

The Bulletin

Meeks Street Church of Christ

1201 Meeks St. Corinth, Ms. 38834
Phone – (662) 808-7777

Visit Our Website at:
MeeksstreetchurchofChrist.com

April 16, 2023

“The Power Of Saying No!” #1

By Brian Meade



There are some in our world who struggle to say no to anyone or anything. They are always saying yes out of a sense of “people pleasing” or maybe even a sense of wanting to be one who takes on anything needed done. Then there are some out of weakness or fear can’t seem to say the word no. But for a Christian, this problem can be what ultimately does us severe harm to our spiritual life. A Failure to say no can lead us away from God.

Christians are to be like our Master, Jesus Christ. Jesus was firm in holding his ground in saying no to the Jews in Mark 8:10-13, *“And immediately he got into the boat with his disciples and went to the district of Dalmanutha. The Pharisees came and began to argue with him, seeking from him a sign from heaven to test him. And he sighed deeply in his spirit and said, “Why does this generation seek a sign? Truly, I say to you, no sign will be given to this generation.” And he left them, got into the boat again, and went to the other side.*”

Jesus did not give them a sign, and He had His reasons for such a refusal. He knew the hardness of their hearts (Mark 3:5; Luke 11:24-26). He knew it was not going to make a difference in their attitude and mean-spirited behavior toward Him, so His denial of a sign to them makes sense.

But how can we follow the example of our Savior in saying “NO” to people and things when called upon to do so? By looking to the examples of the Bible to see men who failed to say no, and following those who did. Many times, we see the consequences of the choices they made, both good and bad.

I. Men Who Did Not Say No.

In Genesis 25:29-34, Esau could have said no to his brother Jacob, when Jacob asked for him to sell his birthright for the food that he had prepared, but didn’t. He could have told him that his birthright was much too important to sell it for something so temporary as one morsel of food. Later on when Isaac would have given him the blessing of the birthright, he could not because his brother already received it. And because of this, Esau is an example of trading eternal rewards for temporary pleasures (Hebrews 12:15-17).

In Exodus 32:1-5, the people of Israel came to Aaron, while his brother Moses was on the mountain with God. They saw he had delayed, and very quickly decided to request Aaron, *“Come, make us a god who will go before us; as for this Moses, the man who brought us up from the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.”* (Exodus 32:1)

Aaron had a choice to make, as he could and should have said no to this request to sin by idolatry. It showed a weakness on Aaron’s part to give in to their request without a protest to wait on Moses or simply say no to their unfaithfulness to God. Not only that, Aaron took the lead in forming and making the golden calf and proclaiming the feast to it (Exodus 32:2-6). This decision would have great consequences for the people when Moses would return from the mountain (Exodus 32:19-31). Verse 28 tells us that about three thousand men lost their lives that day on account of this sin.

In Numbers 22:12-19, When the king of Moab sent messengers to the prophet Balaam requesting him to come and curse the people of Israel, initially he says no. But when Balak sends more honorable messengers with the promise of rewarding him richly for his services, again he refuses in verse eighteen. But the problem with his second refusal is that it was an open-ended refusal. He would go back to God to see if He still wants him to say no to their request. God had already made it very plain what Balaam should do the first time. His going to God to find out more is actually sign that his firm no was wavering toward yes to the messengers and to Balak's desire to curse Israel. He would go with the men and show what was really in his heart. 2 Peter 2:15 shows us where he was in this choice of yes or no by using him as an example of those who are guilty of, *"forsaking the right way, they have gone astray, having followed the way of Balaam, the son of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness;"*

In Judges 16:4-21, we read of the story of Samson's failure to say no to Delilah and gave away the secret of his strength to her. This was a major problem with Samson for all his life—in not saying no to the Philistine women, and being led away with his inability to say no to his desires (Judges 14:1-3; 14:15-17).

He does tell Delilah several untruths about the secret of his strength, before finally telling her the real truth about it. But the real power to saying no lies in not even playing around with such dangerous games. It would ultimately be Samson's undoing to give away the source of his power from God. Samson is still regarded as a great man of faith, but also of the consequences of not saying no to the enemy that seeks our destruction.

In Acts 12:20-24, King Herod "delivered an address" to the people of Tyre and Sidon. This speech was with all the royal fanfare and pomp of such dignitaries of the day. It was met with such delight and flattery from the people who heard it, that they kept crying out, *"The voice of a god and not of a man!"* (Acts 12:22).

