

THE PRAYER TREE

Dear Friend:

Just a few minutes ago I climbed down from my prayer tree. No, I don't mean my pear tree and I did say "I climbed down". I may be old, but I can still climb a tree – just not as high as I used to!

You see, for the past 33 years, 6 – 8 times a year, I go to a certain place of peace and quiet and do some focused Bible reading, praying, and planning. The favorite part of my day is when I go to the prayer tree. God does some very clear talking to me there. I climb about 8 ft, in my younger days it was 10-12 ft. The view over the fields is long and clear. After spending some time praying, the view spiritually is long and clear too. God has directed me in making some pretty big decisions while in the prayer tree. Many are too personal to share, but I will say this: these decisions have been about family, friends, and Franklin Church. They have also been about whether to do a mission trip or not, what sermons to preach, what staff we should hire, should we launch a Stewardship Campaign, whether or not to take additional education, even whether or not to buy a car. Remember, every spending decision is a spiritual decision.

Prior to climbing the prayer tree, I always read a couple chapters of the Bible. Today (June 2nd), I was particularly blessed. I read from John, then I intended to read the whole chapter of Proverbs 2. I never got past verse 5! It grabbed me so much I read and read and read. Funny isn't it how the Bible works! Yesterday or tomorrow if I read Proverbs 2, it may have very little impact. But today...God shouted loud and clear, "Pray this while you're in the prayer tree." By the way, I also have a place I call my prayer room, a place I go to 3 – 4 times a year when it is too cold to be outside. This is a Catholic retreat center on the east side. Bless them, they do not even charge me for the room (9 AM – 3 PM), but I give them a small donation. It is a nice place, but I value my prayer tree a little more.

What about you, do you have a prayer tree? It does not literally have to be a tree, but do you have a place you regularly go to and get some serious alone time with God? Jesus said, "Go into your closet where no one sees you and pray to God." I will pray that you find your own prayer tree (or room, or outdoor space, or closet, etc).

In Christ's Love,

Pastor Mike

Prayer: Pastor Al Carter, Clarabell Harlan, and Bonnie Boone