

# BOOK OF ACTS // WEEK 23

## *WHEN GOD SAYS NO*

*Jason Brinker - 03/23/24*

### GROWING TOGETHER

**\*Leader's Note:** Try to get everyone involved in this one. The “plan” doesn't have to be something life - changing, it can be something simple like going to a movie but instead having to go to work and finish something.

If it is something serious, let the person speak, acknowledge them, and ask them if it's ok to get the rest of the group to share their “plan”. Let your group member know there will be time either at the end of the meeting or a one-on-one at another time when the two of you can get together to discuss further.

- Pastor Jason begins this week's message with a simple yet very reflective question: Have you ever had a plan and it didn't work out the way you planned it?

### GROWING WITH GOD

Read [Jeremiah 29:11](#), [Acts 15:37-41](#), [Acts 16:1-10](#), & [Proverbs 3:5](#) aloud and go over your sermon notes with one another. (Answer all or some of the questions)

Acts 15:39 tells us that Paul and Barnabas had “such a sharp disagreement”, that they chose their respective teams and headed in different directions. Barnabas and Mark paired up while Paul chose Silas and left.

**\*Leader's Note:** As a leader, this section could unearth some deep hurt from your group. Be mindful that this could take up a large chunk of time. Help them see that God still used that to bring them here today.

- **When, in your walk of faith, have you had a “sharp disagreement” with a brother or sister in Christ and parted ways?**
- **Without going into lengthy detail, how did that affect your plan(s)?**
- **Share anything positive that came from the disagreement.**

In order for Timothy, having a Greek father, to have credibility and deliver the message of the Gospel to the Jews, Paul had him circumcised. I'm sure this wasn't in Timothy's plan but recall when Jason told us three weeks ago starting in 1 Corinthians 9:20: "To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews... I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some." Timothy was willing to do whatever it took to get the job done for God.

**\*Leader's Note:** Listen to your group as they speak and if necessary, remind them that the questions below don't mean that God wants us to sin for the sake of sharing the Gospel.

- **Have you ever experienced something that seemed unnecessary at the time?**
- **Where is God calling you to obedience so that He can use you to help further the Gospel?**
- **What is stopping you from carrying it out?**
- **Can you see how God may have used your burden to possibly strengthen another believer or to bring someone closer to him?**

Acts 16:6 tells us that Paul was being kept from preaching the word in the province of Asia. Paul tried to deliver the Gospel two separate times but he was being kept from doing so by the Holy Spirit. Paul believed this was what he was supposed to be doing and God had other plans.

- **Are there times in your life when the things you are praying for become more important than the One you are praying to?**
- **When you reflect on that prayer, does it seem as though your plans are bigger than our God?**

Some people (and faith communities) find the need to have a specific vision for the future, a plan to reach it, and measurable goals to confirm progress towards it. To put it one way, these people like to drive to their destination. Other people seem to be moved by a passion that God has given them to serve in the moment and they seem perfectly content to let the future be dictated by God. To put it another way, these people like to be driven to their destination.

- **Do you consider yourself as someone who likes to drive or someone who likes to be driven?**
- **What's comfortable or uncomfortable to you about each?**
- **Do you feel the need to stay in your assigned seat or can you switch from passenger to driver and vice versa?**

# GROWING IN OBEDIENCE & SCRIPTURE

Pastor Jason concludes this message by telling us that oftentimes, God's "no" is a setup for a greater "yes".

This story is an excellent reminder of why we should all be obedient to the Holy Spirit when we have the desire to do something but we are being told, "no". It's not because God doesn't love us or doesn't want the best for us. It's because He is calling us to obey him in that moment for a greater purpose. We may or may not find out what that purpose is but we have to have faith and believe it is for a greater purpose.

Proverbs 3:5-6 says "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight".

Reflect on what you believe God is saying "no" to so there can be a greater "yes"! Share it with someone and talk through it so you don't miss what God is trying to do in your life.

# GROWING WITH CATALYST PEOPLE

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