

## The Survivor Tree

The most-sacred symbol in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, is a tree: a sprawling, shade-bearing, 80-year-old American Elm. Tourists drive from miles around to see her. People pose for pictures beneath her. Arborists carefully protect her. She adorns posters and letterhead. Other trees grow larger, fuller—even greener. But not one is equally cherished. The city treasures the tree not because of her appearance, but her endurance.

She endured the Oklahoma City bombing.

Timothy McVeigh parked his death-laden truck only yards from her. His malice killed 168 people, wounded 850, destroyed the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building, and buried the tree in rubble. No one expected it to survive. No one, in fact, gave any thought to the dusty, branch-stripped tree.

But then she began to bud. The tree, like Oklahomans, survived.

Christians also survive life's tragedies because of the hope of Christ in each of us.