

Let Their Yes Be No...

BY TONY GUERRERO

“yes” is a great word. As leaders and as creative thinkers, we love to hear it. We tend to gravitate towards people who tell us “yes” and then fill our teams with them. Such people often receive favored treatment and people who tell us “no” are looked upon as negative, or even creativity killers.

Leading a music team (or any team) can be a breeding ground in our lives for pride. Often, all the adulation for the efforts of the whole team come to us, and we often forget to share it.

CONSIDER THESE QUESTIONS:

What kind of leader are you? How comfortable are your people when it comes to questioning your decision-making? More importantly, how correctable are you when someone questions your judgment?

I’m not suggesting that every decision—every song choice, every arrangement choice, every detail—needs to go through a committee. God has always made sure to appoint leaders, and leaders have the right and duty to make calls as they see fit. And in most committee decisions, there still needs to be an ultimate authority who will assume the responsibility for the decisions made and directions that are taken.

But be wary of creating an environment where people are afraid to come to you with disagreements. If your team members feel like they are not able to raise questions or offer different suggestions, you are in danger of becoming a one-man show—a dangerous place for any minister.

There are several ways this environment is unhealthy:

DISSENT:

People will disagree with you from time to time. There is nothing inherently wrong with that, but human nature dictates that if they are not free to voice it to you, they will begin to voice it to each other. Such dissent is a violation of Matthew 18 (where we are called to speak directly with the source of our disagreements) and is a fertile ground for gossip.

BURNOUT:

When we bring creative people on our teams, our initial display of excitement often sets people up to believe they are going to be able to truly contribute creatively. Over time, as they realize that you never really listen to their ideas and that you pretty much do things your way all the time, they will inevitably burn out under your

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leadership. Creative people need to have creative outlet. If you are not nurturing their creative ideas, they will eventually go serve under someone that will.

SHALLOW CREATIVITY:

I don't care how talented and creative you are. If there is, even, one other person on your team, and their creative input is ignored, your team is not reaching its full potential. How foolish to have a team consisting of multiple creative minds and experiences and yet only utilize the talents of one.

CORRECTABLE SPIRIT:

It's easy to feel like we are strong leaders when no one is allowed to raise questions about our decisions. The truly skilled leader will, instead, learn how to lead in the open environment of multiple views and gifts.

You may be a talented leader in many ways, but you can never be a wise leader if there is no willingness to yield to wise counsel. Are you allowing yourself to be corrected?

My dear friend and mentor, Morris Chapman, spoke to our team recently and had us repeat the following: “I’m bold enough to speak what I perceive and is revealed to me to be the truth, but one of the first signs of the anointing is I’m humble enough to be corrected.” Then he said, “That’s going to make this a better department: if everyone has a correctable spirit.” Everyone. Not just those under authority, but also those who are in authority.

James 3:17 states, “But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure. It is also peace loving, gentle at all times, and willing to yield to others” (NLT). And Proverbs 13:10 teaches us that “Pride leads to arguments; those who take advice are wise.”

I would suggest that you examine your situation. Have you only surrounded yourself with people who feel safe saying “yes” to you, or do you have collaborators who will offer wise counsel? Is there at least one person, or preferably a team of trusted people, whom you are allowing to come to you and tell you “no”? Do you welcome the ideas of others and actually put them to use, even when you might not be wholly comfortable? Are you correctable?

Biblically, that is the wise way to lead.



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