



when God says **NO**



Pastor Mason Phillips | June 28, 2026
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Day 1: The Heart of Humility

Devotional: God's "no" is not rejection—it's redirection. When our prayers seem unanswered, we must examine not just what we're asking, but why. Are we seeking to satisfy selfish desires or align with His purpose? James reveals that our conflicts arise from disordered desires warring within us. Yet even in our misalignment, God offers "more grace." Humility opens the door to this grace. Today, consider what you've been asking God for. Is it for your glory or His? God resists the proud but lavishes grace on the humble. When you position yourself under His will rather than demanding your own way, you discover that His plans far exceed your limited vision. Surrender isn't loss—it's the pathway to abundant provision.

Reading:

James 4:1-6 NKJV

Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members? You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures. Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you now know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

Or do you think that the Scripture says in vain, "The Spirit who dwells in us yearns jealously"? But He gives more grace. Therefore He says:

"God resists the proud,

But gives grace to the humble."

Reflection Question: What desire am I holding onto that might be taking me away from God's best for my life?

Day 2: Submit and Resist

Devotional: Jesus in Gethsemane models perfect alignment: "Not my will, but yours be done." He felt the weight of human desire to escape suffering, yet chose voluntary submission to the Father. This is our calling—to actively resist the enemy's enticements while willingly submitting to God's plan. Submission isn't passive surrender to fate; it's an intentional choice to trust God's wisdom over our own understanding. When you resist the devil, he must flee. When you draw near to God, He draws near to you. The Christian life requires both movements: turning away from destruction and turning toward divine purpose. Today, identify one area where you're being pulled by worldly desires. Actively resist it. Then take one step closer to God through prayer, worship, or obedience.

Reading:

James 4:7-8 NKJV

Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you. Draw near to God and He will near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

Luke 22:39-46 NKJV

Coming out, He went to the Mount of Olives, as He was accustomed, and His disciples also followed Him. When He came to the place, He said to them, "Pray that you may not enter into temptation." And he was withdrawn from them about a stone's throw, and He knelt down and prayed, saying, "Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done."

Then an angel appears to Him from heaven, strengthen Him. And being in agony, He prayed more earnestly. Then His sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground. When He rose up from prayer, and had come to His disciples, He found them sleeping from sorrow. Then He said to them, "Why do you sleep? Rise and pray, lest you enter into temptation."

Reflection Question: What am I resisting, and what am I submitting to—God's voice or the world's demands?

Day 3: Destination Check

Devotional: Israel stood at the threshold of promise but chose fear over faith. Their misalignment cost them the destination God intended. Every decision you make either moves you toward God's purpose or away from it. Like a driver who looks away from the road, you drift toward whatever captures your attention. Jesus endured the cross "for the joy set before Him"—He kept His eyes on the destination. Your choices regarding relationships, career, finances, and time either align with God's revealed will or lead you into wilderness wandering. Caleb and Joshua saw the same giants as the other spies, but they saw God bigger. Today, evaluate your current trajectory. Are your decisions moving you toward the promises God has spoken over your life, or are you settling for less because the journey seems difficult?

Reading:

Numbers 14:1-24 NKJV

So all the congregation lifted up their voices and cried, and the people wept that night. And all the children of Israel complained against Moses and Aaron, and the whole congregation said to them, "If only we had died in the land of Egypt! Or if only we had died in this wilderness! Why has the Lord brought us to this land to fall by the sword, that our wives and children should become victims? Would it not be better for us to return to Egypt?"

So they said to one another, "Let us select a leader and return to Egypt." Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces before all the assembly of the congregation of the children of Israel. But Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, who were among those who had spied out the land, tore their clothes; and they spoke to all the congregation of the children of Israel, saying: "The land we passed through to spy out is an exceedingly good land.

"If the Lord delights in us, then He will bring us into this land and give it to us, 'a land which flows with milk and honey,' "Only do not rebel against the Lord, nor fear the people of the land, for they are our bread; their protection has departed from them, and the Lord is with us. Do not fear them." And all the congregation said to stone them with stones. Now the glory of the Lord appeared in the tabernacle of meeting before all the children of Israel.

Then the Lord said to Moses: "How long will these people reject Me? And how long will they not believe Me, with all the signs which I have performed among them? I will strike them with the pestilence and disinherit them, and I will make of you a nation greater and mightier than they." And Moses said to the Lord: "Then the Egyptians will hear it, for by Your might You brought these people up from among them, and they will tell it to the inhabitants of this land. They have heard that You, Lord, are among these people; that You, Lord, are seen face to face and Your cloud stands above them, and You go before them in a pillar of cloud by day and in a pillar of fire by night.

"Now if You kill these people as one man, then the nations which have heard of Your fame will speak, saying, 'Because the Lord was not able to bring this people to the land which He swore to give them, therefore He killed them in the wilderness.' "And now, I pray, let the power of my Lord be great, just as You have

spoken, saying, 'The Lord is long-suffering and abundant in mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression; but He by no means clears the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and fourth generation.'

"Pardon the iniquity of this people, I pray, according to the greatness of Your mercy, just as You have forgiven this people, from Egypt even until now." Then the Lord said: "I have pardoned, according to your word; "but truly, as I live, all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord—because all these men who have seen My glory and the signs which I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and have put Me to the test now these ten times, and have not heeded My voice, they certainly shall not see the land of which I swore to their fathers, nor shall any of those who rejected Me see it.

