

1 Corinthians 13:11-12 *“When I was a child, I spoke like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I gave up childish ways. For now we see in a mirror dimly but then face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known.”*

When I was in Junior High, my private school would offer 7th and 8th graders an opportunity to take a trip to Washington DC. There was a year of fundraising and planning and in the spring a group from the school would go. I was very excited to attend, not so much to see our nation’s capital but to have an adventure away from home and my parents.

I remember just bits and pieces of our trip. I remember seeing the wright brothers plane at the Smithsonian, I remember standing in line for hours to see the White House, I remember standing on the spot where Martin Luther King Jr. gave his famous speech on the national mall. We were there for ten days total and saw everything that city had to offer. In fact, two of our students laid a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. It was a great trip and opportunity.

It would not be until 2022 when I would go back again; over 30 years later. This time I went with Naomi. We were on a pastor’s respite in Virginia and took a day trip to Maryland. She had never been, and I was excited to go. This time at the capital was very different. A lot of life had happened to me in 30 years-I had new perspective and appreciation for the things that went over my head as a young middle school boy.

The World War Monuments, the Korean War memorial, the wall with the names of the Vietnam fallen soldiers, even the statue of Ulysses S. Grant outside of the Capital Building meant more to me this time around. I understood the sacrifice those who were memorialized gave and had a deep appreciation to them and to God himself for the country I live in. It was a very powerful and emotional trip.

When I was young, I honestly didn’t put as much into my faith as I was taught to and, honestly, just expected my parents to do the spiritual leading of my life. They told me when to go to church, what class to attend, what ministry we would be involved in and the like. I did not appreciate what the church was and my place in it. I didn’t appreciate fully the sacrifice of Jesus and the gift of the Holy Spirit in my life.

When I became an adult and life started to happen, I found my faith coming more and more alive-and necessary. The good, the bad, and the ugly of life tend to stretch and test your faith. I was forced to rely on God like I didn’t have to as a child. As much as I am grateful; that my folks raised me to fear the Lord, I had to get my own life to gain full life in my faith in Christ.

I think the challenge this week is to look at our spiritual walk with Jesus. Do we fully appreciate and understand what He has done for us? Do we understand what He wants to do through us? Are we spiritually positioned to fully understand and appreciate our God?

Let's consider our appreciation and understanding in our God and work to position our spirits to fully engage with Him on a personal level.

I love you and God loves you!

Pastor Eric Lundberg