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IN SEARCH OF TRUTH:
"Wait Upon the Lord"

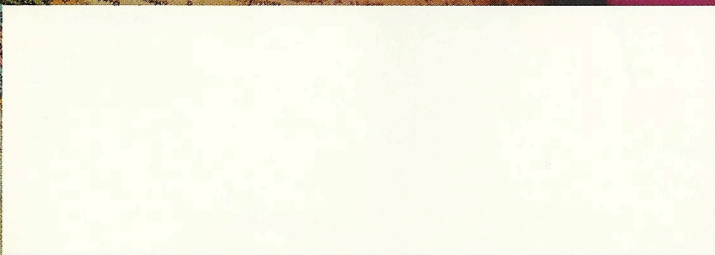
Teaching Kids About
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JANUARY / FEBRUARY 2005

WBS:

Making a Difference
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If God Says

WE HAVE ALL HEARD IT SAID THAT GOD ANSWERS EVERY PRAYER; HE JUST SAYS "NO" SOMETIMES.

BY **LINDA CONDOLORA**



One of the very first words children learn, and perhaps the word most often spoken by parents is "no."

I have two cats and a dog, and they all understand the word "no," just as my children did when they were small. As adults, however, we do not hear no very often. After all, we are adults and can make our own decisions. Who is going to tell us no?

However, sometimes we are faced with having to accept that word and what it means for our lives. Recently, I was told no by my doctor. With that one word, a lifetime dream was dashed and I was left wondering, "Now what do I do with the rest of my life?"

Obviously, what I had planned for my life was not what God has in mind for me. I could have responded to be-

ing told no in a number of ways. Thankfully, as a Christian, I have examples of how to respond when being told no by God.

Maybe it is because we, as adults, are not used to hearing the word "no" in our daily lives that it can be difficult for us to accept when God says no to us. We have all heard it said that God answers every prayer; He just says "no" sometimes.

How do we respond when God says "no" to our prayers? Do we plead with Him and beg Him to change His mind? Do we get angry because we cannot have our way? Or do we respond with humility and submission, the way Christ did when He prayed in the garden, "Father, if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will, but yours be done" (Luke 22:42 NIV).

As always, Jesus is the perfect example for us to follow. He brought His request to the Father, let Him know how He felt, and then left it in the Father's hands. He was willing to accept God's no and do whatever the Father willed. This is the way we should also be.

The Bible gives us other examples of people graciously accepting God's no. David, upon hearing that his son would die, spent seven days pleading with God, praying and fasting. On the seventh day, David's son died. God said "no" to David's pleas.

What was David's reaction when he heard his son had died? He arose, cleaned himself up and went "into the house of the Lord and worshiped" (2 Samuel 12:20). David accepted God's answer and worshiped Him,

even in the face of the death of his son.

Paul was also told no by God. In 2 Corinthians 12, Paul writes about having a "thorn" in his flesh. He describes how he prayed to the Lord three times to have this thorn removed, but God did not remove it. Did Paul become bitter? Was he complaining when he wrote about this? Absolutely not. He had come to terms with and could see the purpose in God's answer. "Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in

hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong" (2 Corinthians 12:9-10).

Paul saw his thorn in the flesh as something God gave him to keep him humble. When God refused to remove it, Paul embraced it. He accepted God's no.

At times in our lives, God will say "no" to us. We should expect it. The question is, how will we respond to being told no? I pray we will be like Jesus, David and Paul. I am so thankful for the examples of Jesus, David and Paul. Because of their examples, I could accept the no and look forward

with excitement to whatever God has planned for me now. Jesus assures us, "I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full" (John 10:10).

Let's learn to accept God's no with humility, submission, worship and trust. Even when the answer is no – maybe especially when the answer is no – we need to trust that God is in control and that He knows what is best for us. □

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