

Heart to Heart

Devotional Thoughts for Women

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God Said “No”

I remember laying in the darkness, staring up at the ceiling and thinking, “Okay, Lord, okay.” After months and months of begging, pleading, crying, and ranting, I finally waved the white flag of surrender, telling God that I was ready to accept His answer. I had been asking God to change things in my life, to restore some things back to me that I had lost and thought I could not bear to lose. I had been praying earnestly for months, but my prayers had been conditional. I wanted a “yes” answer and might have grudgingly conceded a “wait” answer, but “no” was not something I was prepared to accept. I found out the hard way that no matter how badly you want God to say “yes” to your requests, if it is not His will, it will not happen. Period. And you know what? That is a good thing.

There are numerous examples in the Bible of people who prayed to God, diligently making their requests known, but God emphatically told them “No.” Moses pleaded with the Lord to let him cross over into the promised land of Canaan, but God said no. (Deuteronomy 3:23-27) David had his heart set on building the temple for God, but God told him no. He intended for Solomon, the son of David, to take on that project. (II Samuel 7:4-17) David poured his heart out to God, begging Him to spare the life of he and Bathsheba's child, but God told him no. (II Samuel 12:13-23) The apostle Paul begged God to remove the “thorn” from his flesh that caused him so much distress, but God said no. He assured Paul that His grace was sufficient for him and that His strength was made perfect in Paul's weakness. (II Cor. 12:7-10) Even Christ our Lord asked God to let the cup of suffering pass from him, but God said no. (Matt. 26:39)

There were different reasons God told these people no. Sometimes, they were facing consequences of their sin, sometimes they asked amiss (James 4:3), and other times the Lord simply had another purpose and plan, and His will must always be done. How many times have we seen in our own prayer lives the rightness of God saying no to us? Maybe we know it all along, we just try to deny it. Maybe it takes months or even years for us to see why He said no, and we finally say, “Oh! That's why!” Sometimes we never discover the why. It's easy to praise God for answered prayer when the prayer is answered in the way that we want. It can be much harder when we don't receive the answer we're seeking, and we can't fathom the reason why. How can we accept the times when God says “No”?

“We degrade God when we attribute our own ideas to Him, out of annoyance that we cannot fathom His ways.” ~Dostoevsky

The fact is, we can become annoyed and even angry when God won't “see things our way.” If we want to learn to gracefully accept the “no's”, we must first humbly acknowledge that He does not (and will not) think and act in the way we do. Isaiah 55:8-9 says, *“For My thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways My ways, says the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts higher than your thoughts.”* Second, we must implicitly trust God. When we place our requests in His hands, we can know without a doubt that as a just and holy God, He will *always* do what is right, and there is great peace and comfort in that thought. Philippians 4:6 assures us, *“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God.”* And finally, we must imitate the contented heart of our Savior as he finished his garden prayer with the words, *“nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will.”* (Matt. 26:39)

~Heather Pryor

And God Said No

I asked God to take away my pride,
and God said No.
He said that it's not for Him to take away
but for me to give up.

I asked God to make my handicapped child whole,
and God said No.
He said her spirit is whole, her body is only temporary.

I asked God to grant me patience
and God said No.
He said patience is a by-product of tribulation,
it's not granted, it's earned.

I asked God to give me happiness,
and God said No.
He said he gives me blessings, happiness is up to me.

I asked God to spare me pain,
and God said No.
He said suffering draws me apart from worldly cares
and brings me closer to Him.

I asked God to make my spirit grow,
and God said No.
He said I must grow on my own,
but He would prune me to make me fruitful.

I asked God if He loves me,
and He said yes.
He gave me His only Son who died
for me to save me from my sins.

I asked God to help me love others
as much as He loves me.
And God said,
Ah! Finally you have the idea.

-Author Unknown

Ladies Bible Class – There will be no classes in July or August. We will resume in September with a new study in the book of Nehemiah. Books are \$4.00 each. Please see Angela if you are interested in ordering a copy.

RECIPE CORNER

"She...provides food for her household." ~Prov. 31:15

It's summer in Florida, and it is hot! Try cooling down with these refreshing fruit-infused waters.

ORANGE-KIWI INFUSED WATER

- 2 cups of water or sparkling water
- 2 cups of ice
- 1 orange, sliced
- 2 kiwis, peeled and sliced

RASPBERRY MINT

- 2 cups of water or sparkling water
- 2 cups of ice
- 1 cup of whole raspberries
- handful of mint

BLUEBERRY-LIME INFUSED WATER

- 2 cups of water or sparkling water
- 2 cups of ice
- 1 cup whole blueberries
- 1 ½ limes, sliced

STRAWBERRY-BASIL

- 2 cups of water or sparkling water
- 2 cups of ice
- 1 cup strawberries, sliced
- handful fresh basil

LEMON CUCUMBER

- 2 cups water or sparkling water
- 2 cups of ice
- 1 lemon, sliced
- 10 thin slices of cucumber

(Directions for all of the above) Combine all ingredients in a large mason jar or jug. Drink immediately or let it chill in the refrigerator 1-4 hours to infuse more flavor.