

OCHI DAY IN GREECE

October 28 is Ochi Day in Greece, a national holiday. In October 1940, Italy planned to invade Greece and requested passage into the country. General Ioannis Metaxas responded simply, "Ochi!" (No, in Greek).

Greece not only refused to open its borders but heavily outnumbered Greek forces drove Mussolini's troops back deep into Albania. But Germany came to Italy's aid, and by the following April, German forces defeated the defenders and occupied Greece.



Many historians believe that if Metaxas had not said "No!" World War II would have lasted much longer. If Greece had surrendered without resistance, Hitler could have invaded Russia in the spring rather than waiting until winter; the results of waiting were disastrous for Hitler. Ochi Day commemorates the anniversary of Metaxas' answer with military parades and special services in many Greek orthodox churches.

Some people have a hard time saying no, but it is a word that God expects His children to use. Once we accept His gift of salvation, we are instructed to turn away from "godless living and sinful pleasures" (Titus 2:12). It's easier to deny things that are obviously evil, but sometimes we get in trouble when we fail to resist thoughts, actions or relationships that seem harmless enough, yet are not within God's will for us. Small compromises can lead to an invasion of sin in our lives.

Anytime we say no to sin, we are saying yes to God. He wants to give us the wisdom, strength and guidance to help us live a righteous life that brings glory to Him. By relying on His Spirit to help us say "ochi" to sin, a negative answer guarantees positive results.

--Beecher Hunter