Dear Open Door Family,

As we come to the end of another year it is always important to stop and reflect on what God has done in us and through. I try to take time to think about the things that have happened. I like to reflect on the lessons learned through the hard and challenging things God has brought into my life. This is also a time when I am overwhelmed with deep thankfulness to God for the amazing privilege I have of serving Him. This year as I thought about these things I also realized, perhaps for the first time, in a meaningful way that I probably have fewer years in front of me than I do behind me. So as I was reading this Psalm the Lord challenged my heart.

Psalm 92:12-15 *(HCS) The righteous thrive like a palm tree and grow like a cedar tree in Lebanon. [13] Planted in the house of the LORD, they THRIVE in the courts of our God. [14] THEY WILL STILL BEAR FRUIT IN OLD AGE, healthy and green, [15] to declare: "The LORD is just; He is my rock, and there is no unrighteousness in Him."*

Here are several thoughts on these verses. The godly will flourish and thrive like WELL ESTABLISHED trees. Like Palm trees which can be blown by the wind and bend almost parallel to the ground yet they keep spring back and keep on growing. Or like cedars which were known in ancient Israel for their immense size. So how are the righteous like Trees? No matter what storm comes their way they are NOT shaken or uprooted; they keep on growing. WHY? Perhaps because of WHERE they are planted. They are planted in the house of God. They THRIVE in the courts of the Temple. This is poetic imagery as the Psalm tells us that the Righteous who are like trees are rooted and grounded in God and God alone. That is why they are growing and why they are unshakeable. The end result for the godly who have made God's presence their continual pursuit is that they will *BEAR FRUIT IN OLD AGE.* Part of that fruit is to declare WHO God IS and what He is LIKE. He is Just and Fair and He is the Solid ground on which I can stand when everything else around me is shaking and falling apart.

PRAYER: Lord God, please help me to sink my roots down deeply into You and Your WORD. May I seek to live each moment with an awareness of Your presence in my life. Please Lord Jesus, keep me rooted and grounded IN You and FRUITFUL for You.

Pastor Mark Kieft
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