

A blessed man as a tree planted by God. (i)

(Quality: Very good)

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Date: 29 April 1979

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[0 : 00] God. This background is not to be considered, though that is good for us to consider it, in being the children of godly parents. Rather is it to be considered as being elect of God, having our names written in heaven, enjoying the benefits and blessings of the covenant of grace, being taught of God, being brought to know the Lord and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent.

Such a background must indeed issue in the appointed time with the manifested blessing which will rest upon that man that trusted in the Lord. He trusted in the Lord because of that which is written in eternity and that which is manifested in time. So then, there is a trusting in the eternal God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Everyone that is born again is a Trinitarian.

They must believe in the Father, in the Son and in the Holy Ghost. And they must rejoice in this, that there is Jesus Christ, our mediator. Hence, we are encouraged by the words in John 14, Let not your hearts be troubled. Ye believe in God, believe also in me.

Now, in the second verse of our text, we find that which is the secret of the life and the maintenance of the life and the hearts of God's people. It is always a mystery, always will be a mystery, and no more so than to the individuals themselves. The illustration is drawn before us here as a tree. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters. The word of God speaks of men and the people of God as being trees. We read elsewhere, trees planted by God's right hand, trees of righteousness.

So, we may look at the tree and discover some of the secrets as to why the tree grows and to how it's, and as to the manner in which its life is maintained under changing conditions.

[3 : 14] The people of God soon discover that they are not always the same every day. That they are the subject of changing conditions.

The varying times go over them. Sometimes they are cold and sometimes they are hot. Sometimes they are in the winter time and sometimes in the summer.

And so, the drawing attention to the children of God as a tree will immediately draw our attention to the various seasons which are annual in the life of the tree.

But then, we notice particularly where the tree is planted. Certain trees need to be planted in certain places.

In our ignorance, it may be that we would think that we could plant a tree anywhere. Well, God's planting is particular.

[4 : 43] And he will plant his trees in such a place that there will be water. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters.

Now, evidently, there is a spiritual significance regarding the waters. And the first point we would mention is this.

That the tree, that is, this man that trusts in the Lord, will be planted by the waters of life. If the tree is not planted by the waters of life, then that tree will soon die.

The psalmist reminds us, no man can keep alive his own soul. So, it's not just a question of planting a tree anywhere.

Some trees require to more meticulous planting than others. The weeping willow undoubtedly is planted near the waters.

[6 : 04] It is doubtful if it would flourish anywhere else. Can it not be said that where the grace of God is in the heart, the people of God may be likened unto these weeping willows.

Indeed, it is written, they shall come with weeping and with supplications when I lead them. An early evidence of being blessed with this situation of being planted by the waters is that we should draw up the waters.

We cannot weep if there's no life. We cannot ever see tears coming from a dead person or a dead thing.

Now, where the life of God is running by and the tree is planted in that place, then be assured that it will eventually be observed because of the weeping and the repentance which is felt in the soul.

Words very similar to this, to those of our text, are observed in the first psalm. Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful, but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

[7 : 55] And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water that wringeth forth his fruit in his season. His leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters. Since we have the word waters in the plural here, we may therefore feel it permissible to take several views of these waters.

We therefore observe in the next place that the planting of the tree by God, and it's God's planting, will be by the waters of love, as well as the waters of life.

Now it is love that draws trees together, so to speak, because they're all drawing from the same source. So our life is procured from the waters, equally our love is procured from the waters.

But then in the next place we may observe this, that these waters may indeed be regarded as the word of God itself.

[9 : 25] Have we found that to be so? The word of God? Have we felt nourished sometimes? our drooping spirit revived because of the waters of the word of God.

But there's one point that we must not overlook, and that is that the waters and the spirit are very much together in the scriptures.

What would life be without the eternal spirit? what will love be without the eternal spirit? What will the word of God be without the eternal spirit?

Hence, he shall be as a tree planted by the waters where the spirit of God is, sending forth life, sending forth love, sending forth a power in and through the word of God.

then we find the action of the tree. Now we should notice at this stage that the action of the tree is not above ground, but it is underground, and that spreadeth out her root by the river.

