**Sunday 26th July**

Colossians 2: 6, 7

So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness.

Quite a number of ago now I worked at Kew Gardens as a botanist. Even though it was before my time at Kew, the hurricane of 1987 was still much talked about. In that one night 700 trees were lost – some of them very rare and precious. The trees that fell were those that had weaker root systems, or where the growth above ground was not able to be sustained by the growth beneath the ground.

As Christians it is so important that we are deeply rooted in Jesus. Perhaps you can remember back to that wonderful time when you first encountered Him and you received his grace and forgiveness, and began a new life with Him! It is great to remember our beginnings! But it is also vital that we continue in Christ. What are you doing to grow your friendship with Jesus? How are you investing in deep roots? Perhaps you have lost some of your initial enthusiasm, but God has so much more for you to grow into! Don’t give up pursuing Him wholeheartedly! If we are to sustain growth, if we are to be able to weather the inevitable storms, we will need to be deeply rooted. Those stormy times can be such opportunities for us to grow in faith as we dig deep into Him, even when we don’t understand.

*Lord Jesus, thank you for all that you have done for me! I am overflowing with thankfulness when I recognise that I was dead, but now I am alive in you, that I was a slave, but you bought my freedom. Lord, there is nothing that I can do to save myself – I depend on you. Thank you that you were willing to go to the cross for me. Help me to never stop praising you! In this season, help me to become more deeply rooted in you and to grow in faith and love. Amen*

