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Here's Help for the "I Can't Say `No' Blues"

By **Kimberly Chastain**

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I hear it all the time. Cries from Christian women who want desperately to serve the Lord, but who feel overwhelmed. "I almost dread going to PTO meetings or church services anymore because I just know somebody else is going to ask me to help with something," they say. "Don't get me wrong. I want to help, but there are only so many hours in my day. I feel like I'm just going to explode if I don't get some relief."

What usually follow these statements are apologies. "I'm sorry. I don't mean to complain. I've been blessed with so much that I have no choice but to give back. And I really am glad to do it. Anyway, as a Christian, I'm obligated to say `yes' when called on to help. Plus, if I don't do it, it simply won't get done."

Does any of that sound familiar to you? Have you found those same statements coming from your own mouth? Do you rush around all throughout your days doing for others whether you have time to do it or not? Do you cringe whenever the phone rings and the voice on the other end starts with, "Let me ask you something"? Do you have too much stress, not enough time, and a boatload of guilt for feeling the way you do? Then you most likely suffer from "I Can't Say `No'" Syndrome.

The Bible Says It's OK To Say No

While your intentions are probably good, the effects of your actions often turn out to be horrendous. Your husband fusses that you're running yourself ragged. Your children complain that you have no

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time for them. You gripe under your breath about everything because you're so sensitive.

Are you aware that it's all right to say "no"? In fact, the Bible says it is OK to say "no." Jesus, himself, clearly took time to rest as can be seen in Mark 4:38 among other passages. Even the son of God (in human form) knew His human body, mind, spirit, and soul needed a break from time-to-time. You, too, are expected to rest and take care of yourself. How else can you make your body a living sacrifice... a temple... as the Bible instructs?

Feeling Guilty Is Biblically WRONG!

This is a real shocker to most people. In cases like these, Satan, not God, uses guilt to sway our actions. Psalm 69:5, Isaiah 6:7, Isaiah 27:9, and countless other passages of scriptures refer to the sin of guilt. Jesus died for our sins. That means, when we repent of our sin, it is wiped clean. There is no guilt.

Satan often uses the ploy of false guilt to overwhelm us. Don't let him work his tricks on you. This is nothing more than an attempt to keep you trapped and feeling depressed about not spending every minute of every day doing something for someone else.

God doesn't want you run down and tired all the time. How can you effectively serve Him if you barely

have enough energy to get out of bed? Why would He want someone "praising" Him who is disgusted and cranky? Walking the tightrope of "I Can't Say `No'" is not God's idea of a fruitful life.

There Is A Better Way

Take time for yourself. Have you ever been on an airplane? Do you remember the spiel the flight attendant gave before take off? It went something like this: "In the event of a decrease in pressure, an oxygen mask will fall from the panel above your head. If you're traveling with an older person or child, please secure YOUR OWN mask first so that you may better assist your travel partner." Even the airlines know you have to take care of yourself before you can effectively take care of anyone else.

Pray about the things people ask you to do. Actually wait for an answer from God before you give an answer to the committee chairman, the scout troop leader, or whoever else is asking for your help. Others will respect you when you tell them you'll pray about their request... especially if you really do it!

You are not trapped. There is a way to overcome "I Can't Say `No'" Syndrome. The first step is admitting you need help. Once you do that, you're open to living a freeing and more peaceful life than you ever thought possible.

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Kimberly M. Chastain, MS, LMFT is the Christian Working Mom Coach and a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist who specializes in helping Christian women make the most of their lives. She is the author of the on-line course, "I Can't Say No" and Pearls of Encouragement for Christian Working

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Moms, a free e-book. If you suffer from "I Can't Say `No" Syndrome, visit Kimberly's site today for the details on an exciting email course that's sure to set you free!

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The Color Blue: What Does It Mean to You?

By Dylan Miles

Colors are important in our lives. They are all around us; in nature, in our homes, and in the clothes we wear. The color blue means different things on different levels. Blue is natural, practical, and symbolic. We choose to wear specific colors to say something about us. The color blue is often associated with the serenity of the sky, with a sad and depressed mood, or with the music of the Blues. Some countries, like Greece, have blue as their national color and have it on their national flag.

What does blue mean to you?

You probably associate the color blue with the blue of the sky and the ocean, and if you do, then you also associate blue with serenity and peace. It's no wonder! Blue is very much a tranquil color. In fact, it is said that the color blue produces chemicals that calm and soothe the mind and body. For this reason, blue is one of the most popular color choices for bedroom walls, and is often used to paint baby room walls.

Blue is often associated with "feeling blue" or being depressed. But studies show that the color blue inspires productivity in people. People, it is said, work better in blue rooms. And more than that, some fashion experts suggest that wearing blue to a job interview is great because blue makes a statement about loyalty. Blue creates the opposite impression of red, which is a color associated with power and passion. Fashion experts suggests wearing red to a job interview if you want to show power and strength.

Blue is also associated with the music genre, the Blues. In fact, the basic characteristic of the Blues is the "blue note", an irregular music note. The Blues are often sung about lost love and troubles, but in general blue is a positive, calming and serene presence in our lives.

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