[10 : 49] roots are quite remarkable in their working through the ground naturally, because they will always push themselves to where water is, and the more the tree relies upon the water, the more it will push its roots down.

If my memory serves me rightly, I believe I read some time ago now, that the oak tree, each one, drinks up 200 gallons a day.

where does it get it from? Well, it gets it by going down and down and down.

So, may it not be said that the more fully grown we are by the grace of God, the more we shall need to drink the water of life, the more we shall need to drink the water of love, the more we shall need to feel the spirit inditing the word of God in our hearts that we might all the more be nourished and built up, and that spreadeth out her roots by the water, by the river.

This is natural to the tree. And we may well prove whether we are trees of righteousness or not, by that which is natural to us.

[12 : 42] Now, I'm not meaning that it is natural to our nature in which we are born, but it is natural to the spiritual man.

It is natural to this tree that God has planted, that the roots will go where the water is. the roots will go where the spirit is.

The roots will go where the life is. The roots will go where the love is. The roots will go where there is a blessing upon the word of God. The roots will go to that place.

And this may be an underworking unseen by men for a long time.

When we look in the winter season, we see the trees with very little indication of life on the outside, except of course the evergreens.

[13 : 51] But what's happening is, has it not been determined that during the winter season there is a pushing down of the roots?

There is a stabilizing of the strength of the tree. Now the trees of righteousness, the people of God, they grow. They grow.

maybe we've watched to see whether people grow. If there's no growth, then we may well put a question mark about life at all.

You may look at yourself sometimes and cannot see any growth at all. But at other times you will see it. And you will have to say, well, there is some growth.

I feel that there is some growth. Growth in respect to the rooting. That is an important part of growth. Do we feel that we are more established in the truth?

[15 : 01] Do we feel that we've got to hang on to Jesus Christ more than we ever did? Must we look to him more than we ever did? Must we depend upon him more than we ever did?

Then that's growth. Can we come to some conclusion then that we are growing after all? We've come nearer to the words of the hymn, thou, O Christ, art all I want and ever we have done in past.

This does not mean to say that our feelings in the past were wrong. God's love. If we are growing there will be more demands made on the waters which will require more to sustain us and therefore the roots will go out to this water of life and love and the word of God that we may feel that we are built up on our most holy faith, that we may feel that we're instructed, that we may feel that the life of God is truly running through our very being, that we may feel that we are leaning toward Jesus Christ, that we may feel the love to our maker, our God, our Father to be increasing.

Why? Because the fruit is going down into the water which God has supplied. You know the Garden of Eden was not without water, it was necessary, and the church of God is not without water.

We read of it in the Psalms, the streams which make glad the city of God, and these may be recognized in the waters here, the streams that make glad the city of God.

[17 : 12] There will be streams of mercy too. If we are a tree, do we find that our roots are spreading out?

Not only spreading to wards, but spreading out. That is, there will be an enlargement of the truth which is being received.

So, there was a spreading out with regard to the man that was born blind. at first he said, one thing I know, whereas I was blind, now I see.

But he was brought and planted where Christ was. And in one sense, though it may well take longer in many people's experiences, his roots spread out when the Lord said to him, dost thou believe on the Son of God?

There was an enlargement of truth in his soul, and the roots went out toward the waters, went out to the Word of God. Will this not be so in our own spiritual experience?

[18 : 45] There is a thirst for more. Are we trees of the right hand of God? Are we such that trust in the Lord and whose hope the Lord is?

Because our roots are thirsting for more life, they're thirsting for more love, they're thirsting for more understanding of the Word of God. They may endorse the many expressions which are used in the 119th Psalm.

Oh, how love I thy law, it is my meditation all the day. How thy testimonies are wonderful. Open thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law.

The psalmist's root was going out. This tree had roots that went out toward the waters, the waters of life. Hence we may observe it from another circumstance.

As the heart panted after the waterbrook, so panted my soul after thee, O God. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, mark you, planted by God, not haphazardly, planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river.

[20 : 11] we may venture to regard this planting as referring to churches of God.

