

The father asked something very simple of his son. He asked him to go and work in his vineyard. It was like any other chore. Clean your room, take out the garbage, walk the dog, feed the cat. Dads asks their children to do things all the time. But when this father asked the son to go and work in the vineyard, the son said no. He didn't want to do any chores. Later, though, the son felt bad about it. His father really wasn't asking too much. So he changed his mind and did his chores in the vineyard.

The father had another son. He also asked this son to go and work in the vineyard. The son said, "Sure, Dad, I'll go right now." The father smiled, patted his son on the head, and went away grateful that at least **one** of his boys listened to him. Unfortunately, this son also changed his mind. He thought about working in the vineyard all day- the dirt, the hot sun- and he said, "Forget it! I don't want to do that!"

Two sons. One said, "no", but then changed his mind. The other said "yes", but then changed **his** mind.

Every day we make decisions. And every day we change our minds, sometimes for the better, sometimes for the worse. A 6th grader was once

very nervous about an upcoming science test. So that morning he scribbled a few ink-sketched notes on the palm of his hand. Then... he thinks about what his mom would say and starts to have a change of heart. His plan was to cheat, to take the easy way out. But he changed his mind and washed the cheat notes off his hands right before class. Every day we're faced with choices like this. We make countless decisions about how faithful we're going to be to God. Every day we're faced with the dilemma of how much we're going to allow Jesus to shape how we act toward others. As Christians, what choices are **we** going to make? We **fight** against the temptation, but often we **flirt** with it.

Sometimes we say "yes", sometimes we say "no". And sometimes we actually do change our minds- sometimes for the better, but often for the worse.

We know what it was like for that first son, the one who said "no." He knew what his father wanted, and he knowingly went against his father. He may even have enjoyed saying no. It may have given him a sense of independence. But later on he thought about his "no". This was

his *father*, after all. As much as he didn't want to do the work or didn't want to obey his father, the son remembered all his father had done for him, and he changed his mind. So did the other son. Both changed their minds. Each made a decision, each thought about it, and then each changed his mind.

As Christians, we know what it's like to change our minds. Christians probably change their minds the most in this world. We really do. Our Father in heaven has asked all of us to go and live Christian lives in this world. He's asked you to be holy in an unholy world. He's asked you to be a reflection of His Son to everyone you meet every day. God has asked you to be the mirror image of His Son while you're at home, at work, at play. And we say, "Yes, Father, I'll do as you ask. Sure, I'll let Your Son be reflected in my life for everyone to see." But then, five minutes after walking out of this church, husbands and wives are fighting just like always, kids aren't listening to their parents. Gossiping runs rampant. Our renewed zeal to be faithful Christians blows away the second the outside air touches us. Our thoughts race to fill sinful desires before our feet even

step out of the car when we get home. “Sure, God, I’ll do what you ask. I’ll be faithful to you.” But God should never hold His breath too long when it comes to our keeping promises.

Our Father in heaven asks us to do hard things. He asks us to be perfect in an imperfect world. He asks us to go and be the image of Jesus when we don’t even like what we see in the mirror when we wake up. God asks us-**us!**- to be His ambassadors in this world. He asks a lot. God demands a lot.

Jesus knows what it’s like for us to struggle with what God the Father asks. In eternity, God the Father spoke to His Son and said, “Son, I love you. But I have a very hard chore for you to do. I need you to go to work, to go to earth. I need you to take on flesh and blood. I need you to be beaten by whips, crowned by thorns, and, Son- I’m so sorry to ask this of you- but I need you to die in their place. Will you do this for me?” Even though this task was so terrible, Jesus looked and Jesus wrestled with it; He struggled. But He never changed His mind. He stuck with what God asked Him to do because Jesus knows us. He knows we will always

change our minds. He knows we'll never be able to do perfectly what our heavenly Father asks.

God knows we're going to change our minds. Sometimes we'll be like the first son who said no but then did the right thing. Sometimes we'll be like the second son who said yes but then did the wrong thing. At times we will find ourselves with answers written on the palm of our hand. We'll find ourselves putting the wrong numbers on tax form. At times we will find ourselves wishing something bad would happen to someone we don't like. We'll find ourselves knowing what is right in God's eyes and knowing we're doing the exact opposite. It will happen. It will happen.

We're always going to be changing our minds- sometimes for the good, sometimes for the bad. But we're never alone. We've been baptized into Jesus. We see through His eyes the determination to do the Father's will, even to the point of death. Every day when we're faced with the struggle of what to do, we'll have Jesus there saying, "Remember me. Remember what I did for you on the cross. You don't have to make the wrong choices anymore. I am your strength. Don't be afraid to give up

your old ways for Me. Don't be afraid to give up your love of sinning for a new love in Me. My body and blood with the bread and wine will strengthen you; the new life I've poured over you in Baptism will refresh you." Every day when we're faced with the choice to do our heavenly Father's will, our Brother Jesus is with us, reminding us that He's already done for us everything the Father asked.

Even though we'll change our minds, Jesus will hold onto us and always say yes to the Father for us. He will never change **His** mind. "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever" (Heb. 13:8). He will never change His mind about saving us. He will never change His mind about forgiving us. And He will never, ever change His mind about raising us from the dead. "Yes, Father, I have done what you asked, and I will continue to do your will. I will never change my mind." Yes, we're double-minded, but Jesus will never change His mind.

How good for us to know that. How good for us, who change our minds at the drop of a hat, to know that one Man won't change His mind. Jesus will never change His mind about us. Amen.