

SOME SAID "YES" TO GOD, SOME OTHERS "NO"

On Being Generous to Say "Yes" to God calling us.

These jottings are based on the Parable of the Sower. (Mt 13:1-9) and on other N.T. Passages where we read that certain, people when called by Jesus were prompt and ready to say 'YES' to Him, whilst others, explicitly or implicitly said "NO" to the Lord.

Intent If these jottings

- ✓ *To realize that even today, God is calling people to cooperate in his work of salvation.*
- ✓ *God always leaves those whom he calls free to follow or not to follow his call. **He expects our free co-operation***
- ✓ *Any response from our part has to be given 'freely', willingly and lovingly.*
- ✓ *To reflect on the reasons why many people say "NO" to God's call.*
- ✓ *To encourage people to discern their voca-tion and say "YES" to God's call*

Uses of These Notes

For vocational encounters,
For recollections
Talks and sermons
Catechism classes

Target Audience

All Christian audiences
Specially youngsters and youth.

1. Introductory Session

Singing of hymns and/or bhajans.
Opening prayer.

2. An Input Introducing the Topic.

The point to be stressed is the fact that the same seed, scattered by the same farmer should produce such different results!

Similarly, why the call or invitation of God to follow him, meets with so different response results. You may develop the theme on the following lines:

In the Parable we can find four different types of grounds:

- 1st. Hardened ground.** Roadside. Elaborate on this.
- 2nd. Shallow ground.** Little soil. No depth, superficial. Elaborate on this.
- 3rd. Entangled ground.** Thistles-thorn bushes. Elaborate on this.
- 4th. Fertile ground.** Good and deep soil. Elaborate on this.

In real life, we find also people of four different hearts.

1st. **Hardened hearts:** unrepentant, obdurate, closed hearts. Give instances Hardened hearts are not so common.

2nd. **Shallow hearts.** Immature, fickle-minded, wishy-washy hearts. Give instances. Shallow hearts are very common!

3rd. **Entangled hearts:** greedy, worldly, selfish hearts. Give instances. Entangled hearts are very common most common!

4th. **Fertile hearts:** generous, accessible, loving hearts. Give instances. There are fertile hearts, but few!

3. Gospel Case Studies:

Let us reflect on why and how some people mentioned in the Gospel narrative reacted to Jesus' call or invitation to follow Him. Some said "yes", others said "no". What sort of hearts they had?

Note for the Moderator

Make the participants study some passages from the Gospel in which they will find clear cases of how some people opened their hearts to the call of Christ while others closed them to it. In order to do the case studies in a more interesting form, you may make the participants act the passages concerned.

Preparation time:

For this purpose, divide the participants into six groups. The groups should not be smaller than 4 each. If the number of participants is not large enough, drop some the texts. Each group will prepare an act on one of the gospel texts suggested below:

Some said Yes

Mt 1:18-25	The Call of St Joseph. He said "yes".
Lk 5:1-11	The Call of the First Disciples. They said "yes".
Act 9:1-19	The Call of St Paul. He said "yes".

Some said No

Lk. in 10:22-39	The Scribes and Pharisees He said "no".
Mt. I 6:53-69	Wavering Disciples. They said "no".
Mt. 19:16-24	The Rich Young Man He said "no".

Ask each group to bring out forcefully the reason why some people said "yes" to Christ's call, whilst some others said "no".

If need be, they may enlarge and embellish the gospel narrative.

Give the groups enough time to prepare their activities.

Presentation of the activities and discussion

When the groups are ready, call them for a general session.

Each group will present its activity to the house.

After each presentation, help the participants to reflect on the following points.

➤ Who was called and what for?

- Did he say "Yes" or "No"?
- Explain why he said "Yes" or "No".
- What sort of heart he/they had?
 - Hardened? Explain your point.
 - Shallow? Explain your point
 - Entangled? Explain your point.
 - Fertile? Explain your point.

4. Closing Prayer Session

Close down the event with a group prayer session based on some well-known hymns on generosity and vocation.

- Read the lyrics of the hymns of your choice.
- Discuss them, debated upon.
- Pray with them and finally,
- Sing them with gusto and enthusiasm.
- A list of such hymns is given below:

1. Come Follow Me.
2. Come Follow Me.
3. Follow Christ.
4. Go Tell Everyone.
5. Have Thine Own Way, Lord
6. I Abandon Myself.
7. I Have Decided to Follow Jesus.
8. I Surrender All.
9. I'll Say Yes!
10. It Takes Courage to Answer a Call.
11. Just a Closer Walk.
12. Make God Your Guru.
13. Send Forth Your Messengers.
14. Somebody Is Knocking at the Door.
15. The Impossible Dream.
16. The Savior Is Waiting.
17. To Be Like Jesus
18. Walking with the Lord
19. We shall overcome.
20. We Stand for God
21. Where He leads me, I will follow.

APPENDIX

THOUGHTS FOR AN INPUT OR TEACHING ON VOCATION

What we mean by Vocation”?

- We named the call of Jesus to follow Him, by the word “Vocation”.
- The word ‘ VOCATION’ can be taken both in a generic and in a specific or particular sense:
- A General Call’ or ‘General Vocation” is given to all Christians to follow Jesus and proclaim the Good News. We name it: “**Christian Vocation**”.
- The specific and individual call given to each Christian person, within their General Christian Vocation, we name “**Particular Vocation**”
- **Particular Vocation** it is Jesus calling each Christian Follower to a **particular work or state of life.**
- Among many possible particular calls we find the call or **Vocation to the Priesthood and/or to the Religious Life, to marriage, or to single consecrated life.**

Vocation in the Scriptures:

- We see in the Bible, both the Old and the New Testament, that **God always seeks human co-operation to work his wonders.**
- **Though God does not need us. He wants us!** He wants us to be his partners and co-operators in the work of salvation.
- Some instances in the Bible are: Abraham, Moses, the Patriarchs, Young Samuel, the Prophets, Our Lady, St. Joseph, the Apostles, St Paul, etc.
- **Some people**, who were called by God, listened to his invitation. They **said YES to Him.** E.g. Abraham, Samuel, our Lady, St. Paul.
- **Some others said NO to Him.** e.g. Absalom, Jeroboam, Judas, The Rich Young Man, the Tree Would-be Followers. Etc.
- Were it not for those generous people who said ‘YES’ to God, nothing would have been accomplished in the work of salvation.
- How much good has remained undone because of lack of a generous response of so many people!
- Think of the frightful state of the world today, and what it might have been if everybody would say YES to Jesus!
- **Today, as in former days, God keeps on calling us all to do something great for him and for the world.**
- What is He calling you for do today?
- Surely, with His help, you can work wonders in our days?
- **What will your response be? “Yes” or “No “?**