

When God Says “No”!

February 11th & 12th, 2017

Acts 16:1-10

The Christian walk is a journey of growing in our knowledge of God!

2 Peter 3:18 “But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.”

John 17:3 “And this is eternal life, that they know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.”

As Christians, we begin our “Life in Christ” with misconceptions about God’s character and His ways!

- ❖ Adam and Eve learned that God is serious and His word is true! *Genesis 3:24*
- ❖ Abraham wondered why God would wait 25 years to fulfill His promise for Abraham to have an heir! *Genesis 12:4-7; 21:5*
- ❖ Moses questioned why God would call him to Egypt to deliver God’s people only to make it harder on the Israelites! *Exodus 5:22*
- ❖ Jeremiah thought that God was breaking His promise to Israel! *Jeremiah 14:19-21*
- ❖ Peter did not understand that God’s plan to save His people could only be accomplished through Christ’s suffering and death! *Matthew 16:22-23*
- ❖ Thomas and the disciples could not understand why Jesus would go to Bethany where Rabbis were ready to stone Him! *John 11:16*

Paul was called to take the gospel to the ends of the earth! *Acts 13:47*

- ❖ Paul was faithful to God’s call on his life – he traveled throughout Asia Minor to many towns and cities proclaiming the gospel! *Acts 13-14*
 - Ä Paul’s traveling companions were Silas (*Acts 15:40*) and Timothy (*Acts 16:1*).
 - Ä Timothy was learning how to walk with God in difficult times through the example of his mentor Paul!
 - 2 Timothy 3:10-17
- ❖ Paul knew that God’s call on his life would bring suffering!

Acts 9:15-16 “But the Lord said to him, ‘Go, for [Paul] is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel. For I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name.’”

 - 2 Corinthians 11:24-29
- ❖ Paul never wavered in his commitment to Christ!

Acts 20:24 “But I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.”

Paul was stopped by the Holy Spirit from bringing the gospel to Asia or to Bithynia!

❖ How do we respond when God says “no”?

“But God, your Word says that you heal all of our diseases!”

Psalm 103:3 “Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits, who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases,”

“Why am I not healed?”

“But God, your Word says that you will provide for all my needs!”

Matthew 6:33 “But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.”

“Why are we struggling to make ends meet?”

“But God, your Word says that all things are possible for one who believes!”

Mark 9:23 “And Jesus said to him, “If you can”! All things are possible for one who believes.”

“Why is my marriage not healed?”

“But God, your Word says that those who believe in you would lay their hands on the sick and the sick would recover!

Mark 16:18b “... they will lay their hands on the sick, and they will recover.”

“Why did my loved one die?”

“But God, your Word says that the path of the righteous grows brighter and brighter!”

Proverbs 4:18 “But the path of the righteous is like the light of dawn, which shines brighter and brighter until full day.”

“Why is it that the more I seek to follow you the more difficult my life becomes?”

❖ The reason for our disappointment with God is a lack of understanding that God’s promises are always fulfilled according to His plan and purpose!

Ephesians 1:11 “In Him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will,”

❖ God is not like us!

Ä His ways are higher than ours!

Isaiah 55:8-9 “For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, declares the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways and My thoughts than your thoughts.”

• Exodus 15:22-27

Ä God’s people needed to learn that when God delivered them from Egypt, they were not free to do what they wanted to do, but were now free to do what God wanted them to do!

◆ Paul could not preach wherever he wanted, but only where God called him to go!

Paul would later go the Asia (Acts 19) but not at that time!

❖ God has a timing in all that He does!

Galatians 4:4 “But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law,”

❖ God had opened the door for the gospel in Macedonia – in the Roman colony of Philippi!

When God says “no” ...
we continue to trust in His faithfulness
as we follow His leading!

Proverbs 3:5-6

*“Trust in the Lord with all your heart,
and do not lean on your own understanding.
In all your ways acknowledge Him,
and He will make straight your paths.”*

Endnotes:

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