



GET YOUR LIFE BACK, PART 5: NOPE

If you're going to live your life with great purpose, one of the most important skills you can develop is learning how to say no. That's a tough discipline to foster, especially if you want people to like you. We'll look at a biblical story that clearly explains the problems with saying yes to everything, and we'll look at how you can learn to say no to the things that matter less... nicely.

BIG IDEA: Saying no to good things allows you to say yes to great things.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Are you a morning person or a night owl? Why do you think you're that way?
2. At this moment, which is staked higher: your IN basket or your OUT basket? How are you coping?
3. How easy is it for you to say no? Why?
4. What do you fear most when you say no to people and opportunities?
5. Apparently, Moses had a hard time saying no. He felt that as the leader, everything depended on him. What's the root cause / problem of thinking everything depends upon you?
6. *With your Bible or BibleApp, read [Exodus 18:13-27](#) and the story of Moses and his father-in-law, Jethro, for insights into how Jethro changed not just Moses' life, but also the lives of the people of Israel.*

The next day, Moses took his seat to hear the people's disputes against each other. They waited before him from morning till evening. When Moses' father-in-law saw all that Moses was doing for the people, he asked, "What are you really accomplishing here? Why are you trying to do all this alone while everyone stands around you from morning till evening?" Moses replied, "Because the people come to me to get a ruling from God. When a dispute arises, they come to me, and I am the one who settles the case between the quarreling parties. I inform the people of God's decrees and give them his instructions." "This is not good!" Moses' father-in-law exclaimed. "You're going to wear yourself out—and the people, too. This job is too heavy a burden for you to handle all by yourself. Now listen to me, and let me give you a word of advice, and may God be with you. You should continue to be the people's representative before God, bringing their disputes to him. Teach them God's decrees, and give them his instructions. Show them how to conduct their lives. But select from all the people some capable, honest men who fear God and hate bribes. Appoint them as leaders over groups of one thousand, one hundred, fifty, and ten. They should always be available to solve the people's common disputes, but have them bring the major cases to you. Let the leaders decide the smaller matters themselves. They will help you carry the load, making the task easier for you. If you follow this advice, and if God commands you to do so, then you will be able to endure the pressures, and all these people will go home in peace." Moses listened to his father-in-law's advice and followed his suggestions. He chose capable men from all over Israel and appointed them as leaders over the people. He put them in charge of groups of one thousand, one hundred, fifty, and ten. These men were always available to solve the people's common disputes. They brought the major cases to Moses, but they took care of the smaller matters themselves. Soon after this, Moses said good-bye to his father-in-law, who returned to his own land.

[Exodus 18:13-27](#)



7. From what you read, what can you infer was Moses' job description? What were his priorities?
8. How well was Moses leading and others following? What additional expectations did this raise in their mind?
9. What was Jethro's system and why is it better?
10. How can the steps Chris outlined on saying, "No" nicely help you?
11. What great things do you need to say yes to? What good things should you start saying no to?

MOVING FORWARD

Learning how to say no nicely is key to being able to keep a fixed calendar as we talked about in Part 5 of the series. Make a list of what you absolutely need to say yes to, and a list of the things to which you will start say no beginning this week. Then start saying no, nicely.

CHANGING YOUR MIND

"This is not good!" Moses' father-in-law exclaimed. "You're going to wear yourself out—and the people, too. This job is too heavy a burden for you to handle all by yourself." [Exodus 18:17-18 \(NLT\)](#)

