

The Strong Heart of a Tree

Contributed by Sally Bair
Monday, 03 January 2011

The wind blows hard and constantly through Iowa—at least whenever I travel through. During my last trip, sustained winds blew 35 mph with gusts to 45-50, requiring two white-knuckled hands on the wheel at all times—hour after hour. I almost expected trees to topple.

Indeed, I find it amazing that the trees on the Iowa prairie—the ones I’ve observed—stand as tall and straight as they do. The branches bend with the wind but the trunks remain steady and strong and unmovable.

A tree’s strength comes in great part from its healthy root system, but also from its inner core called the heartwood. God created the tree in such a way that every part of it has a purpose and is dependent on the other parts. Every living cell helps maintain a tree’s worth. In simple terms, its worth is evident in the oxygen it provides to the air, its shade for protection, and its beauty for enjoyment and fruit for sustenance.

As long as a tree is healthy, the assaults of prairie wind do no harm. In fact, wind serves to make it stronger. Exactly how strong is a tree? The Bible answers this by comparing a person to a tree. “Blessed is the man whose delight is in the law of the Lord; he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season, whose leaf also shall not wither.” (Psalm 1:3)

The Living Word, Jesus Christ, makes us as strong as a tree and causes us to produce the fruit of righteousness, peace, and joy. When we abide in Him, the winds of life’s everyday problems and trials cannot topple us. In Him we can remain as strong as a tree battered by Iowa prairie winds.

Trees were strong enough to hold Jesus at His birth and death. Imagine! Jesus was born in a manger made from a tree—a humble bed strong enough to hold the majestic Son of God. And Jesus died on a cross made from a tree—strong enough to uphold the weight of the sins of the world.

Lord, You always look at our heart. Help our faith in You to be as strong and steady and unmovable as an Iowa prairie tree so we can provide the oxygen of Your Living Word to others, protect them from evil and harm, and produce Your fruit of righteousness, peace, and joy. In Jesus’ name, amen.

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