

Faith enables us to say yes to God even when our life experience warns us to say no. Faith confronts the doubts, the fears, the improbabilities, and embraces the truth that with God all things are possible!

John 8:1-11 but Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. 2 Early in the morning he came again to the temple; all the people came to him, and he sat down and taught them. 3 The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery, and placing her in the midst 4 they said to him, "Teacher, this woman has been caught in the act of adultery. 5 Now in the law Moses commanded us to stone such. What do you say about her?" 6 This they said to test him, that they might have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground. 7 And as they continued to ask him, he stood up and said to them, "Let him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her." 8 And once more he bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground. 9 But when they heard it, they went away, one by one, beginning with the eldest, and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him. 10 Jesus looked up and said to her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?" 11 She said, "No one, Lord." And Jesus said, "Neither do I condemn you; go, and do not sin again."

Meditation by Don Schwager:

Are you ready to be changed and transformed in Christlike holiness? God never withholds his grace from us. His steadfast love and mercy is new every day (Lamentations 3:22-23). Through the gift and grace of the Holy Spirit we can be changed and made new in Christ. He can set us free from our unruly desires and passions. Jesus never lost an opportunity to bring freedom to those oppressed by sin and guilt. His frequent association with sinners, however, upset the sensibilities of the religious leaders. When a woman caught in adultery was brought to them for trial, they confronted Jesus on the issue of retribution. Jewish law treated adultery as a serious crime since it violated God's ordinance and wreaked havoc on the stability of marriage and family life. It was one of the three gravest sins punishable by death. This incident tells us a great deal about Jesus' attitude to the sinner. The scribes and Pharisees wanted to entrap Jesus with the religious and civil authorities. That is why they brought a woman caught in adultery before Jesus. Jesus turned the challenge towards his accusers. In effect he said: Go ahead and stone her! But let the man who is without sin be the first to cast a stone. The Lord leaves the matter to their own consciences. When the adulterous woman is left alone with

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Jesus, he both expresses mercy and he strongly exhorts her to not sin again. The scribes wished to condemn, Jesus wished to forgive and to restore the sinner to health. His challenge involved a choice – either go back to your former way of sin and death or to reach out to the new way of life and happiness with him. Jesus gave her pardon and a new start on life. God's grace enables us to confront our sin for what it is – unfaithfulness to God, and to turn back to God with a repentant heart and a thankful spirit for God's mercy and forgiveness. Do you know the joy of repentance and a clean conscience? "God our Father, we find it difficult to come to you, because our knowledge of you is imperfect. In our ignorance we have imagined you to be our enemy; we have wrongly thought that you take pleasure in punishing our sins; and we have foolishly conceived you to be a tyrant over human life. But since Jesus came among us, he has shown that you are loving, that you are on our side against all that stunts life, and that our resentment against you was groundless. So we come to you, asking you to forgive our past ignorance, and wanting to know more and more of you and your forgiving love, through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Prayer of Saint Augustine)

Supplementary Reading

Dare to Say Yes

"And by faith even Sarah, who was past childbearing age, was enabled to bear children because she considered him faithful who had made the promise." – Hebrews 11:11

Has anyone ever said to you, "You would be excellent at..."? You know it's true, but it seems beyond your reach. You believe God can do anything, but that? No, that's impossible! God challenges you as he did Sarah, "Is anything too hard for me?" His dream might seem impossible, but the fact that it can only be done with God's help is evidence that it is God's dream. We can do the possible all by ourselves—the impossible requires God's intervention. Faith enables us to say yes to God even when our life experience warns us to say no. Faith confronts the doubts, the fears, the improbabilities, and embraces the truth that with God all things are possible! Sarah laughed at God, but God saw a hint of faith mixed with her doubts.

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Believe in the impossible. Nothing is too hard for God!

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When faced with what seemed impossible, Sarah chose to put her faith in a God who had been faithful to his promises in the past. Is there anything that seems impossible in your life right now? Come up with a list of reasons (based on past experiences) why you believe God will do the impossible for you.

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Note: This excerpt was taken from the "Power for Life Daily Devotion

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