

One Word

“No”

THE WORDS THAT COME FROM OUR LIPS MATTER!!!

7 weeks of POSITIVE words that can shape us!

Luke 6:45 For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.

SERIES: 7 words that connect to our hearts! (REVEAL HEARTS)

PLEASE: A humble heart

THANKS: A Grateful heart

GROW: A Hungry Heart

SORRY: A Contrite Heart

GO: A Willing Heart

YES: A Surrendered heart

TODAY NO: A Protected heart

The word no may be a small no, but it has so much power wrapped up in it.

Not about shutting doors, about opening the right one!

It's about choosing what brings clarity instead of confusion, faith instead of fear, and freedom instead of bondage.

Discover freedom by saying no in three important ways

1. Saying no to others
2. Saying no to idols
3. Saying no to ourselves

1. Saying No to Others—Setting Boundaries.

Setting boundaries in a healthy way is a matter of the heart and between you and God

“A strong no is a stronger yes”—Dr. Henry Cloud

By saying "no" to requests or demands that don't align with your priorities, you are effectively saying "yes" to what really matters.

Boundaries must be set from a place of love and not a place of anger
-They must be to protect and not to punish!

Boundaries were actually God's idea.

Gen 2:16-17 And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, “You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.”

Boundaries are there to protect the relationship, not harm it. To continue access, not stop it. “People who are irresponsible with our hearts should not be granted great access to our hearts.” Lysa Terkeurst

Proverbs 4:23 *Above all else, guard your heart for everything you do flows from it.*

This verse teaches us to actively guard our hearts—be intentional
-not passive.

God will give you wisdom in setting boundaries if you ask for it.

James 1:5 If any of you needs wisdom to know what you should do, you should ask God, and he will give it to you. God is generous to everyone and doesn't find fault with them.

Boundaries aren't just a good idea, they are God's idea!

2. Saying no to idols—Anything you have placed above God

We are introduced to idols in the OT in a few different places...here are two of them...

Exodus 20:3-5 You shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself a carved image...

You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the Lord your God am a jealous God...

Leviticus 19:4 Do not turn to idols or make for yourselves any gods of cast metal: I am the Lord your God.

You may not have any carved images or gods of metal in your home

- An idol is ANYTHING you have placed above God!
- Anything that dominates your heart, attention, or trust
- Money, success, careers, comfort, approval, possessions...

We are commanded throughout scripture as Christians to have nothing to do with idols

1 Corinthians 10:14 (ESV) Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry.

1 John 5:21 (ESV) Little children, keep yourselves from idols.

Romans 1:22–23 (ESV) Claiming to be wise, they became fools and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things.

Awareness is key!!!

How to Recognize an Idol: Ask yourself:

- What do I think about constantly?
- What do I rely on for identity, security, or joy?
- What competes with God for my time, loyalty, and affection?

It's natural as humans for idols to take place in our lives, because we were made to worship God...so we must be constantly on guard with what we are consuming our hearts with.

Identity and worship intersect deeply!!

Scripture teaches us that our identity is found in...

- Being made in God's image...Gen 1:27
- Being redeemed through Jesus Christ...2 Cor 5:17

When we live from that identity, we're less likely to elevate something above God

Many of our idols stem from our identity

-Our identity is often formed in our younger years

Psychologists have identified Five Core Wounds that are deeply tied to our identity that can thus lead us to developing idols as coping mechanisms.

1. Rejection
2. Abandonment
3. Humiliation
4. Betrayal
5. Injustice

How do core wounds relate to identity which can then lead to idolatry in life?

-These Core Wounds Distort Our Identity

-False Identities Breed Idols

-Idols Offer Temporary Relief

5 steps to take in the natural so that God can do the super (supernatural) to tear down idols

1. **Ask God to Show You Your Idol**—"God, is there anything I'm putting above You in my heart?" Be honest. **Awareness is KEY**...as you are honest with Him, He'll gently reveal it..
2. **Name It**—Write it down or say it aloud. Naming the idol weakens its grip.
Ex: "I care more about what people think than what God thinks." It's not fun to admit that, but when I do, it takes away some of its power over me.
3. **Say "No" to it**—Take real action. Get rid of it. Surrender it to God. And then protect yourself from running back to it. Step away from people or situations that draw you back in, remember...boundaries. Stay away from places or expectations that draw you back in. Do a hard reset on your life and priorities. Say no to things that keep pulling your heart away from God...which leads to the next step...
4. **Ask God to reclaim first place**—He's a gentleman and He won't ever just rule over you, He wants to be invited in as first place. Ask Him to reveal the root cause of this idol and heal that wound. And allow God to fill that empty space that is left.
5. **Get Help from Others**—Share with a trusted friend, mentor, or go to therapy... Accountability and prayer can help you stay on track.

If anything has taken first place in your life...it is an idol. Jesus taught us with the greatest commandment... that there is no room for any other gods in our lives when our whole self is loving Him.

Matt 22:37 You shall love the Lord your God with ALL your heart and with ALL your soul and with ALL your mind.

This is a command by Jesus, Himself...so as Christ's followers we can't ignore it!!!

3. Saying no to ourselves—Giving Lordship of our lives to Jesus Christ.

The biggest competitor for the throne of our hearts isn't always something external
Sometimes it's,

- our own will
- our own pride
- our own comfort

In Luke 9:23, Jesus very clearly talks about this.

Luke 9:23 Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me.

To surrender the lordship of your life to Jesus simply means

You give Him full authority

- Not just to save you, but to lead you in this life!

He's not just your Savior who forgives sin, He's your Lord which means...

He rules your thoughts

- Decisions
- Priorities
- Direction

There comes a moment in every one of our lives when God puts a choice in front of us.

It's not just a choice between right and wrong

- It's a choice between ruling our own lives
or surrendering our lives to the One who will give us life

What's your choice gonna be?