



college ministry of prairie lakes church

## Learning to Say, “No”

### 3 Reasons you can say, “no”:

- 1) You are not called to do everything (John 6:38; Psalm 127:1)
- 2) You are not called to please people (Galatians 1:10; Colossians 3:22-23)
- 3) God invites you to rest, trusting him to provide for you (Exodus 20:8-11; Psalm 127:2; Hebrews 4:9-10)
- 4) Your identity is not achieved, but given as a gift through Christ (Galatians 3:3; Titus 3:5)

*“There were endless demands on Jesus’ time. People pressed on him with their needs so that he and his disciples had not leisure even to eat...At times the disciples came to him with reproach because he was not available when needed. There must have been those who wanted to be healed who could not get to him...or who learned too late that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by. How many ‘if only’s’ he must have left behind.*

*Yet he took time to rest, withdrawing to the hills to pray alone. Still he was able to make that amazing claim, ‘I have finished the work You gave me to do.’ This was not the same thing as saying he had finished everything he could possibly think of to do or that he had done everything he wanted to do. The claim was that he had done what had been given.*

*There is always enough time to do the will of God.” ~Elizabeth Elliot*

### How to handle any request for your time, money, or energy:

- Say, “thank you” for the opportunity. Express gratitude and curiosity.
- Do not make an immediate decision on the spot, and do not communicate an immediate decision either way.
- Let them know you will “think about that, and get back to them”.
- Give them a specific time you will let them know either way by (normally a few days is enough);
- make a note to yourself so you remember to respond!
- If it is an “urgent request”, simply make the time you will let them know by smaller. Even tell them you will call them back within a few minutes.
- Take intentional time to pray about the opportunity. Seek God’s will in his word. Evaluate your priorities and current commitments. Zoom out and see the big picture.
- When you have determined it is not something you want to invest in, get back in touch with the person. Phone calls or in person are best. Email is last resort.
- Tell them thank you again for the opportunity, but you are going to have to pass. You can say, “In light of my current schedule and commitments, I don’t think this opportunity is best for me at this time.”
- Don’t say: “I’m just way too busy already”; “I’m sorry...”; “I wish I could”
- Don’t fail to follow up or give them the “silent treatment”; honor their request by getting back to them in a timely manner.