

DISCOVERY QUESTIONS

David and the “No” from God
“Pressure Points” Series
Friends Church Yorba Linda
April 1/2, 2017

Main Idea

Sometimes God says “no” to our requests in order to accomplish a bigger plan that He has going behind the scenes.

Discovery Questions

1. What is the most recent unexpected “good” thing you received?

Two weeks ago, as we looked at 2 Samuel 5, we saw how David established Jerusalem as the new capitol city of Israel. Along with this, we were told that David has a house built for him by Hiram, the king of Tyre (2 Samuel 5:11). Then last week, as we looked at 2 Samuel 6, we saw how under David’s leadership, the Ark of the Covenant—the representation of God’s throne here on this earth—is also brought to Jerusalem. But we read in 2 Samuel 6 that there is no formal place to house the ark; it is merely placed inside a “tent” (2 Samuel 6:17).

These two details come together in our passage today. As 2 Samuel 7 opens, we see that David wants to build a “house” for God—a temple—in which to house the Ark of the Covenant. After all, David has a house, so shouldn’t God? But God has an interesting response to David’s request—“No.” As we study this passage, we’ll see why God says “No” to David, and we’ll learn about God’s “no’s” to our own requests, as well.

2. a. Read 2 Samuel 7:1-17. What are the reasons God gives for why he says “no” to David’s request to build a temple? What does God promise to do instead?
- b. Read 2 Samuel 7:18-29. How does David respond to God’s “no”? What stands out to you about David’s response?

We see in this passage that though God said “no” to David, He had something even better in store for him. David would have a “house”—a dynasty—that would last forever. Ultimately, David had to trust God’s promise, knowing he would not be around to see its completion.

Like David, we have to trust that when God says “no” to our requests, He has something better in store. It’s with that in mind that we consider at the following questions.

3. a. How have you seen Christians respond to a “no” from God in the past?
- b. When has God’s “no” to someone you know resulted in something even better for them?
4. a. When is a time that you experienced a “no” from God? How did it turn out? Have you been able to see a reason why God answered “no” to that prayer?

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- b. Is there an area of your life right now where you've been feeling like God might be saying "no" to your request? Describe it to your group. What would it mean for you if God said "no"?
- c. Whenever you hear a "no" from God, how might you remind yourself of the greater plan that He's developing behind the scenes? Do you have any thoughts about what the greater plan could look like?

5. One of the hardest things to hold on to in the midst of hearing a "no" from God is the goodness of God. One of the reasons we gather in groups is so that we can remind each other how God has been good in our lives. Take some time to share together all the ways God has been good in your lives.

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DISCOVERY QUESTIONS

Leader Guide

1. What is the most recent unexpected “good” thing you received?

This is a “lighter” question designed to get the conversation going. Spend about 5-7 minutes on this question.

Two weeks ago, as we looked at 2 Samuel 5, we saw how David established Jerusalem as the new capitol city of Israel. Along with this, we were told that David has a house built for him by Hiram, the king of Tyre (2 Samuel 5:11). Then last week, as we looked at 2 Samuel 6, we saw how under David’s leadership, the Ark of the Covenant—the representation of God’s throne here on this earth—is also brought to Jerusalem. But we read in 2 Samuel 6 that there is no formal place to house the ark; it is merely placed inside a “tent” (2 Samuel 6:17).

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As noted, in this passage David wants to build a “house” for God—a temple that can serve as God’s home on this earth. Other religions had temples for their gods; David no doubt has seen those and feels as though God deserves one of his own.

God says that he doesn’t want a “house” built for Him because He has never lived in a house and He has never asked for a house. We learn elsewhere in the Bible that even when God does get a temple, He wants to make it clear to the Israelites that He cannot dwell in a temple made by human hands (see Acts 7:48).

Instead of David building a “house” for God, God says that He wants to build a “house” for David—a “dynasty” that will last into eternity. God makes it clear in this passage that David will have a descendant that WILL build a house for David (7:13-14, 16). Though there is a question as to whether this passage refers to Solomon (David’s son who DOES build a temple for God) or someone else in the future—an eternal King that will reign forever (see especially 7:13 and 16)—the passage is significantly vague, allowing for both interpretations. There is an immediate fulfillment of God’s Words in Solomon, but there is a much greater fulfillment in Jesus. Thus this passage is a very significant one in Scripture, as it is a prophecy about Jesus.

For part “b,” we see David’s prayer of trust in God and his gratitude for what God has done. This is a very God-exalting prayer and a rich one to read out loud in your group.

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Spend 10-12 minutes on this question in its entirety.

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Like David, we have to trust that when God says “no” to our requests, He has something better in store. It’s with that in mind that we consider at the following questions.

3.
 - a. How have you seen Christians respond to a “no” from God in the past?
 - b. When has God’s “no” to someone you know resulted in something even better for them?

For part “a,” you’ve probably seen a wide variety of responses. Some people are accepting of the “no,” understanding that God may have other things He is planning. Others can get angry or frustrated with God, especially when it doesn’t make sense to us why God would say “No.” Still others continue to plead with God, asking—and believing—that God may end up saying “yes” after a “no.”

Spend 7-10 minutes on this question in its entirety.

4.
 - a. When is a time that you experienced a “no” from God? How did it turn out? Have you been able to see a reason why God answered “no” to that prayer?
 - b. Is there an area of your life right now where you’ve been feeling like God might be saying “no” to your request? Describe it to your group. What would it mean for you if God said “no”?
 - c. Whenever you hear a “no” from God, how might you remind yourself of the greater plan that He’s developing behind the scenes? Do you have any thoughts about what the greater plan could look like?

For these questions, we want to be sensitive to what people are experiencing in the midst of hearing a “no” from God. There may be some in your group, for example, who recently lost a loved one from an illness after praying for them, and are understandably upset and frustrated that God might have said “no” to that prayer. We want to walk with people in the midst of their pain; to “weep with those who weep” (Romans 12:15) and not shout theology at them. Be sensitive, then, to what people are going through as they answer these questions.

For part “c,” sometimes it is possible to “see” what God is working even as He says “no.” Though many of us won’t get a direct explanation like David does in this passage, we may get a “sense” of what God is up to behind the scenes. Sometimes other people can help us see, as well, what God might be doing.

Spend about 10-12 minutes on this question in its entirety.

5. One of the hardest things to hold on to in the midst of hearing a “no” from God is the goodness of God. One of the reasons we gather in groups is so that we can remind each other how God has been good in our lives. Take some time to share together all the ways God has been good in your lives.

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This is simply a time to be reminded of the ways that God has been kind and gracious to us in recent weeks. It could be anything from, "I got an unexpected \$5 gift card to my favorite restaurant" to "I got that job that I really wanted." You may also want to end in a time of prayer, thanking God for His goodness.

Spend 7-10 minutes on this question in its entirety.