



have been around for a very long time. Have you ever looked at a stump where the yearly rings are clearly visible? The “fat”, prosperous years present as rings spaced farther apart, indicating vigorous growth. The “lean”, difficulty years are seen as rings close together, low growth and conservation of energy. In California, I was able to see this in both the giant sequoias and redwoods. Truly amazing.

*My takeaway* is the whisper of an invitation to abide in a deep wisdom that guides me through the “fat” and the “lean” times. This is the wisdom that moves beyond my small ego-based sensibilities into a larger appreciation of the Big Picture (freely supplied by the Holy Spirit). I am also invited into learning a *patience* that helps me stay the course through stormy circumstances of life. And not just stay on course, but to stay the course with a joy and confidence and personal strength. So whenever I am in the parking lot and catch a glimpse of the pine giant, I am reminded of Jesus’ invitation to grow in patience and deep wisdom.

Wow, all this deep talk is making me hungry! I’m off to savor some chips and salsa!

*Scott*