



Weekly Devotional

April 30, 2007

Growing Like A Tree

“Rooted and built up in Him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving” (Colossians 2:7).

Spring is my wife’s favorite time of year. When the south winds bring warm air up the mountain and the sap begins to rise, Cindy seems to spring into another gear. All her conversations revolve around the first signs of new life. From the shoots of new greenery coming out of the ground to the buds of new growth on the trees, she seems to notice them all. She observes their various stages of growth throughout the season.

A tree goes in and out of growing cycles throughout the year. Where there is life, there is growth! But in the spring, with additional buds and multiple leaves, growth appears more evident. This is the way it is in the Christian experience. Where there is divine life, there will be spiritual growth. Because of external response or involvement, however, our development in divine realities seems to be more apparent.

The young believers in Colossae faced three different religious forces. Some false teachers told them that they had to keep the law to be saved. Another group indicated that a level of knowledge, higher than simple faith in Christ, was needed. One other element stressed a system of “dos and don’ts” to gain God’s favor. In combating these persistent enemies, the Apostle Paul encouraged spiritual growth.

A Christian is to grow downward like a tree! This is witnessed in the first word of the verse, “Rooted.” Those trees with roots near the top of the ground are easily toppled by high winds. But the trees with roots reaching deep into the soil are unaffected by the winds of the storm. Similarly, those believers who are not well grounded in the truths of Holy Scripture are blown around rather easily. Oh, may we be steadfast believers!

A Christian is to grow upward like a tree! We perceive this in the admonition, “And built up in Him.” As a tree depends upon water and clean air for its upward growth, so we are dependent upon Christ. He is our Life! We must draw from Him! We must live off Him! When, in a practical sense, we are taking Christ as our Life, we will develop upward and heavenward. This is truly setting our “affection on things above” (3:2).

A Christian is to grow outward like a tree! Admittedly, the diametrical growth of a tree is very slow. During the moist rainy seasons the bark of the tree swells and makes the tree look bigger than it really is. But it will take many years for the tree to reach full maturity. Being genuinely “stablished in the faith” is not an overnight process. In due season, however, while we grow downward and upward, we will grow outward. May God enable us to be growing like a tree

for His glory!