

God's "Yes"

Multiplication Plan Materials from Mission India
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Did you hear about the pastor who put those **sanitary hot-air hand dryers** in the rest rooms at his church? He thought it would be better for everyone concerned, reducing the amount of paper trash and being better for the environment. But after just two weeks he took them out. Evidently someone had posted a sign next to the hand-dryer in the men's room that said: "For an excerpt from this Sunday's sermon, push the button."

For those of you who did not push the button, I want to talk to you today about God's 'Yes.' And I will begin by contrasting the vast difference between parents and **grandparents!** So far I have only seen things from the perspective of being a child, a grandchild and a parent. I have not yet seen things through the eyes of a grandparent, but I do know there is a big difference between parents and grandparents. The role of the parent is to be the disciplinarian. Parents are required to say "no!" But that is not true with Grandparents. Grandparents are "Yes" people. And kids pick up on that difference quickly. If mom says you can't have a cookie, you go ask Grandma, who usually says that one cookie won't spoil your appetite. And the mother looks at the Grandmother, her mother, and wonders who that person is, and what happened to the person who used to always tell her "no!".

I'm told that being a grandparent is a lot more fun than being a parent because you do get to say 'Yes' more. I have a friend who simply adores one of his granddaughters. He once told me, "I'll never tell her 'no!'" I don't know if he has lived up to that vow, but I'm sure he's come close to it. Grandparents get to be in the position where they don't have to be the one to say "no." Parents are "no" people, but grandparents are "yes" people.

When you think of God, do you think of him as a parent or a grandparent, a "yes" God or a "no" God? Is your view of God framed in the negative or the positive? Listen to Paul's view.

2 Corinthians 1:20 For no matter how many promises God has made, they are "Yes" in Christ.

God loves to say "Yes!" And He has said "Yes" in Christ. Every promise God has made, promises of abundance and care and mercy, they are all YES in Christ. I want you to think with me this morning about some of the ways God has said YES to you.

God says, "Yes, I love you..."

God's love for you is seen in **Creation**. God made it all and gave it to us to use. He made the world for us. He fills our lives with beauty, a testimony to overwhelming love. You see it in the changing of the seasons, in flowers and trees, in the sunrise and sunset. When you hear the sound of the wind or a bird singing or the splash of water running in a stream, you can hear God saying, "I love you!" He created it all for us to enjoy. He gave this world to us saying I love you, and here is the proof.

Creation is a wonderful expression of God's love for you, but that is pretty much summarized in the first few pages of the Bible. The rest of Scripture is a description of God's love that would show itself in the most profound of ways. It is a love story described in terms of patience and mercy and forgiveness and undeserved love and pictured most accurately in the **cross**. There is no greater statement of God's love for you than the cross. In no uncertain terms, your God is saying there, "Yes, I love you!" A Father willing to sacrifice His Son, and listening to Him cry out, "My God, why have you forsaken me?" We can not begin to comprehend the horrible, gut-wrenching, soul-crushing weight of hell that Jesus bore. He was not carrying only your sins, but the sins of everyone when He went to that cross. He did it willingly, for your sake, so that you would not have to go through that awful agony.

John 10:17-18 The reason my Father loves me is that I lay down my life—only to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord.

John 15:13 Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends.

You and I have been privileged to hear this message. God's Spirit has worked through that message to create faith in your hearts that grabs hold of God's Promise and hears the "YES" that He proclaims to you in Christ. You have the assurance of forgiveness and eternal life for Jesus' sake. You know of God's love. You believe His promises in Christ. You have heard Him say "YES" to you.

1 John 3:1 How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!

God says "Yes, I love you. You are my Child." It isn't just a name – it is a reality. You have experienced God's love as His adopted child. You are His. And He wants this for everyone.

Including these children. (Pictures of Children's Bible Clubs). And that is what this Multiplication Plan Project has been all about. You and I have used our talents and abilities and resources to show God's love to children like this in India by sponsoring Children's Bible Clubs that proclaim Jesus their Savior! You and I will probably never know the impact that this Multiplication Plan Project will have in the lives of people. But I am certain it will bring eternal blessings. The results of what you have done in multiplying your \$10 will continue on until Christ comes! He is our Father and however feeble our efforts might be as his children, he says "YES! I will bless your effort."

As parents, we encourage our children in their studies, in their music, in their sports—urging them on with your "yes" of love. Do you think that God does any less for his precious children now? We take to him this symbol of our work and trust in him in the \$10 we have multiplied and ask him to multiply the results of our gift in India. It isn't merely the money that we have made; it is rather the workers that will be trained in India, the Gospel message that will be shared, and the transformation that will flow from the multitude of lives that will be transformed as the Holy Spirit leads more people to know and believe in Jesus Christ. Our Father will now transform what started as such a tiny project—a little game of multiplying \$10, into a lasting harvest of good that will continue in the land of India until He returns! Why? Because we are his children and he loves us.

Do you believe that things like lap quilts and pumpkins and cookies that look like turkeys and garage sales and weight loss challenges and scrapbooks and walking and ham radio cards and jewelry and cookies and auctions on Ebay and lanyards and fried turkeys can have eternal consequences? They can, and they will, because God will work through His children to share His love. When God tells you "YES" to all his promises in Christ this means not only, "Yes, I love you" but it also means, "Yes, I want you to live in the fullest sense of the word!" That means He wants you to be His instruments, His hands and feet, His voice and lips, in sharing His love with those who have not yet heard or believed.

This is so crucial that we share God's love, for without it, people will perish. Forever. I came across a story of a young missionary in the Far East, making the rounds on a cold day. He came across a sick and starving elderly pagan woman. He took her to the shelter of the mission, gave her food and medicine and care and nursed her back to health. When she recovered her strength,

she wanted to know, “Why do you bother with me when no one else cares?” The missionary then started speaking of our Lord Jesus, what He had done for us, and how He sent His followers to help those who suffer, to share God’s love and His “YES” with the world. The old woman thought for a long time, then asked, “This Christ – when did He die?” The missionary told her. After a thoughtful pause, she asked, **“Where have you Christians been for the last 2000 years?”**

Dear Lord, do not let that be said of us! You and I have heard God’s YES plainly in Christ. We have heard and seen God’s YES in the ways we have been blessed in our lives. And now God wants you to be a blessing to others, whether that is sharing the proceeds of this project so that more in India will have the opportunity to hear God’s YES or making the effort to be a blessing to someone you see everyday. **God wants you to help others see and hear and experience His “YES” in their lives.**