

THE TREE OF TENERE

"They must keep hold of the deep truths of the faith with a clear conscience."
1 Timothy 3:9 (NIV).

Some years are very dry in the Shenandoah Valley, while others are blessed with abundant moisture. And although dry weather here hurts our crops and gardens, it doesn't begin to approach the sweltering conditions found in the Sahara Desert of Africa. This massive landform continues to expand, bringing barrenness and poverty to thousands of people.

Surprisingly, out there in the middle of the Sahara Desert, in northeastern Niger, stands a metal sculpture that resembles a tree. What is the purpose of such an unusual symbol in the middle of this dry and barren nowhere?

The reason is found in history. During most of the twentieth century, a single living acacia tree, known as the Tree of Tenere, stood there. It was the last survivor of a group of trees that once grew in that area before the desert became so harsh. This tree had stood alone for decades and was once considered the most isolated tree on the entire planet. The next closest tree was over 120 miles away. It became a landmark on caravan routes and later even a tourist attraction until it was destroyed, not by the desert heat, but by a drunk driver in 1973.

But what enabled this tree to survive when all the rest had died off? What allowed it to bloom and flourish even in the midst of some of the most unlivable conditions on the planet? That answer is a deep one. In the late 1930s, a well was dug near the tree, and it was discovered that the roots of the Tree of Tenere had grown down and reached the water table over 100 feet beneath the surface. Its roots had sought out precious life-giving water over 10 stories below the sand.

Like that tree, all of us go through difficult and dry spells in life as well. Even Christians sometimes struggle in these ways. The secret to survive and even to thrive in these desert-like conditions is to tap our roots into the Water of Life, the Lord Jesus Christ. We must keep our souls nourished and refreshed by His Spirit, or we will dry up and wither away under the scorching heat of life. A shallow superficial association won't cut it. It must be a deep, abiding relationship that is developed through constant prayer, regular worship, and time spent in His Precious Holy Word.

Dryness comes to all of us. Let's be like the Tree of Tenere and sink our roots into the Eternal Water Source that we might continue to grow and flourish.

George Bowers – CBC Executive Board

Weekly Prayer Point

What a glorious time we had together at the worship conference in Greensboro, North Carolina. How pleasant and sweet it was to dwell together in unity for those three days. I am grateful for all who worked diligently to make this event happen. It truly was a taste of the divine!

Permit me to use this format to encourage you to pray for your sister church, and if you have not yet claimed your 'prayer partner', I would like to encourage you to do so. What a privilege it is to pray for one another. I can think of no better way to see God work His Unity than through this chosen method. I promise you will be blessed! My prayers this month will be those prayed by Paul for the Body of Christ that he dearly loved. I pray these prayers will give us insight to pray for one another and that our prayers would be pleasing to our Father! Please email me to receive the information needed to begin praying for a 'Sister to Sister' church and developing a relationship with a church body you may never see here on this earth, but will enjoy for eternity. My email address: hsuzanneclarke@yahoo.com

"Now all Glory to God, who is able to keep you from falling away and will bring you with great joy into His Glorious Presence without a single fault. All glory to Him who alone is God, our Savior through Jesus Christ our Lord. All glory, majesty, power, and authority are His before all time, and in the present, and beyond all time." Jude 1:24-25 (NLT)

Amen.

Please pray for these congregations and pastors:

- Castaner Congregation in Castaner, Puerto Rico and Pastor Jaime Diaz
- Center Congregation in Champion, PA and Pastor Homer Painter

CBC Prayer Committee