Now you know, churches are planted. Though they are, it may appear sometimes that people come to a conclusion.

they say, I will join myself to this people, and so on, but God is over it, and in all the true churches there's a planting.

God plants his people by the river, in this place, in that place, and they begin to draw nourishment, and they begin to grow, and they begin to feel the love of God rising up in their hearts, and hence they say, this is my home, this is the place where I will dwell, this is the place where God has settled me, he's planted me in his house, and this is the place from which I shall receive nourishment.

There are waters here, there is a river here, that makes glad the city of God. The people, the trees that I see here, they are nourished, they are benefited, they are growing, they are united, they have one thirst, their roots are going to the same stream, their roots are going to the same place, the same source, the same river, the same waters.

[21 : 53] Hence, the trees will be planted together. So, we continue and shall not see when heat cometh.

You know, it is a wonderful blessing to feel the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. peace. There is a passage, it just eludes me where it is, which speaks to us of the clamour of the people and the words of men, and these are likened to the heat in the daytime.

In the world, there are many voices, and what pressure is sometimes put on, which may well assume a proportion agreeable to heat in a dry place, which means that there will soon be a fire ignited, there will soon be disturbance, there will soon be destruction.

And what do we read here? The man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is, will be the tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when he cometh.

Is it not wonderful to be absorbed, may I say, saturated, with the river, river and waters by, that we shall not see when he cometh, the noise of tongues, the strife of tongues, we shall be unaffected by them because our hearts are filled with love to Christ, and love for Christ, and not only so, love for the people of God.

[24 : 11] again, shall not see when heat cometh. Every one of these trees will at times, so to speak, erupt in the weakness of the old nature.

what a blessing to have this evidence that we are planted by the waters of love and life, the treasures of the word of God, so that when the old natures of our friends may seem to be so predominant, we may not see them.

The heat that comes from them, they may not be seen, they cannot be seen, because we see the love of Christ, we see the mercy of Christ, we are persuaded that in that tree there is life, we are persuaded that in that tree there is love, we are persuaded in that tree that there is that sap which will rise at the preaching of Jesus Christ, but for the moment, oh for the moment, there has crept in some evil thing.

So therefore, the tree will not see when heat cometh. Heat may be said to proceed from fire, and in the epistle of James we read of the tongue being an unruly member and being set on fire of hell.

alas, though we should know only too well sometimes of the heat which comes from the tongue, but these people, blessed at this time, because their waters, because their roots are by the waters and they are planted by the waters, you see there is water, water, oh there's water, to cool the heat, to extinguish the fire.

[26 : 36] However can this be accomplished? Heat, can we find it discovered in this verse in Ephesians, let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and evil speaking be put away from you and all with all malice, all such things that may produce heat.

But God's commendation is this, and be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, loving one another, forgiving one another, now we see that which proceeds from the waters.

And here is the secret, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you, forgiveness you know is a wonderful grace.

We're in a dangerous place when we're in an unforgiving spirit. because if Christ has forgiven us, if God has forgiven us through Christ, then can anybody harm us to such an extent that we shall say, well I can never forgive them.

One cannot help but feel that if this spirit prevails in the end, that the roots haven't reached to the waters, that the tree has not been planted by God.

[28 : 18] Every tree that comes to the end of its life here below, and will be established in heaven above, will have this evidence of the life of God in the soul, by being able to forgive people, even though they have done them ever so much harm.

I know this from personal experience, so I know it's true. so they shall not see when he cometh.

Why don't they see when he cometh? Because they see Christ in the person still. They were saying, this is not the person that's born again.

This is, there is some, something that has tried to damage this tree, but it will sprout again. Maybe the tree has to be cut down through the heat.

Now we read in the book of Job, there is hope of a tree if it be cut down, that it will revive again.

[29 : 41] Why? Because of the scent of water. the scent of water. This is the secret.

It may be that some would have to agree that though they feel that they are truly trees, yet by reason of their old nature the tree has become cankered in some respects and it's had to be cut down.

But it sprouted again. Oh it's sprouted again. Because of the scent of water. And the roots have gone out you see.

