

## Robin's Recommended Book of the Month:

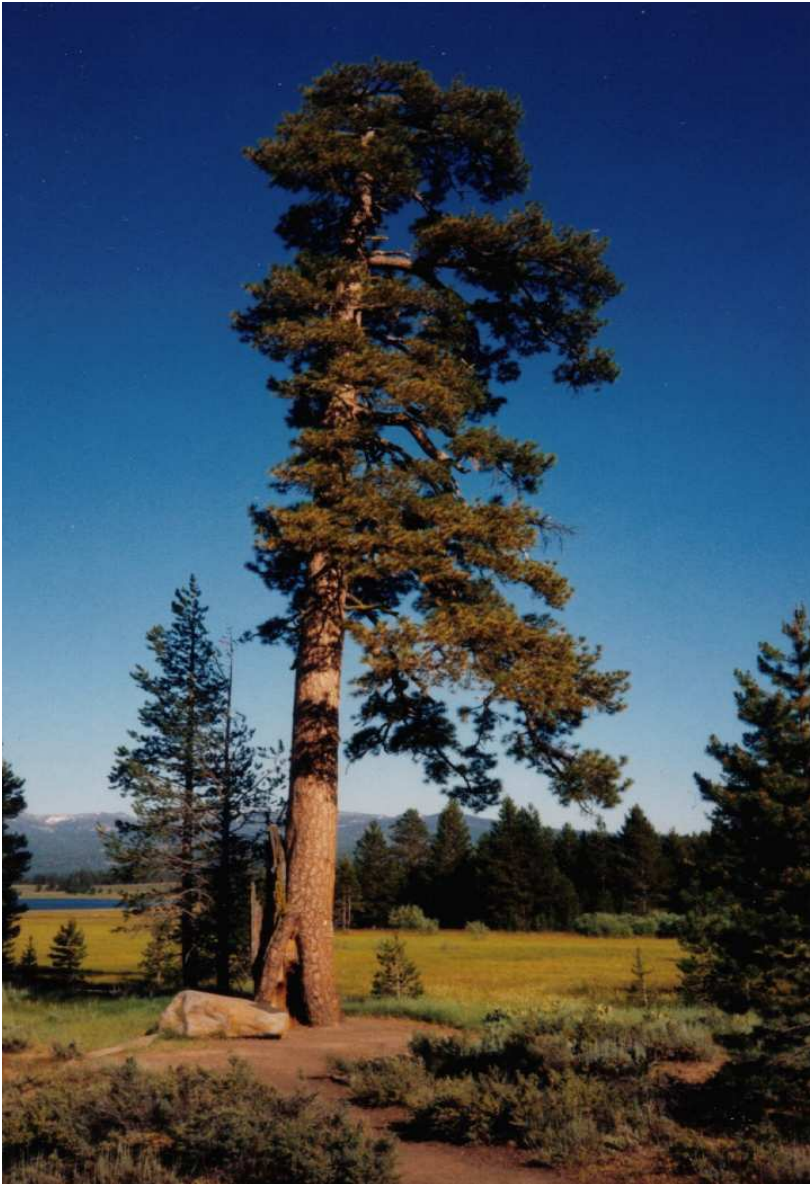
### Set Apart for God by John Mulinde

Last week I put in a picture of a pine tree located near Donner Pass which separates Nevada from California.

In 1946 a wagon party which had originated in Springfield, Illinois became trapped on the east side of this treacherous mountain pass and was unable to cross over into California and safety in the verdant valleys of that area.

Most of the wagon party encamped at a lake just below the summit, some in abandoned cabins, some tearing apart their wagons and propping them against rocks or trees so as to form an ever so small pocket of refuge against the blinding and unending snow. Some 5 miles west of the lake, one couple, Jacob and Elizabeth Donner found it necessary to be left behind by the group that eventually made it to the lake. Jacob and Elizabeth tore down their wagon and leaned it against the tree you looked at last week. He had cut his hand while trying to repair his wagon. All through that long winter of 1864-65, they lived under their wagon pitched against this tree, Elizabeth cooking what meager meals were to be had for herself and Jacob in the hollow of that tree.

If you look at the picture, you'll find the tree has a noticeably blackened area at the bottom of it. This was Elizabeth's "oven."



When rescuers finally found the emigrants in March of 1865, the last ones discovered were Jacob and Elizabeth.

Jacob lay dying from the infection, and Elizabeth refused to leave her husband. The rescue party left and the Donners were never heard from or seen again.

I look at this tree – and I think. I think of the shelter it provided for two doomed people. I think of it yielding to the fire Elizabeth would keep

going so as to provide some heat, if inadequate, and cooking some meager meal for two people who would never live to see their greatly desirable destination, the magic of California in 1865.

I look at that tree.....and I think of another tree. There is another tree that doomed people can come to. It is a tree in the form of a cross.

It is a tree, upon which a Man willingly gave up His life for his friends. It is the tree of Calvary. It is the tree of Life. This is the tree I run to.

This is my tree.

I have torn down the wagon of my own doing. I have torn down the wagon of my own strength, my own intelligence, my own pride, my own anything. I have torn it all down, and I have made the decision to cling to the tree of Calvary.

Actually, I cling to the One who died on that tree. I cling to Jesus.

He died so that I could live. He died so that you could live. He became my ugliness and sin, so that I could become His beauty and righteousness. He was broken so I could be healed. He became weak so that I could become strong in Him.

I love trees – especially trees that stand alone by themselves. Every time I see a tree standing alone, I think of the Lord – and I think of me – and I thank Him for dying for me so I could become His “Oak of righteousness, the planting of the Lord!”

