

What to Do When God Says “No”

Deuteronomy 3:23-28

Deut. 3:23-28

- “Then I pleaded with the LORD at that time, saying: 24 ‘O Lord GOD, You have begun to show Your servant Your greatness and Your mighty hand, for what god is there in heaven or on earth who can do anything like Your works and Your mighty deeds? 25 I pray, let me cross over and see the good land beyond the Jordan, those pleasant mountains, and Lebanon.’ 26 But the LORD was angry with me on your account, and would not listen to me. So the LORD said to me: ‘Enough of that! Speak no more to Me of this matter. 27 Go up to the top of Pisgah, and lift your eyes toward the west, the north, the south, and the east; behold it with your eyes, for you shall not cross over this Jordan. 28 But command Joshua, and encourage him and strengthen him; for he shall go over before this people, and he shall cause them to inherit the land which you will see.’”

God Said No To Moses

- Moses' relationship with God was unique
 - Ex. 33:11 - “So the LORD spoke to Moses face to face, as a man speaks to his friend.”
 - Deut. 34:10-12 - “But since then there has not arisen in Israel a prophet like Moses, whom the LORD knew face to face, 11 in all the signs and wonders which the LORD sent him to do in the land of Egypt, before Pharaoh, before all his servants, and in all his land, 12 and by all that mighty power and all the great terror which Moses performed in the sight of all Israel.”

God Said No To Moses

- Moses was a very special person in Israel
 - Ex. 32:10-14 - “Now therefore, let Me alone, that My wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume them. And I will make of you a great nation. 11 Then Moses pleaded with the LORD his God, and said: LORD, why does Your wrath burn hot against Your people whom You have brought out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand? 12 Why should the Egyptians speak, and say, He brought them out to harm them, to kill them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth'? Turn from Your fierce wrath, and relent from this harm to Your people. 13 Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, Your servants, to whom You swore by Your own self, and said to them, I will multiply your descendants as the stars of heaven; and all this land that I have spoken of I give to your descendants, and they shall inherit it forever. 14 So the LORD relented from the harm which He said He would do to His people.”

God Said No To Moses

- Moses interceded to God on Israel's behalf 20 times - Num. 12:3
- For forty years Moses was patient and forbearing with obstinate people.
 - Num. 12 - Miriam and Aaron
 - Num. 16 - Korah

God Said No To Moses

- In forty years, Moses lost his patience one time and it cost him his future. He struck the rock (Num. 20:1-13), immediately after the death of Miriam.
- There are consequences for sin. Successive good works don't mitigate the consequences of the offense.
- God is no respecter of persons, even for Moses, who was the first one referred to as "The man of God" (Deut. 33:1).

God Said No To Moses

- Moses accepted God's refusal without a negative reaction.
- He faithfully trained his replacement
- He accepted the loss of his earthly ambitions, but gained Heaven - Matt. 17:1-3

David Was Forbidden To Build The Temple

- 1Chron. 17:1-12 - God told David that someone else would build it
- 1Chron. 22:1-10 - David graciously accepted it and made preparations for Solomon to do the work.
- 1Chron. 29 - Before David died he supplied the building materials, commissioned Solomon to the task, and commended him to the whole nation, and prayed that God would bless the work

Apostle Paul Was Told To Keep His Thorn In The Flesh

- 2Cor. 12:7-10 - “And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure. 8 Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. 9 And He said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.’ Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. 10 Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong.”

Apostle Paul Was Told To Keep His Thorn In The Flesh

- The irony is that God had used Paul to heal many people - Acts 28:8-9
- Paul was asking to be done for him what he had done for others.
- When God said no, Paul chose to make the best of it.

Jesus Prayed To Be Spared From The Cross

- Jesus knew that God heard and answered His prayers.
 - John 11:42 - “And I know that You always hear Me, but because of the people who are standing by I said this, that they may believe that You sent Me.”

Jesus Prayed To Be Spared From The Cross

- Jesus prayed with great intensity
 - Luke 22:41-44 - “And He was withdrawn from them about a stone's throw, and He knelt down and prayed, 42 saying, Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done. 43 Then an angel appeared to Him from heaven, strengthening Him. 44 And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.”

How Will We React When God Tells Us “No”?

- God answers every prayer. He says yes, or no, or have patience until later
- It is acceptable to ask again, frequently - Luke 18:1-8
- However, some requests are denied.

How Will We React When God Tells Us “No”?

- It is never appropriate to respond with rebellion.
 - God is sovereign and has the authority to say no.
- We often don't know why God says no, but we do know God.
 - Rom. 8:31-32 - “What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? 32 He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?”

How Will We React When God Tells Us “No”?

- A person of faith will humble himself before the sovereign God of the universe.
- God has a purpose for every soul He has created, and that includes you.
- God has not given us access to His purpose and plans for our lives, nor is it necessary that He does

How Will We React When God Tells Us “No”?

- 1Peter 5:6-7 - “Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, 7 casting all your care upon Him, for He cares for you.”
- “A “no” from God really is a “no.” It is not a “yes cached in a “wait” or something like that. In fact. a “no” is quite a useful answer in the growth process if we receive it honestly.”
(Thomas R. Hauff, Reshaping Prayer and Learning to Listen)

How Will We React When God Tells Us “No”?

- God said “no” to His greatest, most faithful, and beloved children. He did not play favorites when their prayers were for things other than His higher plans and purposes. Therefore, when He says no to us, He has a better reason and a higher purpose than our requests. We must trust Him and respond as well as did Moses, David, Paul, and Jesus.