

IF HIS ANSWER HAD BEEN, “NO!”

August 31, 2014

The word, “no,” means to: “express dissent, denial, or refusal, as in response to a question or request” (<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/no?>). Most, if not all, of us employ the use of this word on a daily basis, especially those of us who have been blessed with the guardianship of children! Sadly, most Christians have come accustomed to hearing the word, “no,” in response to carrying out the Great Commission with which Christ has charged all of us. However, even sadder than that, is the fact that most Christians do not carry out the responsibility of spreading the Gospel to the world.

What would have been the repercussions of Christ saying, “no,” instead of, “yes,” to becoming the only sacrifice that would be able to forgive the sins of mankind? That is where we should all understand the love and beauty of His gift to us, for without it all the people who have ever lived would have died in their sins and would exist eternally in hell (Mt. 26:27-28). How fortunate the human family is that Christ said, “yes,” and selflessly walked to the cross of Calvary and became man’s propitiation for sin.

In return, all He asks is that we remain “steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord” (1 Cor. 15:58). Are we? When was the last time we invited someone to the services of the Lord’s church? Have we put forth a Christian’s effort to gain a Bible study with someone lost in sin? Do we offer excuses when we don’t want to be involved in the efforts of the church? Remember what those efforts are before an answer is given! Christ said His mission was to “**seek and to save that which was lost**” (Lk. 19:10); if that was His mission, then it is every Christian’s mission. Peter demanded, “For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps” (1 Pet. 2:21). Again, when was the last time we were diligent in carrying out the works of the Lord’s church?

What if Christ had said, “no?” When the mob came to Him in the garden, what if His reply to them had been to call the angelic armies to His rescue (Mt. 26:53)? What if Christ had said, “no,” when the soldiers of the governor stripped Him and placed upon Him a scarlet robe in a mocking gesture (Mt. 27:27-28)? Where would we be today if He had simply struck them down in fury? What would have been our outcome if He had said, “no,” when they pressed upon His head the thorny crown as they bowed before him in jest (Mt. 27:29-30)? What would the result have been if Christ had said, “no,” as they drove the nails into His hands and feet? The nails did not keep Jesus on the cross; it was His love for all of us that kept Him there. What if He had said, “no,” when the soldier thrust the spear into His side (Jn. 19:34) and the blood flowed out? Without the precious blood of Christ, none of us would ever have the hope of heaven!

When it is in our power to say, “yes,” the faithful should never say, “no,” to a request by the church to fulfill the duties that Christ has given us to accomplish. Will it at times be inconvenient? Of course it will, but it was not convenient for Jesus to endure the persecutions and afflictions of a hateful people in order to bring salvation to them.

Paul praised Jesus for His sacrifice when he said, “For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us” (Rom. 5:7-8). Everyone is needed if the church is going to be successful. Jesus said, “**The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; Pray ye**

therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest” (Mt. 9:37-38).
What will your answer be? May we all come together and support the congregation of the Lord’s people here.