This was one occasion where saying no to the people would have saved Herod's life, because Luke records, *"Then immediately an angel of the Lord struck him, because he did not give glory to God. And he was eaten by worms and died."* (Acts 12:23).

II. Men Who Did Say No.

In 1 Kings 21:1-4, Naboth the Jezreelite had a vineyard right next to King Ahab's palace in Jezreel and Ahab wanted to own for himself. This vineyard became something that Ahab so strongly desired, and when Naboth said no to his offer to buy the vineyard, verse four tells us, *"So Ahab went into his house sullen and displeased because of the word which Naboth the Jezreelite had spoken to him; for he had said, 'I will not give you the inheritance of my fathers.' And he lay down on his bed, and turned away his face, and would eat no food."*

That's when Ahab's wicked wife, Jezebel, took it upon herself to go and get the vineyard by lies and deceit (1 Kings 21:5-14). Naboth's refusal to sell his inheritance cost him his life. But he is the real hero of this story for saying no, even to the king and doing the right thing!

In Daniel 1:1-8, after taking the Israelite's nation, King Nebuchadnezzar assimilated some of the Hebrews into their culture by giving them new names, teaching them the language of the Chaldeans, giving them the king's delicacies, and the king's wine to drink. Then we read in verse 8, *"But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's delicacies, nor with the wine which he drank; therefore he requested of the chief of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself."* Daniel said no, and didn't compromise, even though it may be tempting to... being so far from home.

In Daniel 3:14-18, Shadrach, Meshach, And Abed-nego were faced with decision: that when the musicians played, all had to bow before the image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up. A failure to do so meant being thrown into a fiery furnace for disobeying the king's order (Daniel 3:1-6). These three men said no to bowing to this image, and were brought before the king. King Nebuchadnezzar gave them one last chance to bow down, but they still said no! God saved them from this fiery furnace and even caused the king to glorify God (Daniel 3:28-30).

In Nehemiah 6:1-4, Nehemiah had to say no to the deceptive offer to *"Come, let us meet together among the villages in the plain of Ono."* But as the rest of verse 2 and 3 tell us, *"But they thought to do me harm. So I sent messengers to them, saying, 'I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down. Why should the work cease while I leave it and go down to you?'"*

The work of God was too important to quit, therefore Nehemiah said no!

In Acts 10:24-26, Peter goes to the house of Cornelius in order to preach the gospel to this Gentile family. Luke tells us in verses 25-26, *"As Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him and fell down at his feet and worshiped him. ²⁶But Peter lifted him up, saying, 'Stand up; I myself am also a man.'"*

Peter rightly refused worship similarly to what the angel in Revelation 22:8-9 did when John wanted to bow before the angel there. Why? Because worship belongs to God (Matthew 4:10).

Both were right in saying no.

News and Notes: Sick and recovering: Tim Harris Sr, Tim Harris Jr, Daniel Holloway, Debbie Keplinger, Sam Johnson, J F Dancer, Robbie, Sheila, and Sherry Doles, Sandi Poole, Nathan Cox, Sandra Oliver, Brandon Briggs, Jimmy Briggs, Chad Harris, Randy Ferrell (Brandi's brother in law), Eli Johnson, Burt Ward, Wayne Bivens (recovering from double by-pass), Ricky Doles, Jamie Jones, and Janet Boren.

Our Gospel Meeting with Billy Randolph starts today!

Those Who Serve:

Sunday Morning 9:00 A.M. Service:

Opening Prayer:	Paul Busby
Preaching:	Billy Randolph
Sermon #1:	"Psalm 121"
<u>Auditorium Bible Class: 9:35am:</u>	Billy Randolph
Lesson For Bible Study:	"Worshipping While Hurting"

Sunday Morning 10:30 A.M. Service:

Announcements:	Brian Meade
Opening Prayer & Scripture Reading:	Paul Johnson
Scripture Reading:	<i>Philippians 4:4-9</i>
Song Leader:	Lee Busby
Lord's Supper:	Danny Sheffield
Assisting:	— —
Preaching:	Billy Randolph
Sermon #2:	"Rejoice Always"
Closing Prayer:	Tim Harris Sr.

Wednesday Evening: 7:00 P.M.

April 19, 2023

Auditorium Bible Class:	Billy Randolph
Announcements:	Brian Meade
Song Leader:	Dan Cottrell
Closing Prayer:	Paul Johnson



Visit our YouTube Channel:

Meeks Street Church of Christ https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCgiXJxZC1oraOugO9qlfBtw?view_as=subscriber

And Our Facebook Page.

For sermon videos, articles, and announcements.