

7 Beautiful “No”s

“No” is considered by many to be a bad word. Children don’t like to hear the word No, and neither do most adults!

But No is actually a Great Word. To say NO to some things in life.....will save your life.

Nike are famous for an advert that says “Just Do It”. Sure, there are times when we should step out and do something, particularly as Christians who are called to be bold and step out in faith. But there are many situations in life when No is the right response. So today I am bringing balance with an advert that says “JUST SAY NO”.

We say No to things that would harm ourselves or others

It is important to say that I don’t regard Christianity as being a long list of “cant do’s” as some feel it is. The Apostle Paul in Romans 14:17 said that living in the Kingdom of God is not about the law but it is about **Righteousness, Peace and Joy**. We live under a new law, the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus which has **set me free from the law of sin and death**. (Romans 8:2).

Saying no can be difficult – but also liberating
Saying no builds our discipline – and discipline establishes healthy habits in our lives
Saying no can be just plain beautiful!

Rejecting wrong and embracing right is the way to progress in our Christian walk

Today we will look at some biblical instances where we say no.

We say no in various ways:

- To other people
- To spiritual forces of evil
- To circumstances
- To ourselves

And in doing so we walk in the freedom that decision brings.

James 4:7 **Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you**

This is Christian living: saying Yes to God. Saying No to the devil

Some here today need to say no to things that trigger a downward spiral in your life. You know what they are, and you feel it is beyond you – out of control. Stay with me today – God has supernatural strength for you. In your weakness His power will be perfected, and you will gain the victory.

Remember we have God on our side, working with us to bring good into our lives.
Colossian 1:29 Paul said **To this end I labour, struggling with all his energy, which so powerfully works in me**. God can do great things in us as we say yes to Him and no to the works of the enemy and our flesh.

7 Beautiful “No”s from the Bible:

1. Say No to anything in the spiritual realm that is not centred in Jesus.

There is only one foundation on which to build our lives. His name in Jesus. He is the cornerstone. He is God. 1 Cor 3:11 **For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ.**

1 John 5:12 **He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life**

John 14:6 Jesus said....***"I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me"***.

Good works are good, but they will not get you into heaven. Buddah will not do it either. Islam wont do it . You may be a "spiritual" person, but without the Spirit of the Lord, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.

Jesus is the Lord of Lords and the King of Kings, He is the only true God.
If you have Jesus, you have it all. You are not lost, you are found. You were in darkness, now you are in the light!

We live in a world of idolatry – money, power, celebrities, football teams, SELF is perhaps the biggest idol of all. But there is only one True God to worship...The Lord Jesus

Isaiah 9:6 ***For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.***

Say No to those that do not recognize the Lordship of Jesus

2. Say No to fear

Jesus said in John 14:27 ***Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.*** He was preparing his disciples for his leaving. They were about to go through great turmoil. His words are as true today as they were then.

Do not let – don't allow yourself to have a troubled heart. There is much in this world to cause us trouble and stress. Fear seems to be wanting to gain access to us much of the time. I heard it said this way:

"When FEAR knocks at the door, send FAITH to answer it and no one will be there."

With Jesus, we can say no to fear. We can embrace his word when he declares in Matt 28:20***surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.***" We are not alone. We have the Greater One living in us.

2 Tim 1:7 ***For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline.***

When you sense fear rising in you.....Confess this scripture and Say no

3. Say No to Conforming

Romans 12:2 ***Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.***

JB Philips translation ***Do not let the world around you squeeze you into its own mould.***
There are pressures on us to conform to the world's way of doing things. We are in the world but we are not of it.

1 Peter 2:9 tells us that we are ***called out of darkness into His marvelous light.***

It all changed when we became a Christian.

We have a shepherd. He is the Good Shepherd. He is Jesus. I had a problem recently and there was no immediate solution – but I have given it to the One who says cast***all your care on him; for he cares for you*** (1 Peter 5:7). I believe it's going to be alright. Is that conforming to the world – No – it's conforming to the word.

Consider the pressures on young people today to get involved with drugs, alcohol both of which are closely associated with Sex.

Just say no when the crowd you are with is heading in the wrong direction, and you know in your spirit it is time to leave.

Just say no when someone offers you drugs at school.

Just say no, girls, when your boyfriend wants to have sex with you.

Young people – become champions in life. An example to others – feel good about yourself. ***Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and he will direct your paths*** (Prov 3:5). Jesus makes you attractive this way. Do you want to attract the opposite sex? Follow Jesus.

The world says sex before marriage is the norm – it is not. If you want a great sex life – wait until you the Lord gives you a wife or husband.

Proverbs 6:22-24 speaking of the wisdom found in God's word...

