

Stories 3.0: Why God Says “No”

Today’s Story: Wanda Smith

📖 2 Corinthians 12:7–9a (NIV) “To keep me from becoming conceited because of these surpassingly great revelations, there was given me a thorn in my flesh, a messenger of Satan, to torment me. ⁸ Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. ⁹ But he said to me...”

WHY DOES GOD SOMETIMES SAY “NO”?

Because of His **BASIC PRINCIPLES**

1. When **our sins have stacked up**. (Psalm 66:18)
📖 Psalm 66:18 (NIV) “If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened...”
2. When **our motives are wrong**. (James 4:3)
📖 James 4:3 (NIV) “When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.”
3. When **we doubt God**. (James 1:6-7)
📖 James 1:6–7 (NIV) “But when he asks, he must believe and not doubt, because he who doubts is like a wave of the sea, blown and tossed by the wind. ⁷ That man should not think he will receive anything from the Lord...”
4. When **we ignore Scripture**. (Proverbs 28:9)
📖 Proverbs 28:9 (NIV) “If anyone turns a deaf ear to the law, even his prayers are detestable.”
5. When **we are disobedient**. (1 John 3:22)
📖 1 John 3:22 (NLT) “And we will receive from Him whatever we ask because we obey Him and do the things that please Him.”

Because of His **BROADER PERSPECTIVE**

📖 Proverbs 2:7–8 (NIV) “He holds victory in store for the upright, He is a shield to those whose walk is blameless, ⁸ for He guards the course of the just and protects the way of His faithful ones.”

📖 Psalm 139:16 (Msg) “Like an open book, you watched me grow from conception to birth; all the stages of my life were spread out before you, The days of my life all prepared before I’d even lived one day.”

Because of His **BETTER PLAN**

📖 Hebrews 11:39–40a (Msg) “Not one of these people, even though their lives of faith were exemplary, got their hands on what was promised. ⁴⁰ God had a better plan...”

📖 Jeremiah 29:11 (NIV) “For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”

Because of His **BIGGER PURPOSE**

📖 Isaiah 53:5 (NIV) “...He was pierced for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon Him, and by His wounds we are healed.”

📖 2 Corinthians 4:16–17 (NIV) “Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. ¹⁷ For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.”

📖 2 Corinthians 12:8–9 (NIV) “Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it away from me. ⁹ But He said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me.”

Digging Deeper: Are you currently struggling with a “No” from God? What have you asked God to do that He hasn’t yet done? Based on the first point in today’s message, are there any Scriptural reasons why your prayers are unanswered? Do you believe God has a good plan for your life? Have you learned to appreciate a “No” from God? Have you ever seen or experienced a miracle?