

*“Be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord...” - 1 Cor 15:58*

# NORTHSIDE EXHORTER

*A Teaching Bulletin to Inform & Edify God's Family at Northside*

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## **“Just Like A Tree”**

*Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; but his delight is in the law of the Lord, & on his law, he meditates day & night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, & its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers. The wicked are not so, but are like chaff that the wind drives away. Therefore, the wicked will not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous; for the Lord knows the way of the righteous, but the way of the wicked will perish.*

*- Psalm 1:1-6*

### **A Tree Grows Upward (Ephesians 4:15-16)**

A fruit tree is not very useful until it grows upward. Its output of fruit is small. Care & nourishment are needed to accelerate its growth. Like a tree, we need to grow upward towards spiritual maturity, by keeping in step with the Spirit, which produces the fruit of the Spirit (*Galatians 5:16-26*). Prayer, Bible Study, & doing God's work will advance our growth.

### **A Tree Grows Downward (Ephesians 3:14-19)**

Some trees grow as far below the ground surface as they do above it. Storms & winds may bend these trees almost to the ground, but they are unable to uproot & destroy them. Like a tree, we need to grow downward also. When we experience our dark night of the storm, which include winds of testing & trial, suffering & sorrow, we must “keep the faith” (*1 Peter 5:9-10*). We must be “rooted & grounded in love” & “steadfast in the faith”.

### **A Tree Grows Inward (2 Peter 3:14-18)**

The inward growth of trees determines their worth as far as paper products & building materials are concerned. The trees that are inwardly sound & free of decay are the most useful & valuable. Like a tree, we need inward growth also. We should grow in grace, understanding, honesty, sincerity, & love. Our inward growth determines our usefulness. Being faithful, trustworthy, & totally committed to God will increase our growth.

### **A Tree Grows Outward (Psalms 92:12-15)**

The outward growth of trees brings to view their beauty & productivity. Like a tree, we should grow outward as well. We should reach out to help the less fortunate, show kindness & understanding, & outreach to the lost (*John 15:1-11*). Faith, hope, & love will cause our growth to continue & increase.

*- Antoine N. Holloway*