my back yard. If I took this approach every year of getting on my knees and digging them out, besides taking me forever to do so, I probably would need to book a few visits to the chiropractor as well. We talked for a little bit longer before I returned to my dandelions, and he went off to do some chores around his property.

I began thinking about his advice that the best approach to getting rid of dandelions is getting down on one's knees. Naturally, I began to think about how this wisdom works best also to deal with deep rooted problems and issues that arise in our lives. A powerful tool we have as Christians is to be able to get down on our knees and pray. We are blessed to be able to know that each time we do pray God not only hears us, but answers when we call on Him. David expressed this confidence in Psalm 4:3 saying:

**You can be sure of this:
The Lord set apart the godly for Himself.
The Lord will answer when I call to Him.**

When we are on our knees in prayer, we not only realize God is listening but are also reminded about His attributes such as goodness, love, and faithfulness. We have this very powerful tool at our disposal. This tool we call prayer can help remove deep roots that try to take control of our hearts and lives. Think of the many things that are trying to take root in our lives right now:

- Worry about rising costs and how to make ends meet.
- Uncertainty as we see our world changing at such a rapid pace.
- Concern about a health crisis we or a loved one might be experiencing.
- Grief and sadness having experienced a deep and painful loss.
- Depression and anxiety caused by finding it harder to cope in life.
- Brokenness as a result of a relationship that has been severed.
- Hopelessness thinking there is no way to overcome the crises we are facing.
- Anger, bitterness, and struggling to be able to forgive as a result of some hurt we have experienced.
- Loneliness and feeling all alone in life.

These are all powerful emotions that try to grow a deep root in our hearts and lives. Just like dandelions seem to do in my backyard, these deep-rooted emotions can overtake our lives very quickly. We have the best tool available to us in prayer to rid us of these deep-rooted emotions. How quickly do we take advantage of this tool of prayer to start getting at these powerful emotions? Do we make the mistake of waiting too long, like many do with their dandelions, and let these emotions overtake our lives before we realize we need to get on our knees and dig out these roots? I think this is a mistake many of us can make in our lives by using prayer as a last resort, rather than the first. The apostle Paul reminds us of the importance prayer should have in our lives. In Philippians 4:6-7 he writes:

Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need and thank Him for all He has done. Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.

Worry is often the beginning for so many of the issues we have identified that begin to start taking root in our hearts. Paul tells us that at the first sign of worry we should use the tool of prayer. He encourages us to pray about everything and tell God what we need. By thanking God for all He has done, Paul shares how a deep peace that only He can provide will begin to rid our hearts of that root that wants to take hold of our lives. Considering the times and situations we are experiencing in this world right now prayer needs to be

an essential tool that we use every day in our lives in order to experience God's lasting peace, and to remove any roots from negative emotions that are trying to overtake our lives.

My neighbour said that getting down on one's knees is the best approach to removing dandelions. Good advice. Scripture's advice of getting down on our knees and praying is the best approach to get rid of negative feelings and emotions that try to take root in our lives. If you happen to drive by my house and see me on my knees in the backyard, I might be trying my neighbour's advice to get rid of my dandelions. I might also be praying while on my knees that my 57-year-old body can endure such a daunting task.

Keep Safe and God Bless

Pastor Dean