

A Mother Who Could Say “No!”

“And his mother answered and said, Not so; but he shall be called John” (Luke 1:60).

In an article published by Mayo Clinic entitled, “Learn How To Say No,” four benefits of saying no are listed: (1) Saying no can be good for you. (2) Saying no can allow you to try new things. (3) Yes isn’t always the best answer. (4) It’s important to allow others to help. Because many are overcommitted and need to reduce stress in their lives, learning to say “No” may also benefit us in various ways.

There are other ideas we should keep in mind when we say “No.” Of course, we should not fabricate a reason to get out of an obligation. Telling the truth is always the right procedure. Neither should we be rude and crude in our response. And, we should not feel guilty for turning down some opportunity to help. Admittedly, it is never easy to say “No.” But, if it will remove undue pressure, we should not hesitate to decline.

Elisabeth became a mother in her old age. When all her friends and neighbors attempted to name the boy after his father, Zacharias, Elisabeth simply said, “Not so; but he shall be called John.” When they put pressure on her about it, she had Zacharias to verify the plan. Here was a mother who could say “No!” Her reasons were not according to Mayo Clinic, but they were acceptable with God.

We can say “No” when we give our devotion to God! Besides being Levites, we are told that Zacharias and Elisabeth “were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless” (Luke 1:6). Elisabeth was bound to the Lord and His purposes, not to the ideas of her friends and neighbors. Thus, saying “No” to her acquaintances was not a difficult matter.

We can say “No” when we get our directions from God! Elisabeth had not always been fascinated by the name “John.” She wasn’t just trying to be different. She had a word from God. When the angel visited Zacharias in the temple, he said, “thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John” (1:13). If we have a word from God, the opinions and persuasions of others should not deter us from obedience.

We can say “No” when we gratify our desires with God! When Elisabeth visited Mary, “the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost” (1:41). The Holy Spirit does not fill rebels, or self-filled renegades. He fills those whose desires are only to please God. Elisabeth was pleased with God’s plan and could say “No” to everyone else’s plan. May the Spirit who filled Elisabeth fill you and me with power, grace and renewed determination.