

Don't tell me no

I grew up with a theme. Virtually everyone told me “I can't.” Some nice people also added that “I shouldn't” because I am not good enough. I have a friend whose dad told him he would not support him until he proved that he could do it. Do what? Anything really. The point was that if you are not good at something then do not bother trying. It is insane logic! How do you know if you can accomplish goals until you try? How to get better 101? Practice what you fail at!

This is like a broken record. Thomas Edison says He knew 1000 ways not to make a light bulb. We cannot grow if we do not fail. It is a simple but solid life lesson. They also say that those who ignore history tend to repeat it. Learning from our failures is how it works. Yes, we can learn from our success. Yet, success is an event that happens sparingly. Much of our life is spent learning from failure. I am sorry if you do not like that. That is life.

This theme has fueled me. Do not tell me no. I will take your no as a yellow light. I am never looking for the red light. Instead, I am waiting for the green one. There is always a better way. I can learn a new trick. So many inventions happen by accident. Fall off a horse enough times and you will make a better saddle. Yet, my biggest motivation is being told no. I hate no. Do not get me wrong, there are good reasons for hearing no. Yet, in so many instances there is a way around the dreaded word no. Why am I being told no? I find that most of the time humans say no because they do not want you to succeed. It was not their idea. They do not get any of the glory. No is a form of holding you back.

What does God have to say? The Bible says in Matthew 7:7 *“Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.”* So many Christians think

that means we pray and God is obligated to grant our request. Yet, the end of this verse says a lot. The door will be open. People tend to take God literally when they need it. The open door could represent opportunity. What it could also mean is that the path is good but the result might change. If you know your Bible then you know that God is unorthodox in how He gets things done. The result is a benefit to us and to God. Jesus' death is the perfect example. Peter's response to Jesus' dying is the ultimate human response. God chose a different path. A path that saved the world and furthered the kingdom.

Matthew 16:22-23 *“Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. “Never, Lord!” he said. “This shall never happen to you!” Jesus turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns.”*

The most famous people in the world all have stories of someone saying no to them. Yes, there are a few exceptions that had a wonderful friend, parent, or inspiration that said go for it! Most of us unfortunately were told no. Yet, deep inside, these special people took it upon themselves to say yes. How many nay sayers are famous. How many of them invented the light bulb? Jesus told so many people yes you can and yes, I can. How many did Jesus say no too? Peter walking on the water? God is painted as the “no” God. Yet, why did Christianity survive for so long? It is all in the yes answer.

I will run my first full Marathon in august. I believe I can do it. Mainly, I am taking a chance because God encourages me to step out in faith. I put in the work and I believe in an amazing God. Putting that together I have a chance. Yet, my mind is saying no. the training is hard. There is doubt and uncertainty. There have been a few people who say I am too old. Why bother when you cannot win. I have even heard people say that I could get hurt.

I may fail. Yet, the beauty of that is failure produces success. A new way will be open to me. Even if I do not finish, I will win. Trying to overcome the word no is a victory for me. Not giving in to a stagnant life is success. I must try. I do not want to take this verse out of context but it works for me. Philippians 4:13 inspires me. *“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”* The purpose of God is to further His kingdom. To see His will and plan enacted. There is nothing negative or debilitating in this goal of God. Forward is the only way. No is not the best solution. I will run my race. Do you believe the nay sayers in your life?