

Grace Notes

Why God Doesn't Send E-Mail

2.16.10



[Jesus said to Saul], "Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do." (Acts 9:6)

"I just wish I knew what God was up to in my life," a friend of mine told me. "Yea," I replied, "sometimes an e-mail would be nice."

Why doesn't God show us (to borrow from the old "Let's Make a Deal" game show) what's behind Door #1, Door #2, AND Door #3. Why doesn't He let us in on what He's up to? Every now and then I think to myself, "God, what could you possibly be trying to teach me? Could you send a postcard? An e-mail? Something? Hello??"

But the more I studied the Scriptures and the people God used I discovered something: God seems to prefer giving out instructions in bite-size portions rather than in a full buffet. In Acts 9, Saul had just been hit with something akin to a lightning bolt. He's now blind and terrified. After a frightening introduction, Jesus offers Saul this one bit of information: "Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do." The Scriptures don't record Jesus giving Saul any other clue as to what would happen next. One chapter earlier, an angel gave Philip one simple order: "Go south to the road...that goes down from Jerusalem." Only after Philip obeyed did God offer the next step in His plan, "Go to that chariot and stay near it." Philip had no idea his new friend would end up taking the gospel back to Ethiopia. Saul had no idea to what degree he would suffer for Jesus, or that he'd author most of our New Testament. Neither Paul nor Philip were given access to God's grand plan for their lives. They simply listened, and obeyed.

Answers don't come easy as to why God chooses, many times, to keep His plan for our lives hidden. However, I believe God offers us a clue in Hebrews when the author recounts a similar situation with Abraham: "By faith Abraham, when called to go to a place he would later receive as his inheritance, obeyed and went, even though he did not know where he was going." (11:8)

"By faith..." Simply put, God wants us to trust Him. "Trust in God; trust also in Me," Jesus told His disciples the night before He was crucified. I'm convinced the enemy far too often fools us into underestimating the power of our faith. Faith is vital not only to our salvation (*For by grace are you saved through faith...*), but also to our everyday life as a disciple of Jesus. "Without faith," the author of Hebrews wrote, "it is impossible to please God." (11:6) Quoting Habakkuk, Paul wrote, "The righteous shall live by faith." (No wonder the enemy would rather have us live by sight.) Faith unleashes God in our lives. But, like a muscle, faith must be exercised in order to grow stronger.

A final word: Are you weary from waiting on God's "next word of instruction?" (The 3 days of blindness for Saul in Acts 9 must have seemed like an eternity.) **Rest in God's Word.** The psalmist wrote, "Your word is a lamp unto my feet and light unto my path." (119:105) Commenting on this verse, the 19th century British preacher, Charles Spurgeon, wrote, "When darkness settles down upon all around me, the word of the Lord, like a flaming torch, reveals my way."



Soli Deo Gloria, Nick