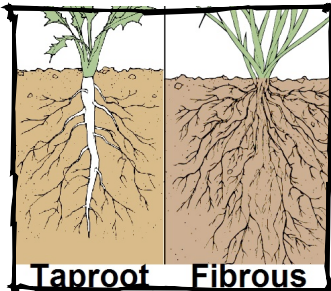




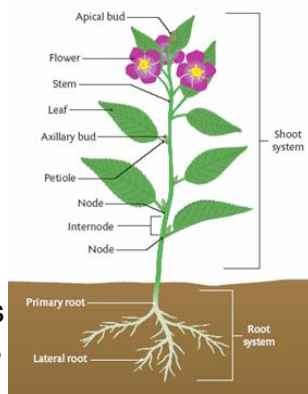
Last time we looked at Weeds, and this time gardening and horticulture from another point of view. But don't worry, it's still a spiritual lesson.

When *Ministry Times* happen, very often it seems that everyone is crying except me, or someone notices 'everyone' screaming except them. They feel nothing. Why? Does it mean God is overlooking them? Is there something wrong with them? Let's do some horticulture and consider what it might be teaching us.



Different types of plants and trees have different shapes and sizes of roots. Not only that, but some root systems are

shallow and others, like those of an oak tree, go very deep. Each root system is designed by the Maker to be perfect for the plant. If the Carrot had the same root system as a Sequoia tree Bugs



Bunny would never get to eat.

The roots have several functions. One is to gather nutrition and water for the plant, another is to give it stability and to keep it upright. There are probably others. Obviously then an oak tree needs bigger roots, going deeper into the thicker clay and boulders below or the tree will not stand up. But grass does not need that, instead it needs to mat together to grow close to its neighbours to form a ground covering and to protect against weeds infiltrating between the grass plants.



But when it does not rain for several days, the lawn quickly begins to lose its greenness and turns yellow and then brown. However, as you can see from this photo, the trees and deeper rooted plants stay green.

That's because the surface soil gets dry quickly, and the plants that get their water from the soil are soon in need of more water. The trees, on the other hand, get their water from deep below the surface, where clays and other rocks will trap large quantities from previous rains for a long time.

If you have a pot plant which is wilting, and then water it, you will see a noticeable difference within an hour or so. I doubt you will ever see a visible difference to a tree in your



garden in British climate – it is not so susceptible to rain or drought.

What has this to do with us? God, the Master Gardener, has not made us to be the same. He has given His people a tremendous variety. Among us there are some who are like Oak Trees. Solid, always there. Standing whether there is rain or not, not visibly different in dry spells or rainy ones (*and here, for the purposes*

Last time we started to consider weeds that have eaten into the Church, hampering the effectiveness and robbing the victory.

*It maybe that you have ideas of what other weeds are - it would be great if you could write something to help to sharpen us all.*

One of the biggest has to be not believing the Bible, not taking God at His word. You see, an opposing world view (that has always been around) has become the dominant one in our society. It is essentially that Man is supreme. Genesis 11 has Man building a tower to 'make a name for ourselves' - the Babel system is still with us. Modern philosophy is based on it. Richard Dawkins one of the most ardent proponents of it. "We don't need God".

So how has this infested the Church? It seems to me we have been ready to listen to Satan's question to Eve: "**Did God really say?**" and examine the Bible with that question in mind and the teachings of the Babel-ists in mind.

So, instead of coming to scripture with the view "This is God speaking, He does not lie, this is Truth" many in the Church approach it with "These are stories written by people in ancient times without modern understanding. I need to fit them into our modern world if I can, and ignore them if I can't".

That's the extreme end of it, but even many "bible believing" Christians adopt some of this approach for some parts of God's Word. The Church as a whole is not consistent, and different Christians give different answers to questions such as Creation/Evolution, Miracles such as the Red Sea Crossing or even the Resurrection, Healings, the Second Coming, and so forth.

*No wonder the world is confused, no wonder the Gospel becomes ineffective.*

If there are areas of the Bible you doubt or can't accept, let's discuss them. Let's love each other as we do, we probably all have issues somewhere. Let's deal with weeds together.

Post comments on the Facebook page ([www.tfgministries.org.uk/facebook](http://www.tfgministries.org.uk/facebook)) or contact me privately through FB or [geoff.lumley@tfgministries.org.uk](mailto:geoff.lumley@tfgministries.org.uk)

### *Bible Study Series*

**We continue our series on  
Ephesians ch 2:1-10**

**Jesus has brought us to life, our response  
should be a change in the way we act,  
even in our conversations**

**Read the passage, and go to  
[www.tfgministries.org.uk/podcasts](http://www.tfgministries.org.uk/podcasts) to join in.**

*of this discussion, we will equate rain with what happens during 'Holy Spirit Ministry' times).*

There are also those who are like grass.

Needing regular rain, responding quickly, visibly affected by it. Perhaps there are many like this, and the rain helps them to grow closely together as it does for grass.

There are also those who could be likened to other types of plants – with deep tap roots and also shallow fibrous roots on the same plant.

Of course, if the rain *never* comes, even the trees will wilt and die. So even for those for whom 'nothing ever happens' it is good to be in places where you can receive ministry. The rain will seep in, the reserve pools will be replenished, and you will be able to carry on.

I have read elsewhere other Christian ministries saying 'cut off the shallow roots, we all need deep roots'. But that is not how God made gardens. If you just have deep roots you get a forest or jungle, not a garden. We are different, we need to discover what we are like ourselves and celebrate it. *All of us* need to be receiving from the Holy Spirit regularly. But for some that will have more immediate visible/experiential effect than others. It does not make us better if we respond visibly in times of ministry, it does not make us better if we don't seem to need those times.

It makes us better if we bring what we are to God for His glory, and let Him tend His garden in His way. Jesus said "*I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener*" (NIV).

Look around at the rest of the garden, be who you are in the Kingdom to assist God in watering and tending it. Rejoice that you are part of it, rejoice in the beauty the rest of it has and know that you add to that beauty too!