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## Yes, No or Maybe

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## Yes, No or Maybe

If you invite someone to an event, which would be the least favorite answer you could receive? For many of us, "maybe" is definitely less helpful, as we are left with no specific answer to our question, and have to figure out whether or not to keep a date or time available. With a "yes" or a "no," we can then decide what next to do, whereas the "maybe" leaves us with an open question instead of closure.

Can you imagine inviting God to listen to a concern or asking God for help, and receiving the equivalent of "maybe?" While some people might think or even believe that God says "no" more often than "yes" to our requests, none of us has had experiences of God needing more time and information before deciding upon an answer. Any doubts about answers are not in God, but in us. God is always "now," and cannot possibly respond to us with an indeterminate answer though our perceptions of the communications we receive might need more careful attention or reflection.

We have become sensitive, over time, to the ways in which family, friends, and associates respond to a variety of invitations, so that from one person a "yes" or "no" does not necessarily give us a definite answer, just as a "maybe" for some people is a gentle way of saying "no, thank you." God's answers may come to us in subtle, quiet ways, but they are neither vague nor ambiguous. We can rely on receiving straight answers and immediate responses, though we can improve in recognizing God's ways of communicating with us.

Just as we can hear but not listen when someone is speaking, we can miss entirely some of God's responses to us if we are doing all the talking or are wholly occupied with our own feelings and thoughts. In a face-to-face conversation, even with a friend or someone we greatly respect, we might find it difficult to hear what the other person says when we have something very important that we want to say. Similarly, though we ask something of God, or tell God of our needs, we can inadvertently omit either waiting for a response, or, more normally, become so focused on our concerns that we do not communicate directly with someone who is actually present with us. We talk "at," but not to, the person who knows and loves us.

The more we pay attention to God whom we are addressing, the more we will recognize that we are being heard and answered. In relating directly with God, we usually experience gentle but real affirmation, no matter what our circumstances, thoughts and feelings. Rather than assume responsibility for our affairs, God becomes present with us whenever we reach out in personal trust. Presence is the best and most immediate answer to our

invitations and requests. Think of how important it is to have someone who is with us, even if he or she cannot change our circumstances. Actually, there is a change, when we have real companionship of care.

Because God loves us as completely as only God can, the only and always answer to our calls is always "yes."