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Faith

Ephesians 1:11-23

Some of us approach faith through our brains. We work out the details through logic, reading and debate with others and finally assent to it when it makes sense. Others of us approach faith through our hearts. We need to experience a sense that God is present and real and find that presence through worship, music, the testimony of others and prayer. All of us need both qualities, but we tend to make one or the other primary.

GROUP DISCUSSION. Describe one of the key head or heart steps in your process of coming to faith.

PERSONAL REFLECTION. Is faith something you feel and experience or something you think about and try to understand? Explain.

Read Ephesians 1:11-23.

1. What do these verses reveal about the role of each of the three persons of the Trinity?

2. What thoughts and feelings do you have as you read of what God has done?

3. What does it mean to be chosen by God (v. 11; see also v. 4)?

4. How did the Ephesians respond to God (vv. 13-15)?

5. In verse 15 Paul draws a connection between the Ephesians' faith and their love. How does your faith help you to love others?

6. When have you seen “faith” (Christian or other) that led someone away from loving others?

7. What does Paul ask God to do for the Ephesians (vv. 17-19)?

Why would he single out these qualities?

8. How does knowledge of God help make faith real?

9. How does the experience of God help make faith real?

10. Focus on your weaker area. What steps might help you grow in either your head or your heart faith?

11. When are you likely to see faith as something you need to “work on” rather than trusting God to build faith in you?

How can the facts in this passage enable you to escape that trap?

Offer your praise to God for the gift of faith.

Now or Later

This week focus on deepening your understanding of what nurtures and upholds your faith and what challenges it.