So there's been a revival. we speak of revivals but there can be no revival unless there are roots in the trees.

And there can be no revival even though there are roots in the trees if there isn't any water. Water of life, water of love, water of gracious truth displaying the waters of mercy.

[30 : 58] the waters of divine favor. But her leaf shall be green. Leaves in the word of God may often be likened to a gracious, a godly profession.

Now we need to be concerned about a godly profession. But what shall we understand by the leaf shall be green?

Well, when the leaf is green, it is an evidence of life. It is an evidence that the sap's risen. It is an evidence that there is power in the tree.

fruit bearing and furthermore, if the tree is to be fruit bearing, as all these trees will be, it is an evidence also that the time will come when fruit will appear.

But her leaf shall be green under all the bearing circumstances which come along. is it not a mystery that those trees that we describe as evergreen remain so throughout all the year?

[32 : 32] No doubt there is a secret which is well known to those close to the horticultural site, but they remain green.

and these trees will remain green. There will be the evidence of life, even in the most distressing circumstances.

Now, will you be ready to say, well, I don't think there is always the evidence of life? Has not one said, zeal extinguished to a spark?

Life is very, very low. All my evidence is dark, marks of grace I cannot show. That may be. But who is looking at the tree?

And who is looking at the greenness of the leaf? It is the husbandman. It is the Lord God himself. He can see where life is.

[33 : 39] Maybe he can see how green the leaf is, how green the profession is, when others perhaps can't see it. What does he see?

Well, maybe he sees the groaning of the prisoner and the leaf is green. Maybe he hears the size of his children and the leaf is green.

maybe like Ephraim in the first chapter of this prophecy. He looks down from heaven and he hears that which comes forth.

I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself thus. Thou hast chastised me and I was chastised. as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke, turn thou me and I shall be turned for thou art the Lord my God and the leaf is green.

Can others see it? They may not see it. There's secret religion between your soul and God but the Lord looks down and he sees the leaf is green.

[35 : 01] There's the evidence of life there. And then God looks a little further in this person's experience.

Surely after that I was turned I repented. Belief is green. A profession is still there. Life is still in the soul.

And after that I was instructed I smote upon my thigh. I was ashamed. Yea, even confounded because I did bear the reproach of my youth.

So God looks, so to speak, inside the tree. And because the tree is planted by God by the waters, and because the roots reach out and spread out, they are roots by the river, so we have a secret as to why the leaf remains green.

And God sees it. You see, our God and Savior, if that is true, in respect to our souls, looks down and he can see that which is what we might call root growth.

[36 : 30] And what we might call internal working, that which is not seen without. But her leaf is, shall be green. We might notice this expression, shall be green.

here is a prophecy. And the prophecy is concerning the trees, concerning the people of God, concerning those of whom it is said, blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord and whose hope the Lord is.

Hope will, the root of hope, you see, will reach down into the Lord himself. And the root of faith will stretch forth to the same place.

Have faith in God, hope thou in God, have we not these expressions in the scripture? And the root may also be love in the soul to Jesus Christ, which will reach down to where the waters of life and love are, and the truth, and mercy, and shall not be careful in the year of drought.

A year or two ago, we had severe droughts, and there were many trees that died, but not all died.

[38 : 11] and we may come to this point. They did not die because God had planted them by the waters, and their roots had spread out by the river, the river of the water of life.

here we see God's determination, God's watchfulness, if we should come, and God knows what will come on the earth from the beginning to the end.

If we should come into a period of soul drought, remember that God has assured that every one of his own trees are planted by the waters.

They do not depend absolutely upon the rain that comes down from heaven, but they do depend upon the water that is in the earth itself.

Therefore, we may look at two aspects of truth itself. in the drought, there is a feeding the tree, a maintaining the life of the tree, because the roots will spread out to the bottoms of the mountains.

[39 : 51] It's to be that they may discover there those tremendous truths which will carry them right through.

We refer this morning to the election of the father. But we may now mention the redemption that God has effected through his son Jesus Christ.

Christ. We may reflect upon the work of the Spirit of God, how that work is not hindered by anything.