"But My servant Caleb, because he has a different spirit in him and has followed Me fully, I will bring into the land where he went, and his descendants shall inherit it.

Hebrews 12:1-2 NKJV

Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Reflection Question: What "promised land" has God shown me, and am I making choices that lead me there?

Day 4: Grace in the Waiting

Devotional: Joseph's journey from dreamer to dungeon to deliverer teaches us that God's "no" in one season positions us for His "yes" in another. While Joseph languished in prison, it seemed God had forgotten the dreams. But divine delays are not divine denials. God was orchestrating circumstances, developing character, and positioning Joseph for a purpose larger than personal comfort. What you perceive as God's silence may actually be His preparation. The same God who gave you the vision is faithful to fulfill it—in His timing, in His way. Joseph's

brothers meant evil, but God meant it for good. Your current "no" may be protecting you from something harmful or preparing you for something greater. Trust that alignment with God's timing is as important as alignment with His will.

Reading:

Genesis 37:1-11 NKJV

Now Jacob dwelt in the land where his father was a stranger, in the land of Canaan. This is the history of Jacob. Joseph, being seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brothers. And the lad was with the sons of Bilbao and the sons of Zilch, his father's wives; and Joseph brought a bad report of them to his father. Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age. Also he made him a tunic of many colors.

But when his brothers say that their father loved him more than all his brothers, they hated him and could not speak peaceably to him. Now Joseph had a dream, and he told it to his brothers; and they hated him even more. So he said to them, "Please hear this dream which I have dreamed:

"There we were, binding sheaves in the field. Then behold, my sheaf arose and also stood upright; and indeed your sheaves stood all around and bowed down to my sheaf." And his brothers said to him, "Shall you indeed reign over us? Or shall you indeed have dominion over us?" So they hated him even more for his dreams and for his words.

Then he dreamed still another dream and told it to his brothers, and said, "Look, I have dreamed another dream. And this time, the sun, the moon, and the eleven stars bowed down to me." So he told it to his father and his brothers; and his father rebuked him and said to him, "What is this dream that you have dreamed? Shall your mother and I and your brothers indeed come to bow down to the earth before you?"

And his brothers envied him, but his father kept the matter in mind.

Genesis 41:37-45 NKJV

So the advice was good in the eyes of Pharaoh and in the eyes of all his servants. And Pharaoh said to his servants, "Can we find such a one as this, a man in whom

is the Spirit of God?” Then Pharaoh said to Joseph, “Inasmuch as God has shown you all this, there is no one as discerning and wise as you. You shall be over my house, and all my people shall be ruled according to your word; only in regard to the throne will I be greater than you.”

And Pharaoh said to Joseph, “See, I have set you over all the land of Egypt.” Then Pharaoh took his signet ring off his hand and put it on Joseph’s hand; and he clothed him in garments of fine linen and put a gold chain around his neck. And he had him ride in the second chariot which he had; and they cried out before him, “Bow the knee!” So he set him over all the land of Egypt.

Pharaoh also said to Joseph, “I am Pharaoh, and without your consent no man may lift his hand or foot in all the land of Egypt.” And Pharaoh called Joseph’s name Zaphnath-Paaneah. And he gave him as a wife Asenath, the daughter of Poti-Pherah priest of On. So Joseph went out over all the land of Egypt.

Genesis 50:15-21 NKJV

When Joseph’s brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, “Perhaps Joseph will hate us, and may actually repay us for all the evil which we did to him.” So they sent messengers to Joseph, saying “Before your father died he commanded, saying, ‘Thus you shall say to Joseph: “I beg you, please forgive the trespass of your brothers and their sin; for they did evil to you.” ‘ Now, please, forgive the trespass of the servants of the God of your father.” And Joseph wept when they spoke to him. Then his brothers also went and fell down before his face, and they said, “Behold, we are your servants.”

Joseph said to them, “Do not be afraid, for am I in the place of God? But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive. Now therefore, do not be afraid; I will provide for you and your little ones.” And he comforted them and spoke kindly to them.

Reflection Question: What promise am I waiting for, and how can I trust God's timing while I wait?

Day 5: Living for His Glory

Devotional: The ultimate alignment check is this simple question: Does this bring glory to God? When our prayers, pursuits, and plans aim at His glory rather than our comfort, we position ourselves for confident, answered prayer. John assures us that when we ask according to God's will, He hears us—and grants our requests. This isn't a formula for getting what we want; it's an invitation to want what God wants. Whether you eat, drink, work, rest, or pray—do all for His glory. This transforms mundane moments into worship and reframes disappointments as divine appointments. God's "yes" awaits those whose hearts beat in rhythm with His purposes. Today, surrender your agenda. Ask God to align your desires with His will. Then watch as His grace-empowered "yes" unfolds in ways exceeding your imagination.

Reading:

1 Corinthians 10:31 NKJV

Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

1 John 5:14-15 NKJV

Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.

Reflection Question: How can I reframe my current prayers to focus on God's glory rather than my comfort?

Closing Prayer: *Father, teach me to embrace Your "no" as protection and preparation for Your greater "yes." Align my direction, destination, and disposition with Your perfect will. I humble myself before You, trusting that You resist the proud but give grace to the humble. Lift me up according to Your purposes, and let every area of my life bring glory to Your name. In Jesus' name, Amen.*