

# **Hurricane Softened Soil & Hearts**



## **We Interrupt These Blog Posts to Bring You A Hurricane**

Stupid hurricane. It blew in and wrecked my plans. For thousands, it wrecked a lot more.

My heart breaks over the news of those who've lost so much in Hurricane Irma (September 2017) [and how Hurricane Florence, September 2018] – especially those who lost their lives.

I'm thankful to report, we weathered Irma well. We only lost our power for a few hours. (Long enough to remind me how much I depend on it.)

We almost lost a tree, too. After Irma, our Chinese Elm leaned at a 45° angle. This is good, though. It had been growing at an 85° angle since the beginning.

I kept meaning to straighten it out and stake it while it was

small, but one thing led to another. By the time I got around to it, the tree was rooted into the hard clay soil and unwilling to budge an inch.

I thought about forcing it but was afraid of damaging the tree – maybe even breaking it – so I left it. But now we've got to fix it. Tree roots can't survive above-ground.

Fortunately, we can pull it up with ease because it's now loose in the Irma-softened soil, and we own a Jeep.



## Softened Soil & Hearts

When I told my friend Debbie about our poor tree, she pointed out how much our Chinese Elm is a picture of the work God does in our hearts.



**Unless God softens the soil of our hearts, no outward pushing or pulling will move it without damage.**

I'm guilty of hurting a few people with my well-meaning attempts to force their hearts to move in a direction I felt was best.

I've tried to help God rather than wait for Him to do the work only He can do.

*Why do I keep forgetting I'm not God?*

## **God's Perfect Work**

God's work in our hearts is perfect. Only He knows best what we need.

**Sometimes God sends a long, gentle rain to soften a heart.**

*He'll speak to us through His Word or and open our eyes to a truth we'd missed or misunderstood. Painless.*

**Other times, He sends a rainstorm that breaks up the soil of our hearts in ways we wouldn't have chosen.**

*Painful, but effective.*

**And then, when necessary, God sends an all-out hurricane to flood and blow against our hearts until they become putty in His hands.**

*PAINFUL, but perfect.*

God's Work in our hearts isn't always fun. It helps to remember:

*God never allows storms in our lives to blow beyond what is absolutely necessary to cause our roots to grow deep into His marvelous love.*

## **New Life – New Look**

If my Chinese Elm continued to grow at an angle the roots couldn't support, a strong storm would've eventually flattened it.

With the soil now properly softened, we can give our tree new life that's able to weather whatever comes.

We can give it a new look, too. A strong look, rather than looking like it'll fall over if the wind sneezes.

As painful as they are, I'm thankful for the storms God has sent or allowed into my heart. He's used each one to mold me more into the likeness of Jesus. I rarely cheer in the midst of the turmoil, but I grimace less when I remember God's wisdom is infinite, and His goodness is perfect. I can trust Him.

I may never look just like Jesus with all the twists and turns in my trunk, but that's ok. My roots are growing down into the soil of His marvelous love, and I'm filled with new life. And hopefully a new look. A look that smiles more than it grumbles or whines.

My goal is before I'm old and gray people who know me will see what Jesus is truly like. My children didn't see Jesus in me enough, but perhaps my grandbabies will. (Life is a marathon, not a sprint.)

## **I'm Sorry**

To those of you that I've hurt by my pushing and pulling, **"Forgive me."** I hope you know it was only because I love you – or because I was temporarily an idiot.

And to those of you who've been hurt by other Christians who tried to force your heart to believe in Jesus or look like Jesus – on their behalf, I say, **"I'm so sorry."**

And to those who are facing a Heart Hurricane, I say, **“Embrace it.”**

Hang on, but embrace it. Let God have His way with your heart.

Let Him soften and move your heart to where it needs to be before life flattens you. Or even breaks you.

## **An Encouraging Word From the Word**

I now leave you with encouragement from Ephesians 3:16-20:

*I pray that from his glorious, unlimited resources he will empower you with inner strength through his Spirit.*

***Then Christ will make his home in your hearts as you trust in him. Your roots will grow down into God’s love and keep you strong.***

*And may you have the power to understand, as all God’s people should, how wide, how long, how high, and how deep his love is.*

*May you experience the love of Christ, though it is too great to understand fully. Then you will be made complete with all the fullness of life and power that comes from God.*

***Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think.***

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*If you want to help victims of Hurricane Irma or Hurricane Harvey, [Samaritan’s Purse](#) is a great organizations. They provide help to many and are supported by donations.*

[Softened Soil & Hearts -- #GodsWorkInUs in the hurricanes of life Click To Tweet](#)