

The main idea from the teaching this Sunday was that Jesus often told people “no”. He was able to do so because He knew who He was and what His purpose was. When the requests of the people conflicted with who He was and what His purpose was, He said “no”. When the most loving thing He could do was to say “no”, He did.

Take a look again at some of the passages like Mark 1:29-39; John 6:1-15; and Luke 5:12-16.

- What did Jesus do in each of these accounts?
- Where did He go in each of these accounts?
- Why did He go there?
- What do you imagine Jesus’ prayer life was like? What kind of prayers do you think He offered up?
- How many times can you think of that Jesus prayed in public?
- Do you think there’s a lesson in the proportion of Jesus public vs. private prayer life?
- What would you say the ‘purpose’ of a public prayer is?
- What would you say the ‘purpose’ of a private prayer is?
- Do you think Jesus was renewed or found strength through His prayer times?
- What evidence can you think of to back up your answer?
- Do you think prayer could have the same impact on you?
- The big questions, of course, are, “Who does God say you are and what is your purpose?”
- What other messages does the world tell us about who we are and what our purpose is?
- How can we be intentional about returning to or remembering who God says we are and what He says our purpose is?
- Is doing so an active part of your faith journey?
- How can the others in your group help you make it a regular and active part?

We also looked at a couple of passages where Jesus told individuals that their behavior was not appropriate, in other words, He confronted them. Take a look at Matthew 26:47-54; Mark 10: 35-45; and Luke 12:13-21.

- What behaviors or attitudes did Jesus confront in each of these narratives?
- Did Jesus ‘sugar coat’ it by giving disclaimers and apologies about His rebuke?
- Why not?
- Is it possible to lovingly confront with boldness?
- Jesus did more in each of these narratives than say “no” or “stop”. What else did He do?
- What does Jesus using these opportunities as teachable moments convey to those He was confronting (vs. simply saying no or being angry with them)?
- We sometimes say, “Jesus loves you just the way you are; but He loves you too much to leave you that way.” What does that mean to you?
- Should the same be true of our love for others?