

NO, A SMALL WORD

Int.

1. Aim: To show the value of using the little word NO !
2. God has always placed restrictions or said "no" to mankind
 - a. Eden - Gen. 2:17 "...you shall not eat..."
 - b. Ten commandments - Exodus 20 - 8 are negative "thou shalt not" "You shall not" NKJV
3. No is a small but useful word in our life today
 - a. Few years ago Nancy Regan started the "just say no" campaign to fight the drug problem. Many people just laughed. But it worked for those who said "NO".
 - b. People today turn their noses up at abstinence programs in sex education.
4. But no one ever amounts to very much who cannot properly use the word "no."
 - a. It is a small word in any language (Nyet - Russian, None, Non, Na, Nada).
 - b. I guess because to really say no you have to do so emphatically and quickly lest by procrastination you say "maybe" and thus finally say "yes."
5. Every disciplined person must learn to say No!
6. The meaning of righteousness is to be able to say no to temptations.
7. You can say that this is a negative sermon
 - a. I'm as in favor of positive preaching as any one but it is certain that our relationship to God depends upon "thou shalt not's" and that the Gospel requires us to learn to say no.
 - b. Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me." Matt. 16:24 NKJV Deny = abstain
8. No is a small but powerful word

Discussion

I. "NO" IS A LITTLE WORD BUT IT TAKES A BIG PERSON TO USE IT

- A. Conformity and getting along are highly valued in our society and thus to say No is often difficult.
1. Only the most independent minded can do it. But it is to this that we are called.
 2. Rom. 12:1-2 "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And **do not be conformed to this world**, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God."
- B. Jesus could say "No" to Satan three times in a row. Matt 4:1-11.
1. We too often say "yes" the first time we are tempted
 2. Satan doesn't have to take us up on a high mountain to try and get us to say yes, but takes us to our front window and look across the street at our neighbor's house or car.
- C. The ability to say "no" belongs only to free men.
1. Slaves cannot say "no", only independent men may say no and yet many give up their independence by their inability to say NO and thus become enslaved to their own desires.
 2. Rom 6:16 NKJV "Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin leading to death, or of obedience leading to righteousness?"

D. And yet one extraordinary captive was able to say NO. Daniel.

1. He said "no" to the king's table and the pampered life that it led to and thus maintained his physical and spiritual integrity. Daniel 1
2. There were surely many arguments to go along- to say yes.
 - a. "Let's feel our way along slowly here in this strange city before we draw attention to ourselves."
 - b. "We may be better able to change things by working within the system."
 - c. "Who knows but what God intends us to participate since He's put us here."
3. But Daniel would have none of it. He knew right and wrong and would say **no** to that which was wrong.

E. Many today live captive to a slavery system greater than that of ancient Babylon; the credit slavery system. Money

1. And all because they cannot say (NO) to the allure of having things now instead of delaying gratification until they can afford it.
2. Or even better denying themselves in this world for the gain of the world to come.
3. 1 Tim. 6:6-10
4. Titus 2:11-12 NKJV "For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, {12} teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age,"

II. SAYING "NO" IS THE KEY TO PERSONAL STRENGTH.

- A. We often teach the children that Samson was the strongest man in the world.
1. But Samson was strong only so long as he said "**no**." Judges 14-16
 2. When he could not refuse a woman's seducing he grew weak and was lost.
- B. Being able to say "no" is almost the definition of strength of character.
1. A man is spineless who can't stand up and say "no."
 2. It's easy to say "yes" to go along with the crowd
 3. What is hard is to be different to take a stand and to say "no".
 4. But there is strength in being able to say "no."

III. "NO" HAS KEPT MILLIONS FROM THE PATH OF SIN BECAUSE OF EVIL COMPANIONS

- A. Proverbs 1:10 "My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not."
- B. Paul said "Evil companionships corrupt good morals." - 1 Cor. 15:33 ASV
1. We should choose our friends and associates with care.
 2. They influence us more than we know or care to admit.
 3. Even with our closest friends we may have to learn to say "No, I prefer not to go if that's the kind of people who are there."
 4. "No-way". I do not do things like that.
 5. Prov 13:20 "...but a companion of fools shall be destroyed."

