

Believe in your Heart

Monday, 8/24/09 – Read John 14:1-3

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: Christian people use the words “believe” and “belief” a lot. Sometimes, though, the use of those words suggests only a fragment of their meaning. And sometimes the words are used in ways that can actually impair our relationship with God. This week, let’s dig into those words and let them lead us into a deeper relationship with God. ... Look closely at the phrasing of John 14:1. It says “believe IN” God and “believe IN” me [that is, Jesus]. What does that phrase “believe IN” mean to you? What is it to believe in a person? How is that different from believing THAT something is true or false?

Tuesday, 8/25/09 – Read Hebrews 11:6-12

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: The Bible does sometimes encourage us to believe THAT something is true. Look at Hebrews 11:6. But merely believing that God exists is not enough. It’s necessary but not enough, all by itself. Read through today’s whole passage, verses 6-12. Noah and Abraham certainly believed that God exists. But their believing included more than merely believing the fact of God’s existence. What did Noah and Abraham do in addition to believing in the existence of God? When you think of your believing in God, does it include more than merely believing that God exists? How would you describe it?

Wednesday, 8/26/09 – Read Romans 10:9-13

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: The Bible is always stretching language to express something that is hard to put into words. In today’s reading the Apostle Paul uses the phrase “believe in your heart.” What do you think that means? ... Probably most of us most of the time think of believing as something we do with our minds. The heart is the seat of emotions, the place of caring and of love. Heart is about being in relationship with others. ... See if you can put it in your own words: what is it to “believe in your heart”?

Thursday, 8/27/09 – Read James 2:18-19

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: Today we return to the insufficiency of “mere belief” -- merely believing that something is true. This very provocative statement in James 2:19 claims that even demons believe [that God exists]. ... The point here is not an insistence on believing that demons exist but on the insufficiency of merely believing that God exists! ... Read again verse 18. What does James claim is the natural expression of really believing?

Friday, 8/28/09 – Read Luke 24:25-27

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: Today’s reading brings us back to the connection between HEART and BELIEVING. The Risen Lord on that first Easter Day challenged these two disciples as “slow of heart to believe.” The problem was not intellectual. The

problem was not that they could not mentally accept the fact of resurrection. Their problem was in their heart. It was a problem of trust. It was a problem of love. ... Think about that phrase, "slow of heart to believe"; what does it mean to you?

Saturday, 8/29/09 – Read Galatians 2:15-16

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: Our understanding of BELIEVING is complicated by the fact that in English "believing" and "faith" are different words. In the Greek New Testament (from which our English Bible is translated), they are the same word in different forms, "pistis" or "pisteuo." Paul McReynolds' literal translation of today's reading uses the word TRUST instead of FAITH and instead of BELIEVE. ... In your mind what is the difference between TRUSTING and BELIEVING? How would your relationship with God be different if it were based on trusting?

Sunday, 8/30/09 – Read Hebrews 11:1-3

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: In verse 1 the Greek word (that is translated as FAITH) is again "pistis" -- which Paul McReynolds again translates as TRUST. Try reading it this way: "Now trust is the assurance of things hoped for ..." How does that change the meaning for you? Does that change your understanding of faith and believing? If so, how? Would that change the way you relate to God?

My Faith Journal, August 23, 2009

Believing in God #5

Setting the Heart

What do I hear God saying to me today?

What action do I intend to take this week?

Each day this week, take a few minutes. Begin with PRAYER. Then READ through the Bible passage indicated on the inside of this guide. WRITE down your own thoughts, reactions, observations. ANSWER THE QUESTION to begin connecting the Bible with your life. Use additional paper or your own notebook if you need more space to write.