

# Wednesday, March 31

Today's Reading: Matthew Chapter 26: 31-75

Today's Devotional Message is by Pastor Paul Baehmann

*Then Jesus went with them to the olive grove called Gethsemane, and He said, "Sit here while I go over there to pray." He took Peter and Zebedee's two sons, James and John, and He became anguished and distressed. He told them, "My soul is crushed with grief to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch with Me." He went on a little farther and bowed with His face to the ground praying, "My Father! If it is possible, let this cup of suffering be taken away from Me. Yet I want Your will to be done, not Mine." Matthew 26:36-39*

One of the great privileges we have given to us is the privilege of prayer. At any time day or night; it makes no difference whether you're sitting, standing or laying down, you can talk to God. He'll never be away on vacation or too busy to listen to you. Throughout scripture God's people are encouraged to pray and the promise is given that God not only hears our prayers, but that He hears them with a loving heart and He will answer. The mistake people so often make is that they think that God only answers when He says, "yes!"

I believe there are three basic possible answers and then many variations of those three answers. The three basic possible answers are: "yes" "no" and "not yet." Of course we all like the answer of "yes," but consider the question of, "why do you pray?" Is it simply only to get whatever it is that you want at the time, or do you pray really wanting God to do what is best?

Our problem is that when difficulties come we can see only the immediate situation and have trouble seeing the big picture. God who isn't bound by time, stands above it all and is able to see the entire picture. When you add the fact that He loves us with a love so great that it caused Him to lay down His life for us on the cross, who could give us a better answer than our loving friend, Jesus? So we pray, knowing that He who can see the big picture will say "no" if that is the wisest and most loving thing to do.

Jesus knew that He came to die, but when the time came; being human, He found it extremely difficult and so He prayed. Matthew writes that He was grieved and agitated. Luke writing about the same situation says that He prayed so hard that He began sweating. Jesus pleased with His Father for life, but even more important than living for Him was that He would be obedient to His Father; so we hear Him praying, "yet I want Your will to be done, not Mine." Because Jesus was willing to receive an answer of "no" to His prayer and obediently die, you and I now have the possibility of life forever more.

Be assured that when and if God ever says "no" in answer to your prayers it will only be because He loves you so much that He wants to do what is best for you and your loved ones. It might not seem like it at the time, but God is able to see the whole picture. Trust in Him and His love.

Prayer: Lord God, give me the confidence that when I pray I can trust You with whatever the answer will be because I know that You love me. In Jesus name I pray. Amen.