

When I was growing up, I loved it when my Dad, who worked as an instrumentation engineer and “hobbed” as an amateur “ham” radio operator, let me have some of his cast-off (inoperable) devices and components to play with¹. I would “make” something and then pretend that it was a real technical device, like a wrist radio or laser weapon. I assembled parts in various ways, though they never actually “made” anything productive. But it was a fun way for me to use my imagination.

Dad actually knew how things worked, though, and he could look at a malfunctioning television set (back in the old tube days), and put his finger right on the circuit board for the function that was not operating properly. He would show me where the horizontal and vertical control sections were, for instance, and always amazed me with his knowledge and understanding of how the system worked. Once we picked up a few fairly large circuit boards at a swap meet. Dad sketched them out, figured out their purpose, and helped me make an electronic counter for my eighth-grade science project (I got an “A”).

He truly loved working on electronic gizmos in his shop. He loved the technology, and designed electronic circuits (even sometimes during the sermon at church) and built them himself. But Dad got a much greater joy than I could ever get, as he was able to use such parts for something real. He understood things at a much, much higher level than I did. And as a result, he felt a much deeper thrill in using it because of that knowledge.

In our spiritual lives, we are sometimes guilty of “playing” with parts of God and His Kingdom, and not being fully engaged in our thinking. We may feel some benefit from this, but it doesn’t reside deep within us. Unless we actively pursue a knowledge of God, we find ourselves in a similar situation to my childhood play. We may enjoy the Presence of God, but we cannot truly experience the fullness of His Joy² until we work to understand Him more. Then we are able to see and better appreciate details of the inner working of His Goodness.

1. related to my story “When Life Breaks...”
2. John 17:13, “I am coming to you now, but I say these things while I am still in the world, so that they may have the full measure of my joy within them.
See also Ephesians 3:17b-19, “And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord’s holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge - that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.