

## **Global Watering**

*“And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatever he does shall prosper.”*

*Psalm 1:3*

*We've seen some warm days recently, and with warm weather come thirsty plants. Unfortunately my track record as a plant guardian hasn't been very good. I tend to lose sight of the fact that a plant needs consistent care to flourish, not just occasional watering when the soil becomes parched and the leaves drop. Plants generally don't thrive under such sporadic care, and mine have too often languished until relegated to their final destination: the garbage can.*

*Such was pretty much my modus operandi until recently. Admittedly I'm a big fan of gadgets and nifty solutions, so I bought a plant-watering device called Plant Nanny. A hollow glass globe delivers water as needed through a cone-shaped clay stake embedded in the soil of a potted plant. The unit looks something like an ice cream cone, and it hydrates a plant's roots by drawing water from inside the globe to the soil through the clay cone. Periodically I need to check the water level; when the globe is empty, I refill it and place it back in its clay cone holder. Currently I have about 9 of these “life support” systems connected to numerous plants both inside and outside the house.*

*The results have been remarkable, in my view. The once-deprived plants are thriving now, though I only spend a few minutes per week maintaining them. But with such positive reinforcement, I'm continually motivated to check the water level in every globe, thus observing how each plant differs in its need for hydration. I frequently add water in the globes that empty rapidly, but less often in the globes of smaller, slower growing plants. Yet each gets what it needs, for when an empty globe seems like a cry for water I'm much less apt to ignore it.*

*This new system has been a clever solution, but it's also revealing. For instance, the plants that flourish the most in turn drink greater volumes of water. Plants need water, but guess what? So do we. Yet man not only needs physical water but also the spiritual water of God's Word. Those who take in God's Word by soaking it up are compared to healthy trees planted by streams in Psalm 1:1-3. Furthermore, knowing and doing God's Word strengthens us to withstand life's trials. So when the storms of life come, our deep spiritual roots hold us upright like that strong tree that won't blow over in the wind. This tree survives bad weather as well as good; so do those sustained by God's Word, even thriving in spite of changing times.*

*But a strong tree doesn't just spring up overnight. Similarly, I'm reminded of the magnificent, sprawling Sago palm tree planted outside my mother-in-law's house. What began over 30 years ago as a small potted plant has in time mushroomed into an enormous living specimen. Its massive trunk is dense and supports many branches that seem ready to reach out and grab you at any moment. It's so sturdy, and the roots stretch so deep that I wonder if little short of dynamite could uproot that Sago without difficulty. Looking at it now, it's hard to envision that the beginnings of such a tree were ever humble. But more, it beautifully illustrates the results of diligent care over time. My mother-in-law nurtured the little tree to receive just the right light, exposure, water and soil so that many years later the fruits of her labor are manifest today in that glorious, healthy tree. Spiritually speaking, I want to grow strong and thrive like that Sago Palm.*

*Wanting spiritual strength is a start, but desire alone isn't enough. Divine vigor isn't accessible to us through our own means and strength, only God's. Yet He supplies in abundance all necessary spiritual nourishment; His divine power gives us everything for life and godliness through knowing Him (2 Peter 1:3). God never fails in His provision, so we must choose whether or not to receive it. If I fail to live without the consistent intake of God's Word, my growth in grace and knowledge of Him will invariably be stunted. Though I may want spiritual abundance, I can no more expect it without God's Word than I can expect my plants to thrive without sun and water.*

*So spiritual maturity comes by hearing and doing God's Word diligently over time. In the Scriptures we find the knowledge of God, the object of our faith by which we walk, and without which it's impossible to please Him (Hebrews 11:6). Then God's implanted Word grows us to maturity like a nurtured seed that grows into a healthy, thriving plant (James 1:21, Matthew 13:8).*

*Though diligence is necessary, it isn't a heavy burden. Describing His place of rest Jesus said, “My yoke is easy, and my burden is light” (Matthew 11:28-30). His food for the soul is sweet, as the Psalmist wrote, “How sweet are Your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth” (Psalm 119:103). Likewise Jeremiah “ate” God's Word with heartfelt joy and delight (Jeremiah 15:16).*

*So thirsty plants need water lest they wither and die. Yet every soul that thirsts for righteousness and drinks of His everlasting wellspring is eternally quenched, and thus will never perish.*

**By Mary Nixon**