***When you walk, they will guide you;
when you sleep, they will watch over you;
when you awake, they will speak to you.
For these commands are a lamp,
this teaching is a light,
and the corrections of discipline
are the way to life,
keeping you from the immoral woman,
from the smooth tongue of the wayward wife.***

Prov 2:18 speaking about the adulteress.... ***For her path leads down to death***

Just say NO

4. Say No to wrong words

Ephesians 4:29 ***Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen***

Isn't that clear? Notice that word LET again. Just as we can purpose not to let our hearts be troubled, we can purpose not to let unwholesome words come out of our mouths.

2 Cor 4:13 It is written: ***"I believed; therefore I have spoken." With that same spirit of faith we also believe and therefore speak*** As believers, our faith directs our words.

In James he likens the tongue to the rudder of a ship. The tongue is small but powerful, containing the power of life and death. Prov 18:21

May be just a small adjustment. Start today. Say no to yourself when you want to speak negative words or words that could harm someone else. Speak words that build up instead.

Keeping a watch over the words we speak help will keep us on the right path in our lives.

Just say NO to the wrong words

5. Say No to Negative thoughts

Romans 12:2 which we saw earlier speaks about a transformation that takes place in us as we renew our minds. This is at the heart of the Christian faith. Jesus said in John 6:63 that his words.... ***are spirit and they are life***. His Word transcends the merely physical realm and affects the real us, our Spirit.

Proverbs 23:7**as a man thinks in his heart, so is he**
So we can see the importance of our thoughts.

Change your thoughts to change your life.

So when the negative thoughts come – and they do come don't they? – identify them and say No!

2 Cor 10:5 **We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.**

As our thoughts change, so our emotions change and our lives change.

Memorize scriptures that you can meditate on when the negative thoughts come.
For example Isaiah 26:3 **You will keep in perfect peace him whose mind is steadfast, because he trusts in you.**

As we say No to wrong thoughts we change our lives and the lives of those around us.

6. Say No to Strife

Strife is a killer. By strife I mean unrest, a state of quarrelling, animosity. Strife ruins relationships and takes away our peace. It is amazing how many people put up with it, and consider it a part of life.

As Pastor Chris has said many times, when we point the finger at someone else, four fingers are pointing back at us!

Here's a thought: you could be WRONG!

We are called to be "peacemakers" not "strifemakers".

Proverbs 15:1 says **A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.**
We can diffuse a situation or stir it up.

Insisting on being right in our own eyes is the main culprit for strife.

So next time, just say No. When you have an opportunity to let it go or stir it up – let it go.

The Message 1 Peter 3:10-12 **Whoever wants to embrace life and see the day fill up with good, Here's what you do: Say nothing evil or hurtful; Snub evil and cultivate good; run after peace for all you're worth. God looks on all this with approval.....**

Here's where you could end up if you insist on always having your own way and being right.
Proverbs 5:11-14 **At the end of your life you will groan, when your flesh and body are spent. You will say, "How I hated discipline! How my heart spurned correction! I would not obey my teachers or listen to my instructors. I have come to the brink of utter ruin....."**

Say No to strife to stirring it up. Pursue the path of peace.

As a parent, don't major on minor things – it causes unnecessary strife.

Major on major things. On good manners, on showing respect to parents and elders, on good behaviour and having a right attitude, on treating others well, on honesty. These are life skills that will carry a child through to adulthood.

Say No to strife

7. Say No to Self

We should love ourselves, recognizing that we are created in the image of God.

Psalm 139:13,14 ***For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.***

Having a healthy self image is important.

By contrast the world we live in is obsessed with self. And here Self is Selfish.

The bible speaks about this attitude in 2 Timothy 3:2-5 describing the End Times ***People will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boastful, proud, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, without love, unforgiving, slanderous, without self-control, brutal, not lovers of the good, treacherous, rash, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God— having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with them.***

Jesus said (Hebrews 10:7) ***'Here I am—it is written about me in the scroll— I have come to do your will, O God.'***

It's not about you and will never be about you. BUT as we live this way, we will actually find ourselves

John 12:24 ***I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds. 2The man who loves his life will lose it, while the man who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honor the one who serves me.***

Philippians 2:3,4 ***Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others***

The Message puts it this way....***Don't push your way to the front; don't sweet-talk your way to the top. Put yourself aside, and help others get ahead. Don't be obsessed with getting your own advantage. Forget yourselves long enough to lend a helping hand.***

This is not a "doormat" scenario – just letting others walk all over you. Rather it is living a life that is considerate towards others. This is how Jesus lived. He had a plan, a mission to fulfil, and he accomplished this in love, in strength and with great passion, driven by his Father's love and a desire to please Him. This could describe our lives also

Say No to self