

Trees of Righteousness

I like to walk around our neighbourhood, especially the areas with plenty of trees.

I even have favourite ones that I stop and enjoy.

In the years we have lived here, we have weathered several big storms, each of which has wiped out a considerable number of local trees, but my favourites have been spared.

Imagine my surprise recently when, after an evening of light rain and winds, I found one of “my” trees – a spectacular 15m tall leopard tree – splayed inelegantly across the footpath and gutter.

It still had its artistically dappled trunk undamaged, and the branches with their abundant lacy foliage were still intact.

But the massive root ball had simply been lifted out of the earth, exposing the shallowness of the roots.

The overall impression was that the tree had grown tired of standing and had lain down to sleep and eventually to die.

How many people are like this tree?

They look impressive, strong, dependable and immovable on the outside, but when any level of pressure or opposition comes, they simply don't stand.

They don't necessarily implode, explode or make a scene; they simply give up and topple over.

If we're honest, we could all be like that, and nobody understands the frailty of human nature like God does.

He recognises that good intentions, self-effort and even determination, will never be enough to anchor us in life's storms.

We might look great for a season or two, but if our roots don't go down really deeply into nourishing soil, we are eventually doomed to wither and die.

That is so unacceptable to God that He devised a way that we could all avoid that fate if we choose to.

He made the sacrifice of His only son, Jesus Christ.

Through His death, He provided the anchor that can hold us fast through **all** of life's storms.

Jesus is the foundation for our lives, which will never crumble, erode, or change.

Our responsibility is to let ourselves be planted in good soil, fed and watered by His word.

His responsibility is to cause growth and fruitfulness and turn us into what Isaiah called “trees of righteousness” (Is 61:3).

As we take this cup and bread today let's remember that it's a celebration of all He's done for us.

Because of Him, we can have roots that run deep, seeking out the living water that sustains us through the most challenging times.

Because of Jesus, we not only live, but we flourish.

That's worth remembering and being thankful for.