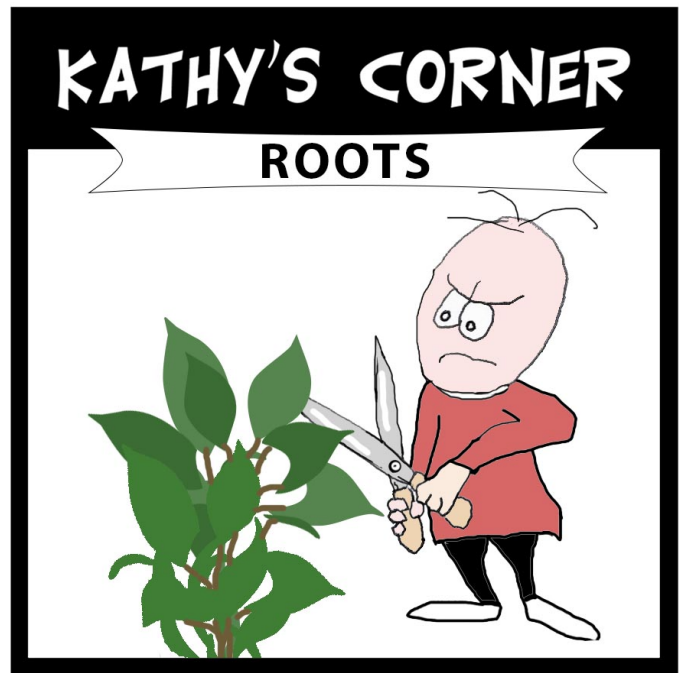


Roots

As I look out my window this morning, I see a small walnut tree growing. It appears to be healthy with lots of green foliage in spite of the many times I have cut it down to the ground since it is much too close to the house. The life is obviously still in its root system. This started me thinking about how many times the enemy comes to cut down certain ones of us who belong to the Lord Jesus—but if the root system is sound in Him, the life is still there.

When King Nebuchadnezzar had a dream which troubled him, he called for Daniel to interpret it. The whole story is in Daniel chapter 4, talking about Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom being like a fruitful tree, but unfortunately, the King arrogantly took credit rather than acknowledging God. Here is Daniel's interpretation of the king's disturbing dream (Verses 23-27 from the passage in the Christian Standard Bible):



“The king saw a watcher, a holy one, coming down from heaven and saying, ‘Cut down the tree and destroy it, but **leave the stump with its roots in the ground and with a band of iron and bronze around it in the tender grass of the field. Let him be drenched with dew from the sky and share food with the wild animals for seven periods of time.’ This is the interpretation, Your Majesty, and this is the decree of the Most High that has been issued against my lord the king: You will be driven away from people to live with the wild animals. You will feed on grass like cattle and be drenched with dew from the sky for seven periods of time, until you acknowledge that the Most High is ruler over human kingdoms, and he gives them to anyone he wants. **As for the command to leave the tree’s stump with its roots, your kingdom will be restored to you as soon as you acknowledge that Heaven rules.** Therefore, may my advice seem good to you my king. Separate yourself from your sins by doing what is right, and from your injustices by showing mercy to the needy. Perhaps there will be an extension of your prosperity.”**

Paul gave instruction to the Gentiles concerning Israel's temporary rejection:

Now if some of the branches were broken off, and you, though a wild olive branch, were grafted in among them and have come to share in the rich root of the cultivated olive tree, do not boast that you are better than those branches. But if you do boast—you do **not sustain the root, but the root sustains you.** (Romans 11:17-18 CSB)

In our prayer meeting Sunday, Sandra prayed for our church's growth. Growth is dependent upon the root. There will never be fruit if there is no root, and the kind of fruit is also dependent on its root. Paul said, **“So then, just as you have received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to walk in him, **being rooted and built up in him** and established in the faith, just as you were taught, and overflowing with gratitude.”** (Colossians 2:6-7 CSB) Paul mentioned being “rooted and firmly established in love,” in Ephesians 3:17.

The importance of the root is undeniable. There are many places in the Bible that talk about bad or evil roots—roots which the Lord cuts off completely. I don't believe any of us at NUMA have to worry about this, so I focus on the good roots, though there is a warning to heed if you are not joined to Jesus. I remember the author of Hebrews, after delivering a harsh warning to his audience against falling away, was confident that the Lord had better things for them, and I believe we at NUMA will continue to cling to our root, hopefully in unity, and produce fruit for our Lord.

No one can be made secure by wickedness, but the root of the righteous is immovable.
(Proverbs 12:3 CSB)

The wicked desire what evil people have caught, but the root of the righteous is productive.
(Proverbs 12:12 CSB)

I love this:

The person who trusts in the Lord,
whose confidence indeed is the Lord, is blessed.
He will be like a tree planted by water:
it sends its roots out toward a stream,
it doesn't fear when heat comes,
and its foliage remains green.
It will not worry in a year of drought
or cease producing fruit. *(Jeremiah 17:7-8 CSB)*

Later, you all! Gotta find my loppers! 😊