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Baptized in the Name of the Father

14 When I think of all this, I fall to my knees and pray to the Father, 15 the Creator of everything in heaven and on earth. 16 I pray that from his glorious, unlimited resources he will empower you with inner strength through his Spirit. 17 Then Christ will make his home in your hearts as you trust in him. Your roots will grow down into God's love and keep you strong. 18 And may you have the power to understand, as all God's people should, how wide, how long, how high, and how deep his love is. 19 May you experience the love of Christ, though it is too great to understand fully. Then you will be made complete with all the fullness of life and power that comes from God. 20 Now all glory to God, who is able, through his mighty power at work within us, to accomplish infinitely more than we might ask or think. 21 Glory to him in the church and in Christ Jesus through all generations forever and ever! Amen.

Ephesians 3:14-21 (NLT)

Before reading the content below, look back over the verses you have read and try and pick out one thing, or one verse that caught your attention most. Even better - underline it or highlight it. What was it about this verse that stood out to you?

The first step to discipleship is to be introduced to your Heavenly Father. The further you walk this road of discipleship, the more you will discover that everything comes back to the supreme privilege of having a real relationship with the God of the Heavens that we get to call Father.

For this first lesson, the goal is to catch a glimpse of the enormous love that the Father has for you. Not a love deserved or earned, but given freely to those willing to trust in the Name of His Son, Jesus Christ.

HERE ARE SOME OF THE WONDERS OF HIS LOVE:

Firstly, the Father's love is EXPERIENCED THROUGH A RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS CHRIST. What that means is that Jesus makes his home in a heart of trust. In other words, the stronger your trust in Jesus and His Word, the more at home Jesus is in your life. He comes and 'makes his home in our hearts' through the presence of the Holy Spirit. This is the source of inner strength, the Holy Spirit who dwells in the home of our hearts through trust.

Secondly, the Father's love ROOTS us. Trusting God is like sinking roots into the soil of the Father's love. The power of a tree's roots are incredible. For example, they anchor a tree to give it strength and foundation. The deeper and stronger the roots, the taller and bigger the tree can grow. They nourish a tree as life giving sap is drawn up through the roots. Some trees weave their roots together with other trees' roots providing a community of strength for the trees around it. Additionally, roots bond the soil together to prevent erosion. The roots actually preserve that soil for future generations of soil. In the same way the Father's love anchors, nourishes, binds us together and preserves us.

Thirdly, the Father's love is our source of STRENGTH. Being rooted in the Father's love is the key to inner strength. It is consistent. It is unconditional. It is unending. Just like that tree, when we are rooted in the Father's love we are able to anchor ourselves in His unconditional love, draw from that love, build community in that love and share that love with others.

Fourthly, the Father's love is BEYOND UNDERSTANDING. We actually need supernatural help from God to grasp the supernatural extent of the Father's love. Paul describes the four dimensions of the Father's love: How wide - how inclusive. No one is excluded. No race, no religion, no gender, no background can exclude you from the Father's love.

How high - how thrilling. To know at an emotional level the wonder of being loved by God is exhilarating. I am loved. I am precious in the eyes of God. I am valuable.

How deep - how unending. Nothing I can do can separate me from the Father's love. The unending love of the Father is part of his glorious nature.

How long - how enduring. God's love never fails. It endures for all eternity.

Fifthly, the Father's love is to be EXPERIENCED. His love is not just known about academically but experienced emotionally. In fact Paul the apostle prayed for a revelation of the Father's love that would be so real that it would penetrate our hearts and fill us with joy.

