

## E-DEVOTION FOR TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22

In Colossians 2:7, we read... *"Keep your roots deep in him, build your lives on him, and become stronger in your faith, as you were taught. And be filled with thanksgiving."*

Having lived in Northern Minnesota for many years we always love to take a fall drive to see the leaves turn color. Our granddaughter sent us a picture this last weekend of the beautiful trees on the road to their home. It makes us a bit homesick for the beautiful fall 'up north.' But then... we know very well what comes next! Brrrrrr...

When we purchased our home here in Green Valley one of the selling points for us was a large pine tree on the golf course right in our backyard. It's a huge tree. So many mornings while we are having our coffee, we speak of how much that 'touch of Minnesota' comforts us.

That tree is so big that it must have a great root system. The saying goes... "The larger the tree, the more rooted it is." To grow strong, roots are very important. I also love the saying from J.R.R. Tolkien... *"Deep roots are not reached by the frost."* In other words, if our roots are deep the difficulties that come our way may be a little bit better to bear.

Being rooted in Christ... growing stronger each and every day is an essential part of our living as Christians. Even at this age, there is so much room for growth, isn't there? But just having good roots isn't everything. We need to keep ourselves fed and watered. Scripture, prayer, study... those are good ways to feed our souls. And then, we think about what we produce! The fruits of the spirit, of course. In our world today we are the ones who can spread our branches and produce good fruit. This is a time for us to show love, mercy, compassion, empathy, kindness, sensitivity... all those things that one who has strong roots can spread.

Think about how deep your roots really are. Just from a little seedling, watered in our baptism, fed through years of Sunday School and Bible School. Nourished by teachers and pastors, parents and family, friends, and neighbors. And now a grown tree... kind of like that pine tree in our backyard. It gives us afternoon shade, it reminds us of where we came from, it gives home to birds who build their nests. And it continues to lift branches to the sky.

*"Rooted in faith" ... we grow and share our lives, our stories, and our faith.*

Keep washing your hands, fold your hands, bow your head. We're not out of the 'woods' yet! And give thanks for roots, deep and strong that carry us through all time.

Pray with me: "Dear Lord, we thank you for the gift of faith. The gift born in us and nourished with love. Give us strength to share the fruits of your love with all people. Keep us strong, protect us and help us be the shade to those who need our healing presence. Amen. In Jesus's Name, Amen.

Pastor Ken Nyhusmoen