



God Said No!

by Jackie Abbott

Sometimes I hear from a friend or an acquaintance the statement, “God didn’t answer my prayer.” It comes with the sound of defeat and doubt. I can understand that, for at one time I felt the same emotions.

Fortunately, with lots of study in the Word and lots of wonderful guidance in my church and with my fellow Christians, things began to make more sense to me. Yes, God does answer our prayers, just not always the way we want them answered. My answer to those who doubt is... God says

“Yes,” “No,” or “Wait, for I have a better idea.”

We love those times when the answer is “Yes” and we get what we asked for. Then, quite often, we realize that the “No” answer was the right answer, too, because it kept us from failing with something or falling into bad situations.

Oh, but the “wait” is harder to understand. However, as I have looked over the past years of my life, I have found that the “Wait” was the best answer of all. Losing a loved one opened my heart to accept an opportunity to be available to help someone else. Watching my Mom go through Alzheimer's Disease made me aware of the needs of others and to be empathetic to those with unusual problems that I had never faced before. Yes, hard to do, but a wonderful blessing to be able to comfort others.

Even St. Paul – a wonderful, devoted, hard-working disciple for Christ, experienced a “No” answer from God. In II Corinthians 12:7-10, we read of Paul's request to remove a thorn from his side. He did this three times! And each time, God's response was “No.” But God's response was also His gift of grace to Paul, assuring Paul that this gift of grace would be sufficient for him.

When Jesus prayed He got a lot of “yes” answers. He restored sight to the blind, cured leprosy, drove out demons, and returned Lazarus to life... just to mention a few of the wonderful miracles He performed.

But, Jesus also got the “Wait” and “No” answers, too. At Gethsemane, Jesus knew the worst time in all creation was about to occur, and He asked the Father to remove this burden... if it was God's will. This was part of the “Wait” time.

Upon the cross, Jesus is scorned and ridiculed and suffering pain that we cannot imagine... both in body and spirit. But, there was a reason for the “Wait”... Think of this, God had Jesus to “Wait” for there was one more who needed the message of Jesus. There were two criminals that were crucified alongside Jesus. One was critical of Jesus and dared, “If you are the so-called Messiah, save us all.” But, the other criminal, admitting his sins, having seen the goodness and hearing the words from Jesus' mouth, “Father, forgive them,” knew that this was surely the Son of God. His belief was confirmed when Jesus told him that he would that day be in Heaven.

It's so hard to accept that the next answer for Jesus would be “No.” God turned His back on His only Son. I just know that God shed tears... But if this event had not happened, you and I would be looking forward to a death with pain never-ending. God loved us so much, and Jesus did the only thing that could save our sinful beings, by defeating Satan so that we could have life everlasting. And then, we will know that the answers will be an eternal “Yes.”