Saying “No” to God

2 Peter 2:4-9

Longer passages are not quoted in the study sheet, but they can be read in the accompanying transcript.

You can say “yes” to God or you can say “no” to God; but if you say “no”, you must realize there’s a ______ to pay and much to lose. The Bible teaches the love and the grace of God; it gives us an unchangeable __________ of truth and righteousness. The Scriptures provide both an ______ for the soul and a north ______ to guide us in the right path. It not only helps us to know more about God, the Bible provides a mirror for our ______. The more we study God’s Word, the more we understand about ourselves. We need to be able to see ourselves as God sees us so that we may make the ________ necessary to please Him.

I can think of few things more precious than a newborn ______. I love the thought of something so __________ from heaven. Sweet Jackie and I have twelve grandchildren. We had four daughters of our own, and now we enjoy the love and the blessing of our grandchildren. They’re such a ______! When a little one gets to be about 18 months to 2 years, however, they learn a ______ that starts a challenge that lasts for a lifetime. They learn to say the word “____”! They’ve heard it from their parents, and now they’re telling their parents “no.”

Many think challenging authority is the way to __________! Some never imagine that “doing your own thing” could be more _________ than it’s worth. Saying “no” to God, challenging His __________ doesn’t go unnoticed by God. He sees and knows ______ we do and _____ we do it. We can’t expect to live by our own ________, to act outside the morals of the Scriptures, to ignore the Word of God, and to escape the judgment of Jesus Christ on the last day.

Our reading today is from 2 Peter 2:4-9. The battle of a lifetime is one inside our ______. Ultimately, it’s the battle for our _______. Will you do your own will or will you _________ authority? The first authority is our _______. In time we learn that God is the __________ authority in our lives. The Bible urges us to be ________ how we deal with our inner person. Our hearts are important. Proverbs 4:23 says, “Watch over your heart with all diligence, For from it flow the springs of _______.” If we let our hearts grow selfish and indulgent, we can _______ our lives by a moment’s foolish choice.

Rebellion is an ______ of the heart and will; it’s an act of defiance or resistance to one in authority. God gives us all freewill, and we can say “yes” or “no” to God. We can do God’s will or we can follow our own _______; God won’t stop us. You can choose to do what you ______. You can say “no” to God, but saying “no” to God comes at a great _______. God is gracious to the penitent and the willing; but when people ________ against him, there’s a price to pay. That price is always higher than you think.

In the days of Isaiah, hundreds of years before Christ, the people of Israel had ________ away from God and began living immoral lives that pleased themselves. The Bible says, “‘Come now, and let us ________ together,’ Says the L ORD, ‘Though your ______ are as scarlet, They will be as
white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They will be like wool. If you consent and _______,
You will eat the best of the land; But if you refuse and rebel, You’ll be devoured by the sword.’ Truly,
the mouth of the LORD has spoken” (Isaiah 1:18-20).

Bible history shows that when people said “no” to God, they ______ Him out of their lives and
they did it to their own destruction. God gave Adam and Eve only one boundary in the Garden of
Eden. They could not ______ of the “tree of the knowledge of good and evil.” God said, “in the day
that you eat of it you shall surely ______.” But they listened to the ______ of the devil, and they
chose to say “no” to God and then to sin. They were ______ out of the garden, where they could
have enjoyed eternal life and the fellowship of God. The woman bore children with ______, and the
man would eat his bread by the _______ of his brow “till you return to the ground, for out of the
ground you were taken; and you are dust, and to dust you shall return” (Genesis 3:19).

In Noah’s day people also __________ against God. Read what the Bible says in Genesis 6:5-7.
You’ll remember that God sent a great _______ and destroyed every person except those on the
ark—eight souls in all.