The fruit will spread themselves out in a time of drought to that which is not seen by the ordinary person. But all those trees that have roots, they will know that they are getting down to rock bottom.

They are getting down to that truth which is contained in the eternal God. They are getting down to the truth which refers to his faithfulness.

[41 : 04] They are getting down to the truth of his eternal generation. They are getting down to that truth, I am the Lord, I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.

Getting down to the truth that their life is hid with Christ in God, beyond the reach of harm, beyond the reach of all drought, beyond the reach of all things that might destroy many a tree which God has not planted.

planted, but everyone that God has planted will assuredly be planted by the waters, and there will be the spreading out of the roots by the river, and shall not be careful in the year of drought.

The margin has a word for drought, restraint. Now, you know, some people have suggested, maybe more than suggested, that when the drought comes, it is the judgment of God.

Well, let us look at it as the judgment of God in this way that we're instructed. in the drought which took place a year or two since, the people were instructed by the restraint in their usage of water.

[42 : 52] They were instructed not to be wasteful. So, they shall not be careful in the year of drought, drought.

Even though they have no need to be careful because of the supply of the source, yet, the Lord will instruct them, these trees of righteousness, in a restraining way, that God is not to be played with, but that everything must be regarded and used properly.

So, drought may sometimes come not to impair life or destroy life, but to show us the need of receiving God's gifts in a right way.

We shall not be careful in the year of drought, not for the soul's life. The tree will not die, but nevertheless, it may the drought may well serve to put a restraint to cause us to think.

And lastly, neither shall cease from yielding fruit. Trees do not bear fruit all the year of ground.

[44 : 31] How many of the saints of God have been dismayed and greatly troubled and deeply concerned because they cannot see the fruit.

Be assured that the husbandman will look after his tree and he will deal with it in order that it may bring forth fruit.

The Lord Jesus speaks to us in the 15th of John, every branch in me that beareth not fruit, he taketh away. And every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.

Now we are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in me and I in you, as the branch cannot bear fruit of itself except it abide in the vine, no more can ye except ye abide me.

This being so, there must be a continuance of a fruitful yield. The trees here referred to, the man that trusts in the Lord, whose hope the Lord is, will have to acknowledge that the fruit is the result of God's work.

[46 : 17] What kind of fruit is to be brought forth from these trees of righteousness? They must surely be the fruit of the Spirit which are detailed to us in the Galatians, but the fruit of the Spirit is love.

joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance.

Blessed fruit, this is, all conspiring to praise God. Neither shall cease from yielding fruit, fruit.

Sometimes your feelings may be such that the fruit of love, of joy, of peace, and so on, you feel that you've seen the last of it.

Perhaps you may say, my winter has been long. I haven't seen fruit or felt any fruit, not even the buddings fall for a long time. let God be true, and every man a liar.

[47 : 43] God will bring forth his fruit in his season, and will certainly be faithful to his word, neither shall cease from yielding fruit.

God brings about the conditions. We see it in nature that God does not work by the days of the calendar.

We have a cold period now. The blossoms are late. Everything, all growth is late. But what will God do?

He will surely bring about the harvest in due time. We are bound to see the harvest because God has said, as long as the earth remaineth, there shall be seed time and harvest.

So, if we should come to a conclusion, well, now I ought to be bearing fruit, but the cold winds and the heavy rains and the disturbing influences seem to have held back the burning forth.

[48 : 57] Make no mistake, God will prove what is here written, neither shall cease from yelling fruit. And as the warmth of the sun comes, as the love of God is felt in your soul, as the sun begins to rise and the days get longer and the nights get shorter, so you will feel the beginnings of the fruit in the blossom and the gradual development of the fruit.

fruit in the world. It will be joy, peace, unbelieving, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance.

Now, the things are certain. In Daniel we read, the thing was certain, but the time was long.

time will not prevent the certain thing coming to pass, even though it is long.

And therefore, this will be so in respect to all these points as they relate to the man that is blessed. And because he is blessed, he trusts in the Lord.

[50 : 23] And because he is blessed, his hope, the Lord is. And this is the man, for he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaves shall be green.