

Matthew 16:22-23

Then Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, "Far be it from You, Lord; this shall not happen to You!"

But He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men."

In today's verses, Jesus was telling His disciples how He was about to suffer many things and be crucified and rise from the dead. Now for us, we know the end of the story, but put yourself in Peter's shoes for a moment. Here is your Teacher, your Mentor, your everything you are living for, and He is telling you that others will beat and crucify (kill) Him. I think we would all have the same response that Peter did, and the reason we would is the first two things Jesus said. Let's look at them.

† **Matthew 16:21** *From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day.*

"*suffer many things*" and "*be killed*" two things we can relate to, because we know that others can and do hurt others as well as some go as far as killing others. And when we hear that, our minds go to defending that person, which is what Peter was doing. But Jesus mentioned three things, and the third is that He would "*be raised the third day.*"

Beatings and killings we understand, for these are things that happen every day. But someone raising from the dead, this we do not understand because we have not seen it, especially someone rising from the dead after three days. So, yeah, we would be like Peter.

With that in mind, how many times have we prayed for something, something that we felt was right, and in our minds we knew it would help others out; but God said "no" to it anyway?

Think of King David who wanted to build a temple for God, and God said no to David, but God also told David that his son, Solomon would build the temple for Him (God). In our minds, King David's request sounded so right, but God had a better way.

Or think of Paul and Silas:

† **Acts 16:6-7 (NLT2)** *Next Paul and Silas traveled through the area of Phrygia and Galatia, because the Holy Spirit had prevented them from preaching the word in the province of Asia at that time. Then coming to the borders of Mysia, they headed north for the province of Bithynia, but again the Spirit of Jesus did not allow them to go there.*

Paul and Silas were thinking, "We are supposed to go and share the Gospel. Ok, let's go to *Phrygia and Galatia* and *the province of Bithynia.*" But the Spirit once again said "No." It sounded good and the right thing to do, yet God had a better plan. And if you read on in Acts you see what that better plan is. I'm sure God loved the people of *Phrygia and Galatia* and *the*

province of Bithynia, but it wasn't time for Paul and Silas to go there. Others would go and salvation would come there. But not yet, even though it sounded right and good at the time, but God had a better plan.

So, for us, we may have plans that sound good and right, yet there are times we get discouraged because we see those plans never blossom or they fall flat on their faces. So we wonder why, what did we do wrong that God would not answer those good requests for others. Simply, in some of those times, God has a far better plan that we simply do not see or understand at the moment. If Peter had his way, and he and the disciples defended Jesus so that He never went to the cross, we would all still die in our sins. Yet we know that, and that's why we understand Jesus' response to Peter.

So in those times when we are praying and God is not doing, it may be as simple as asking God, "If this is good, then why is it not happening?" (FYI, it's ok to ask God why) Or to even ask God to reveal His better plan to us so we do not get discouraged and ask if we can be a part of that better plan that He has.

† **Proverbs 11:14 (MSG)** *Without good direction, people lose their way; the more wise counsel you follow, the better your chances.*

† **Proverbs 16:9** *A man's heart plans his way, But the LORD directs his steps.*

† **Psalm 37:23-24 (NLT2)** *The LORD directs the steps of the godly. He delights in every detail of their lives. Though they stumble, they will never fall, for the LORD holds them by the hand.*

† **Isaiah 55:9** *"For as the heavens are higher than the earth, So are My ways higher than your ways, And My thoughts than your thoughts."*