

# What to Do When God Says “No”

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake)

## Introduction:

- A. Deut. 3:23-28 - Moses pleads with God
  - 1. Rejection is a part of life. It is something we have to learn to deal with.
  - 2. No one gets everything they want out of life.
    - a. Parents don't have the ability to give children all they desire.
    - b. When there is only one job available and six people want it, five are going to be disappointed.
- B. The ability to accept disappointment is a mark of maturity.
  - 1. Children must be taught not to throw tantrums when they don't get what they want.
  - 2. Adults may not throw tantrums, but they often answer their disappointment with drugs, alcohol, sex, entertainment
  - 3. Examine examples of how four great Bible characters reacted when God answered their sincere pleas with “No.”

## I. GOD SAID NO TO MOSES

- A. Moses relationship with God was unique - Ex. 33:11; Deut. 34:10-12
- B. Moses was a very special person in Israel - Ex. 32:10-14
  - 1. Moses interceded to God on Israel's behalf 20 times - Num. 12:3
- C. For forty years Moses was patient and forbearing with obstinate people.
  - 1. Num. 12 - Miriam and Aaron
  - 2. Num. 16 - Korah
- D. In 40 years Moses lost his patience one time and it cost him his future.
  - 1. Struck the rock - Num. 20:1-13 - Immediately after the death of Miriam
  - 2. There are consequences for sin. Successive good works don't mitigate the consequences of the offense. Only one blemish in 40 year service
  - 3. God is no respecter of persons, even for Moses, who was the first one referred to as “The man of God.” - Deut. 33:1
- E. Moses accepted God's refusal without a negative reaction.
  - 1. Moses had to have been disappointed, but he did not argue.
  - 2. He faithfully trained his replacement, Joshua, who would lead the people to where Moses was originally destined to lead, and where he likely spent 40 years anticipating doing so
  - 3. He accepted the loss of his earthly ambitions, but gained Heaven
    - a. Matt. 17:1-3
  - 4. Moses left us an inspired example of how we should accept God's “no” in answer to our prayers.

## II. DAVID WAS FORBIDDEN TO BUILD THE TEMPLE

- A. 1Chron. 17:1-12 - God told David that someone else would build it
- B. 1Chron. 22:1-10 - David graciously accepted it and made preparations for Solomon to do the work.

- C. 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

### **III. APOSTLE PAUL WAS TOLD TO KEEP HIS THORN IN THE FLESH**

- A. 2Cor. 12:7-10
- B. The irony is that God had used Paul to heal many people - Acts 28:8-9
  - 1. Paul was asking to be done for him what he had done for others.
  - 2. When God said no, Paul chose to make the best of it

### **IV. JESUS PRAYED TO BE SPARED FROM THE CROSS**

- A. Jesus knew that God heard and answered His prayers - John 11:42
- B. Jesus prayed with great intensity - Luke 22:41-44
- C. Jesus accepted God's denial of His request because He knew it was necessary to accomplish God's plan to save humankind.

### **V. HOW WILL WE REACT WHEN GOD TELLS US "NO"?**

- A. God answers every prayer.
  - 1. He says yes or no or have patience until later
  - 2. It is acceptable to ask again, frequently - Luke 18:1-8
  - 3. However, some requests are denied.
- B. How should we respond when God says "No" to our requests?
  - 1. It is never appropriate to respond rebelliously.
    - a. God is sovereign and has the authority to say no.
    - b. Pouting and whining reflects spiritual immaturity.
  - 2. We often don't know why God says no, but we do know God.
    - a. God is love and He loves us so much He gave His Only Begotten Son. He has a fully proven track record of doing what is in our best interests according to His wisdom and not according to our wants and whims
    - b. We must trust our Heavenly Father to have our salvation and spiritual well-being at heart - Rom. 8:31-32
  - 3. A person of faith will humble himself before the sovereign God of the universe.
    - a. God has a purpose for every soul He has created, and that includes you.
    - b. God has not given us access to His purpose and plans for our lives, nor is it necessary that He does
    - c. 1Peter 5:6-7

#### **Conclusion:**

A. "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)