

Ephesians 3:14-19 (NIV)

14 For this reason I kneel before the Father, 15 from whom his whole family in heaven and on earth derives its name. 16 I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, 17 so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, 18 may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, 19 and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

“You’ll thank me when you’re older.” Ever find yourself uttering those words to your children? Parents want what’s best for their kids. Often times it’s hard for the kids to see how this is actually a good thing at the present. But when they are older and can look back, they can see the benefit and be thankful that mom and dad made them do it. What allows a child to finally comprehend the benefits? Maturity. That’s what Paul is praying for here.

Spiritual maturity comes from contact with the means of grace, the Gospel in Word and Sacrament. These are the glorious riches through which God has promised to come to us. These are the vehicles that the Holy Spirit has chosen to work through to not only create faith, but to strengthen and sustain faith. But why do we need to mature spiritually? What’s wrong with the attitude, “Jesus loves me this I know and this is all I want to know?”

Like a young child, an immature faith can’t comprehend God’s love. This love surpasses knowledge. This love is not logical at all. This love can only be understood by faith and only with the help of the Holy Spirit. Spiritual maturity comes from consistent and frequent contact with those means of grace. Paul uses the words rooted and established. This is not a fly by the night, once in a great while kind of relationship. This is something that is routine, fixed, a life-source type of relationship. Why? So we can grasp the enormity of God’s love.

I still find it amazing how much I don’t know about God’s love. Even as a professional student of the Bible, I learn something new every time I’m in contact with the Word. And the beauty of it is that I’ll never stop learning. I’ll never know it all! That’s how wide and long and high and deep God’s love is! The love of Christ the he demonstrated in his work as our Savior is beyond comprehension. But through the power of the Holy Spirit, I can grasp Christ’s love. Through the wisdom that only comes through God-given faith, I can be filled to the top with all the fullness of God. And you can too. Heed the Spirit’s invitation and get connected to the means of grace. Move beyond your spiritual milk and start to delve into the meat and potatoes of God’s love for you. It may seem hard now. You may not see results immediately. But trust me, you’ll thank God when you’re older!