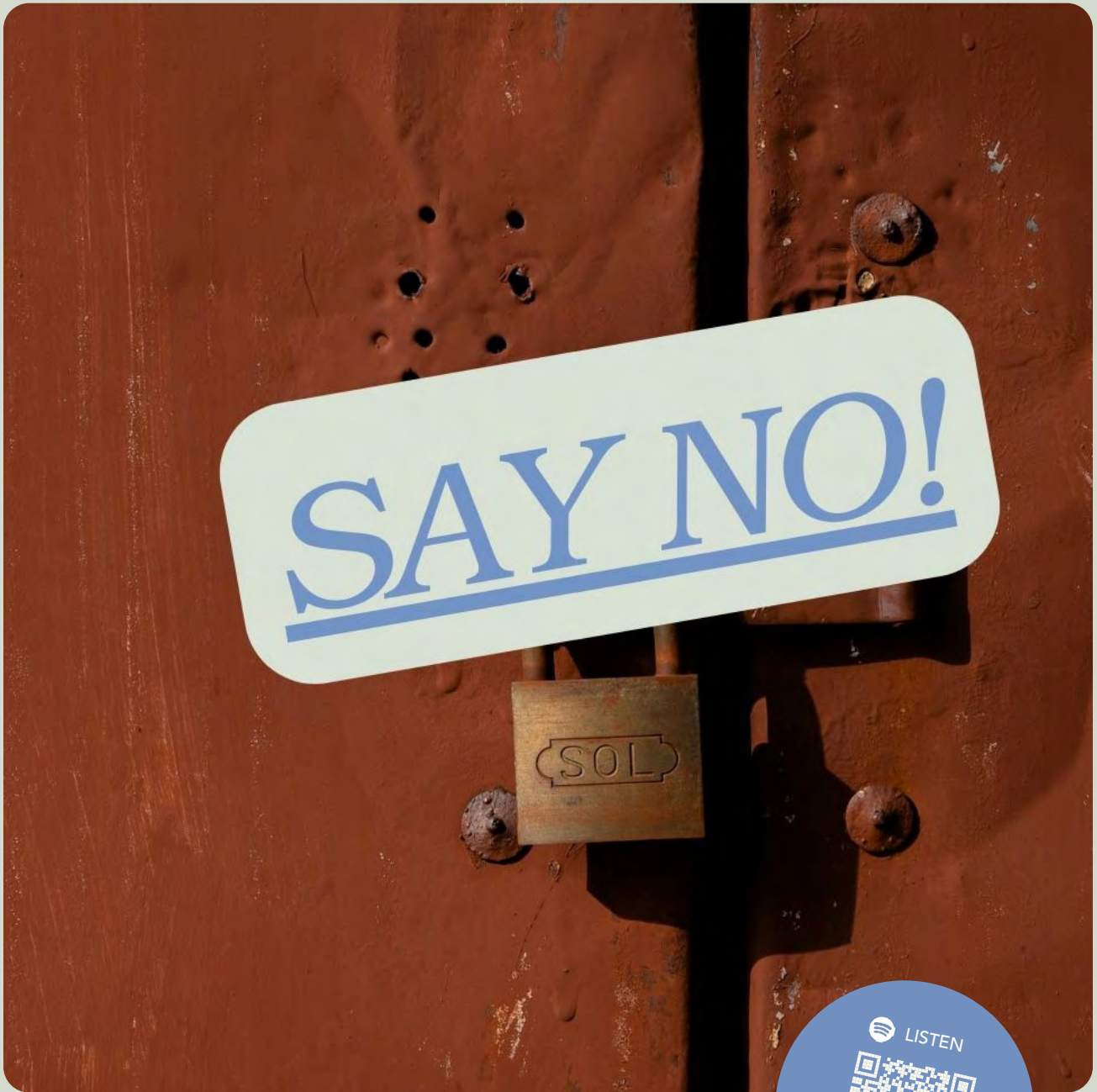


Thursday, March 6, 2025



Day 02

“Jesus returned from the Jordan full of the Holy Spirit and he was led by the Spirit to spend forty days in the desert, where he was tempted by the devil.”

—LUKE 4:1-2 (PHILLIPS)

Reflect

It’s hard to resist the pull towards something we know isn’t our best choice. There are those small pleasures we reach for when we need a little boost, like the bedtime doom scrolling or perfecting a Pinterest board that whispers, *Escape is possible*. Then there are those moments when we feel the urge to do or say something that doesn’t quite line up with our values. Those times when everything within us may rise up to say “Go ahead, it’ll feel amazing!” And maybe it does—for about five seconds. But those choices tend to overpromise and underdeliver. Sometimes, restraint, while annoyingly difficult, can be like a gift—not to the person who maybe *did* deserve your snappy comeback—but to your future self. The you who will be glad you held back, stayed true, and made space for grace to do its quiet work.

Respond

What is the hard thing you want to say no to, and what is the yes behind it that you want to carry forward?

Blessing to see clearly

*Yes, we will grieve,
but not as those in denial.
We will suffer,
but not as those entombed
in loneliness.*

*We will join the ranks of afflicted,
the weak, and the vulnerable.*

*We do it willingly. (Okay, not always.)
But we are being shown
what is plastic and what is gold.*

*We are drawn forward by glimpses
of something better—
a world where cruelty and injustice
cannot sustain themselves,
where the cycles of harm
finally collapse
under their own weight.*

*Once you've seen it,
you can't unsee it.*

*Blessed are we
who now know the value
of what must be let go
and what must be held tightly.*

*May we carry forward
only what is true,
what is good,
what is beautiful
trusting this:
love never fails.²*

² Kate Bowler. "To See Clearly" in *Have a Beautiful, Terrible Day: Daily Meditations for the Ups, Downs, and In-Betweens*. (New York: Convergent Books, 2024). 147.