IV. "NO" IS THE WORD THAT PROTECTS VIRTUE

- A. It was the "No" of a slave that protected the home of Potiphar. Gen 39:7-10 NKJV
 "And it came to pass after these things that his master's wife cast longing eyes on Joseph, and she said, "Lie with me." {8} But he refused and said to his master's wife, "Look, my master does not know what is with me in the house, and he has committed all that he has to my hand. {9} "There is no one greater in this house than I, nor has he kept back anything from me but you, because you are his wife. How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" {10} So it was, as she spoke to Joseph day by day, that he did not heed her, to lie with her or to be with her."
- B. God preserve us from such situations but failing that may He give us the strength to say "no" as did Joseph.

V. "NO" IS THE WORD OF REFORMATION THAT CHALLENGES THE STATUS QUO

- A. If only society would hear 3 Jn. 11 "Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good. He that doeth good is of God- but he that doeth evil hath not seen God."
- B. It is the word of "No more. That's enough."
1. Phinehas was willing to say no more that's enough in Numbers 25.
 2. After Balaam had taught the Moabites how to put a stumbling block before the people of Israel they committed adultery with the Moabite women- one even in the very tabernacle of the Lord. But Phinehas would have none of it and killed them both and thus turned back the plague from the people of Israel.

- C. It is the word that says just because it's always been done that way doesn't mean that it's right.
1. It's the word that says just because everybody else is doing it doesn't mean that it's right.
 2. It's the word that says just because it seems right to men doesn't make it right.
 3. As the Scriptures say "let God be true and every man a liar" (Rom 3:4).

VI. "NO" IS THE WORD THAT PROTECTS OUR HONOR

- A. Uriah knew how to say "no" to the temptation presented him by David in an effort to cover up David's own sin.
- B. 2 Samuel 11:11 "And Uriah said unto David, The ark, and I srael, and Judah, abide in tents; and my lord Joab, and the servants of my lord, are encamped in the open fields; shall I then go into mine house, to eat and to drink, and to lie with my wife? as thou livest, and as thy soul liveth, I will not do this thing."

VII. "NO" IS THE WORD THAT PROTECTS JUSTICE

- A. Pilate gave in to the crowd of yea sayers who clamored for Jesus' crucifixion. That may be one of the most amazing things about Jesus' crucifixion- that the crowds who a few days before had shouted Hosannas should now shout "crucify Him."
- B. Pilot should have had the courage to say "no" and preserve justice and his honor. But instead "When Pilate saw that he could not prevail at all, but rather that a tumult was rising, he took water and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, "I am innocent of the blood of this just Person. You see to it." Matt.. 27:24 NKJV

VIII. "NO" IS THE WORD THAT PROTECTS US FROM VIOLATING GOD'S WORD

- A. Think of the young prophet who so boldly had said no to the request of King Jeroboam
1 Kings 13:8 "And the man of God said unto the king, If thou wilt give me half thine house, I will not go in with thee, neither will I eat bread nor drink water in this place:"
- B. Would to God he had continued to say no. Instead he said yes to the deceitful old prophet and payed for it with his life.
- C. Let us learn from his mistakes and continue to say no to every request to violate God's word no matter from whom it comes nor how reasonable they may make it sound. If it is not from God's word it is the way of death.

CONCLUSION

- 1. Let's not forget "Yes." But "yes" has meaning only in the presence of "No."
 - a. You cannot be for something unless you are against something.
 - b. I sa. 7:15 "Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good."
- 2. Let us know what to say no to and what to say yes to.
 - a. Matthew 12:30 "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad."
 - b. Can you say "Yes" to Jesus and "No" to the things of the world?
- 3. Jesus invites you today. Will you not say yes to Him today if you haven't before?

Sources consulted

Sermon - No: The Smallest But Most Useful Word by M. Thaxter Dickey

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