Bible students will remember what happened to Israel as the people came into Palestine. In Joshua
and Caleb’s day, the people _______ to do God’s will. In Numbers 13:1-2, the Bible says: “Then
the LORD spoke to Moses saying, ‘Send out for yourself men so that they may ______ out the land of
Canaan, which I’m going to give to the sons of Israel; you shall send a man from each of their fathers’
tribes, everyone a leader among them.’”

Twelve went out and ten came back and brought a ______ report. The Bible says, “We went in to
the land where you sent us; and it certainly does flow with ______ and _______, and this is its
fruit. Nevertheless, the people who live in the land are strong, and the cities are fortified and very
large; and moreover, we saw the descendants of Anak there” (Numbers 13:27-28). They were
_________ and they counseled the people not to go into Canaan. Numbers 13:32-33 says: “So they
gave out to the sons of Israel a ______ report of the land which they had spied out, saying, ‘The land
through which we have gone, in spying it out, is a land that _________ its inhabitants; and all the
people whom we saw in it are men of great size. There also we saw the Nephilim (the sons of Anak
are part of the Nephilim); we became like ______________ in our own sight, and so we were in their
sight.’”

Numbers 14:1-4 says: “Then all the congregation lifted up their voices and cried, and the people
wept that night. All the sons of Israel __________ against Moses and Aaron; and the whole
congregation said to them, ‘Would that we had died in the land of Egypt! Or would that we had died
in this wilderness! Why is the LORD bringing us into this land, to fall by the ________? Our wives
and our little ones will become plunder; would it not be ______ for us to return to Egypt?’ So they
said to one another, ‘Let us appoint a leader and return to Egypt.’” The people showed a lack of faith;
they _________, and they rebelled against God.

Numbers 14:5-9 says: “Then Moses and Aaron fell on their faces in the presence of all the
assembly of the congregation of the sons of Israel. Joshua the son of Nun and Caleb the son of
Jephunneh, of those who had spied out the land, tore their clothes; and they spoke to all the
congregation of the sons of Israel, saying, ‘The land which we passed through to spy out is an
exceedingly ________ land. If the LORD is ________ with 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 ________ against the LORD; and
do not fear the people of the land, for they will be our prey. Their protection has been removed from
them, and the LORD is with us; do not ________ them.”

Verse 10 says, “But all the congregation said to stone them with stones. Then the glory of the
LORD appeared in the tent of meeting to all the sons of Israel.” The Lord was ________ with Israel and
thought about smiting them all with pestilence. But Moses interceded for the people, asking for their
pardon. The Lord pardoned the people, but they had a _________ to pay.

In Numbers 14:21-23, the Lord God says, “Indeed, as I live, all the earth will be filled with the
glory of the LORD. Surely all the men who have seen My glory and My signs which I performed in
Egypt and in the wilderness, yet have put Me to the test these ten times and have not listened to My
voice, shall by no means see the land which I swore to their fathers, nor shall any of those who
spurned Me see it.” Every rebellious person in that generation twenty years old and upward
__________ in the wilderness. Only Joshua and Caleb entered the Promised Land.

In Jesus’ day, there were disciples who had seen many ___________. When they heard Jesus
________ something they didn’t understand or like, these disciples turned away from the Lord. The
Bible says: “As a result of this many of His disciples ____________, they weren’t walking with Him
anymore. So Jesus said to the twelve, ‘You don’t want to go away also, do you?’ Simon Peter
answered Him, ‘Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the ________ of eternal life. We have believed
and we’ve come to know that You are the Holy One of God”’ (John 6:66-69).

When people say “no” to God, they ________ more than they imagine. They may think they have
gained their freedom to do as they _______, but they often find themselves ________ to sin. Adam
and Eve did as they pleased and were ________ _____ of the Garden of Eden. The people in Noah’s
day ________ their lives. The people in Caleb’s day ________ young and lost their inheritance. The
people in Jesus’ day ________ “eternal life.”

