

The Source of Pride and Joy of My Family

Sometimes, it's the little things that make a big difference. There are many things in life that we just take one glance at and look over, expecting that they are expected there and will continue to be there for us forever. However, it is just because we've gotten so used to having these things around to keep us comfort that we don't understand how much of a difference it would create for this aspect to disappear. In my essay, I chose to think of the sources of pride and joy that we may see everyday because those aspects that we look over are the foundations that make up our family.

I like to imagine these aspects of a family as a flower because when you think of a flower, images of beauty, joy, and peaceful green fields instantly pop into your head, as should a good family. Every flower is split into three different parts: the roots, the stem, and the flower. The roots, the stem, and the flower each represent the love, unity, and the members of the family, respectively, that a great family like mine has.

The flower itself is the face of the family. Each petal of my flower represents a member of the family. For example, my flower would have three petals, one for my father, one for my mother, and one for me. A flower without its petals is rarely a flower at all. A flower's beauty is defined by its petals that are almost like its clothes. Even the Bible speaks of the beauty of flowers when it says in Matthew 6: 28 - 29, "And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." Likewise, a family's beauty is in the members of the family. Each member holds strong to the rest of their family as the petals hold firmly to the center of the flower.

Each member must contribute to the family in some way, for a flower with three flowers in which two are dead are no more than a flower with one flower. In our family, each person strives to serve their purpose within their family. I, as a student, have to work hard and study hard so that I can strive and support my own family someday. My mother stays at home and nurtures me, doing much of the household work to make sure everything gets done. Even when she is sick, she cares for me, when I'm sick, she cares for me, when I am well, she cares for me, and pretty much everyday, she cares for me. My mother has cared for me so much and without her, I definitely wouldn't have become the person I am today. In fact, I would've died without the nurturing my mother has given me throughout my life. My father has a job and works hard everyday that he works to support our family with enough money to support everyone. He is the reason that I am able to participate in so many extracurriculars, such as Tae Kwon Do and learning the piano! Along with that, both my parents are supportive of my endeavors and always encourage me to be the best me that I can be! I am forever thankful for all that they have done and continue to do for me.

Now, what is each petal of a flower connected to? Each petal of a flower is connected to the stem, which is recognizable as the long green shaft in most flowers. This stem represents the unity of the family. Without the stem, the petals of the flower have nothing to grasp on to or to have a firm growth or foundation in, leading to the death of the flower. Likewise, when there is

no unity among the family, each family member slowly grows apart from one another to the point where being called a family is just a facade, a mask to shade their inner brokenness. With a strong stem, a flower is able to connect itself to the roots and get the nutrients given from the roots to grow and become a beautiful flower. Similarly, my family is able to remain united together in the foundations of the family to grow and become the best family that we can be.

The roots are pretty much the most important part of the flower and possibly the most overlooked, for they are held underground. The roots support the rest of the flower, it gathers nutrients for the growth of the flower, and the only reason the flower stands through winds and storms is because of the roots and their firm connection with the ground. Thus, the roots represent love. Love is essential in any good family because without love, the family falls apart. No member of the family respects one another and gradually grow apart. Likewise, a flower without its roots cannot stand for any tribulation or obstacle that might come its way will knock it down, leaving its petals to die. With love in our family, unity is able to grow amongst the members of our family, thus developing as a family!

For the growth of a flower, you need nutrients and water. I think family experiences and memories that life brings count as these. Experiences and memories with your family, no matter how small they may be, can contribute to the growth of the family in its unity. Something as small as sitting and talking with your parents or as big as going on a vacation with them can all create lasting memories that carry on with you and the rest of your family. These memories can cause growth in the family, so that the family becomes more mature and more understanding of each other. There are many memories and experiences that I have been through with my family, such as family vacations that we go on once in a while. But whether it was through harsh times when things weren't working out between all of us, or times when we were all having a great time with each other, I think that our family has grown because of them! Great times when we are all having fun together create a fun atmosphere for the family and cause more unity, while sad times when we have to stick together to make it through tribulation causes maturation in the family, thus causing more unity. Eventually, it all amounts to the growth of unity in the family, which is our stem. As our stem grows, the taller our flower becomes and the happier our family is!

Now, you may be thinking, "Well then, where are the leaves?" I think the leaves are other aspects that seem extraordinary to people, but in reality, many well-connected families are fine without them. I consider these as the leaves, the additional parts to the flower. Aspects such as wealth and physical beauty fall into this leaf category. Often times, people are inclined to think that a family is happy because they are rich or they are talented or some other foreign aspect of the flower. But, if the family is truly deriving its happiness from the leaves of its flower and doesn't dedicate time to the other parts of the flower, then it is just as useless as a flower trying to live off its leaves. It might live for a while, but never for long. However, a flower that has a strong stem and strong roots will grow to be happy and healthy, regardless of how many leaves that the flower has. Likewise, a family with love, unity, and the members of the family working together, will grow and be happy with who they are with a family for way longer of a time.

Now, this is all well and good, but what are we forgetting here? Well, a flower doesn't come from nowhere and neither does its stem nor its roots. It all comes from a seed! So where does a seed come from? Well, many times, the seed comes from a farmer or someone who is

harvesting seeds for them to grow! So, where does our family come from? Our family comes from God! When God created our world, He thought of us and created a good atmosphere for us to grow in! As our family began to grow and develop, God never left His eyes from us and continued to nurture and cultivate our growing family! In the same way that a farmer waters its plants and continuously cultivates them to make sure that they grow strong, God made sure that our family is able to grow in a good environment and that we will stay strong through whatever obstacles our family faces!

So, where does our story go from here? What does a flower do when it finishes developing? Well, it creates fruit! A flower is able to create seeds or other fruits that the nurturer is able to enjoy! In the same way, our family worships the Lord and is faithful to Him! We produce fruit of our own that will please the Lord and live our lives waiting for the next moment that God may cause us to grow and make fruit! Through our flower, the seeds are spread to other places and new lands are able to experience the Lord! Likewise, our fruit and lives are able to shine a light to other people that helps them come near to the Lord! Then, the Lord cultivates them and makes great fruits spring from all flowers that stay true to the Lord!

When a family grows away from the Lord and almost refuses the help of the Lord, it can only go downhill from there. Without the help of a nurturer, the flower begins to slowly die as it is not able to support itself without God's help. Even if it does live on and produces its own fruit, the fruit of that flower will never create the same sort of good fruit that one made by a well-nurtured flower makes. When a family grows with support from the Lord, the Lord takes care of the flower and makes sure that the fruit that is produced is produced correctly! As long as we don't turn our flowers away from the Lord, the Lord will continue to nurture and produce fruits of the Spirit from our family! These fruits can include the fruits of the Spirit, including joy, love, peace, patience, kindness, and so much more! With the help of God, our purpose as flowers are fulfilled and we are able to live a happy life with the Lord!

In conclusion, every family is like a flower, with its flower petals, its stem, and its roots. Each part of these flowers represents the members of the family, the unity of the family, and the foundations of love in the family, respectively, and if cultivated properly by the Lord, will live very well! Families cultivated by the Lord will produce good fruit and will please the Lord, leading to a happy eternal life with the Lord forever and ever! So, sometimes, families can look at other families and think, "Wow, that family is so rich, which must be why they are happy." But, in truth, this is not always the case. Sometimes, it's the foundations of the flower, not the leaves, that are the most important and play the biggest role in shaping a beautiful flower.