

FAITH AND HOPE AND LUCK

Faith, Hope, and Luck #4 :: No Dice {Andy Stanley}

INTRODUCTION

We've heard amazing stories of answered prayer. A friend was healed. A marriage was restored. A check arrived in the mail. And in these circumstances, we are ecstatic about God's goodness, mercy, and interest in our lives. *Go God!* But our prayers aren't always answered to our liking. What about the times when they seem to go unheard? What do we do when God apparently says no? Does it take more faith to endure a no from God than to receive a yes?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. When have you prayed for something and God responded, "No"? How do you tend to respond when you feel like God has said no?
2. In Philippians 4:6, God invites us to bring our requests to him. Why does God invite us to pray when his response is oftentimes no?
3. Read 2 Corinthians 12:7-10. Paul made specific requests of God on three occasions. And God responded with a no each time. Does Paul's experience encourage or discourage you from continuing to approach God in prayer?
4. The point of our greatest weakness is the point where God has his greatest opportunity to demonstrate his power. How is accepting God's "No" different than giving up on prayer?
5. When have you seen God's grace and power magnified in your weakness or someone else's weakness?
6. How does praying "Not my will, but your will be done" reflect God's' grace in our lives?

THINK ABOUT IT

When God says no, it is not a reflection of your faith; but if you respond correctly, *you* will become a reflection of his grace, because it takes more faith to endure a no from God than to acquire a yes. In essence, you're saying, "God, if you don't remove this, then I'm trusting that your grace is going to empower me to keep on going." How can you manifest God's grace through your weakness?

WHAT WILL YOU DO?

This week, pray for another person in your community group to whom it appears God has said no. Pray that he or she will know how to receive God's grace.

CHANGING YOUR MIND

But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me.

2 Corinthians 12:9