Let’s say “yes” to God. Let’s be ___________ to God’s will. We need to be like Moses. Hebrews
11:24 to 26 says, “By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s
daughter, choosing rather to endure ill-treatment with the people of God than to enjoy the passing
pleasures of ______, considering the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for
he was looking to the reward.”

We need an attitude like the generation who entered the Promised Land after ________ years in
the wilderness. God’s Word says: “They (that is, that younger generation under twenty at the time of
the bad report) answered Joshua, saying, ‘All that you have commanded us we will _____, and
wherever you send us we will _____. Just as we obeyed Moses in all things, so we will obey you; only
may the LORD your God be with you as He was with Moses. Anyone who rebels against the command
and doesn’t _______ the words in all that you (Joshua) command him, shall be put to death; only be
strong and courageous” (Joshua 1:16-18).

Later, Isaiah also showed a marvelous spirit when he said to God, “Here am I. Send me!” (Isaiah
6:8). I’ll go; I’ll do what you ______. Here am I send me. Do you have that ________? We need
the ________ and ________ for God that says, Tell me what to do and I’ll do it. Tell me what it is that
is _______, and I’ll __________ it. We’re not going to ________ with God. We’re not going to give any “ifs,” “ands” or “buts.” We’re going to ________ and do. We’re simply going to trust God enough to ______ whatever He instructs us. We aren’t going to ______ with Him or try to _______ His Word to suit ourselves.

The church began on the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Jesus Christ. It was fifty days after he had been crucified. Peter preached a compelling __________ to the people proclaiming the resurrection of Jesus from the dead and how the Father in heaven had made him both Lord and Christ. When the people heard it, they were pierced to the ________, because they realized the crucified Jesus was indeed the Lord and Christ. They were guilty and cried out, “Men and brethren, what shall we ______?” Peter said to them, “Repent, and each of you be __________ in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:38). The Bible says, “So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were _______ about three thousand souls. They were continually __________ themselves to the apostles’ doctrine (teaching) and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer” (Acts 2:41-42).

These people said “yes” to God, “yes” to repentance, “yes” to baptism, and “yes” to the church! God ________ them with forgiveness and with an abundant new life. He made them His children and heirs and citizens in His __________, the church. They had ______ and they had eternal life. You too are making a __________. Will you have the blessing of God, or will you ______ against God? Will you say “yes” to God, or will you say “no” to God? You can say “no”, but just think about what you’ve _______. Don’t play around when the __________ of your soul is at stake.

I fear these days some folks are more sold on what they ________ about morals and about truth than what God teaches. For instance, they permit all kinds of sin and they endorse them, even though God __________ it. Sometimes when God teaches, they will only say “yes” when God ________ with them. Otherwise, they __________ their own course and ignore the moral teaching and the truth that God gives us. It’s unwise to say God will just ________ us to choose our own ways, our own morals, and our own beliefs. It’s unreasonable to imagine that God will let us ________ and __________ whatever we wish and then never judge our morals, our beliefs, or our actions.

Rather than follow our ______ paths, we ought to say “yes” to God, “yes” to repentance, “yes” to baptism, and “yes” to the church! When we realize that we have sinned, and the ________ of sin weighs on our souls, we ought to repent and be baptized. No “ifs,” or “ands,” or “buts” about it. No substituting what we’d like to do for what God asks us to do. Obedience is doing God’s _______ in God’s _______. It doesn’t attempt to justify error or suggest that we have something better than the ways of God.

Let’s say with our hearts and with our lives, “yes, Lord! We will come to you and serve you by __________ what You’ve taught us. We will, out of faith and love, repent of our sins, confess Jesus Christ as Lord, and we’ll be baptized. We love you and want to be __________ to your will.” Baptism is an immersion in water for the forgiveness of sin. Saying “no” to God or changing the instructions would be the ________ thing that we could do; but saying “yes” and obeying is the best thing we can do. Let’s say “yes” to God and make things right. Let’s not permit one day, not even one day to go by in rebellion to God, but make up our minds today that we will follow the Lord!