



Lcbs-2023-11-14-LearningTheImportanceOfSayingNo.pdf

The Importance of Learning to say “NO”

One of the great things about minimalism is that it allows us to eliminate things that are time wasters and put our focus on the important things in life. To do this, we must learn to determine what is important and be able to say NO to those things which are not.

Most of us live in a world where our daily lives have become too busy. To be pleasing at work to our employer or more importantly pleasing to the Lord, we have to learn to do those things most important and not do those that are of little importance. Jesus desires us to be people who are about God's work.

Luk 9:23 And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.

Luk 9:24 For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it.

If you were with us Sunday night when Jordan Lindsey preached out the book of Haggai, he taught how God was very displeased with the children of Israel for not doing the work of God first. The people found time to do their own thing and build their houses, but put off the rebuilding of the temple.

(Hag 1:1) In the second year of Darius the king, in the sixth month, in the first day of the month, came the word of the LORD by Haggai the prophet unto Zerubbabel the son of Shealtiel, governor of Judah, and to Joshua the son of Josedech, the high priest, saying,

(Hag 1:2) Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, This people say, The time is not come, the time that the LORD'S house should be built.

(Hag 1:3) Then came the word of the LORD by Haggai the prophet, saying,

(Hag 1:4) Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your cieled houses, and this house lie waste?

(Hag 1:5) Now therefore thus saith the LORD of hosts; Consider your ways.

(Hag 1:6) Ye have sown much, and bring in little; ye eat, but ye have not enough; ye drink, but ye are not filled with drink; ye clothe you, but there is none warm; and he that earneth wages earneth wages to put it into a bag with holes.

(Hag 1:7) Thus saith the LORD of hosts; Consider your ways.

(Hag 1:8) Go up to the mountain, and bring wood, and build the house; and I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified, saith the LORD.

Like God told his people in verses 5 and 7 to consider their ways. I think we need to

consider our ways.

Each of us has only 24 hours in a day. We must learn to prioritize our lives to be pleasing to God. When something comes up and you are asked to do something, it is crucial to realize that the little two-letter word NO may be way better than YES. When you say YES, you are saying that the thing you are about to do is the most important thing there is and in fact, saying NO to all other things you might be doing.

Now if it is God's will for your life, you best say YES. But my point is we can be so good-natured that we tie up all our lives with things that are not all that important and waste our time away.

Psa 90:12 So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.

I read a book recently by James Clear who is a motivational speaker and a very great teacher on how to use your time precisely. I want to read a couple of portions of his book on learning to say NO.

The Ultimate Productivity Hack is Saying NO. James Clear

How often do people ask you to do something and you just reply, "Sure thing." Three days later, you're overwhelmed by how much is on your to-do list. We become frustrated by our obligations even though we were the ones who said yes to them in the first place.

It's worth asking if things are necessary. Many of them are not, and a simple "no" will be more productive than whatever work the most efficient person can muster.

But if the benefits of saying no are so obvious, then why do we say yes so often?

We agree to many requests not because we want to do them, but because we don't want to be seen as rude, arrogant, or unhelpful. Often, you have to consider saying no to someone you will interact with again in the future—your co-worker, your spouse, your family, and friends.

Saying no to these people can be particularly difficult because we like them and want to support them.

We find ourselves over-committed to things that don't meaningfully improve or support those around us, and certainly don't improve our own lives.

Perhaps one issue is how we think about the meaning of **yes** and **no**.

The Difference Between Yes and No

The words “yes” and “no” get used in comparison to each other so often that it feels like they carry equal weight in conversation. In reality, they are not just opposite in meaning, but of entirely different magnitudes in commitment.

When you say no, you are only saying **no to one option**. No to just that one thing. When you say **yes, you are saying no to every other option**.

“Every time we say yes to a request, we are also saying no to anything else we might accomplish with the time.” Once you have committed to something, you have already decided how that future block of time will be spent.

In other words, saying **no saves you time in the future**. Saying yes costs you time in the future. **No is a form of time credit**. You retain the ability to spend your future time however you want. **Yes is a form of time debt**. You have to pay back your commitment at some point. And I think we know from my last devotional that debt is not good.

No is a decision. Yes is a responsibility.

The Role of No

Saying no is an important skill to develop at any stage of your career because it retains the most important asset in life: your time. “If you don’t guard your time, people will steal it from you.”

“Saying no is so powerful because it preserves the opportunity to say yes.”

Saying no can be difficult, but it is often easier than the alternative. “It’s easier to avoid commitments than get out of commitments. Saying no keeps you toward the easier end of this spectrum.”

In a spiritual connotation, I think you can see how crucial it is to say NO to a lot of things.

No - to wasted time on social media.

No - to much wasted time on videos or TV.

No - to things tying up all our free time.

If we are not giving our all to the Lord like He wants, we need to learn the simple word: NO.

It all ties back to what God wants for our lives. Let’s read that verse from Luke again.

Luk 9:23 And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny

himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.

Luk 9:24 For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it.

We need to make full use of NO and YES as needed and mean it.

(Jas 5:12) But above all things, my brethren, swear not, neither by heaven, neither by the earth, neither by any other oath: but let your yea be yea; and your nay, nay; lest ye fall into condemnation.

So be sure when you say **YES**, it is a commitment that you follow through on and you will do what you promise.

But realize that **NO** is acceptable and may be the right answer to free up time to do the work of the Lord and at the same time, simplify your life. It is up to each of us to manage our lives and time. Don't be over-committed and miss out on the important things in life.

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