

# What's Your Excuse?

Ex 3:1-4:17

## Introduction:

1. Managers were surveyed to make a list of the most popular excuses
  - a. #5 – “No one told me to go ahead and do it.”
  - b. #4 – “I didn’t think it was that important.”
  - c. #3 – “I didn’t know that you were in a hurry for it.”
  - d. #2 – “That’s not my department.”
  - e. #1 – “I forgot.”
2. Someone said, “An excuse is the skin of a reason, stuffed with a lie.”
3. Someone else said, “Excuses are the nails that build the house of failure”
4. When God appeared to Moses at the burning bush.....
  - a. He called Moses to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt
  - b. Moses gave excuses why he was not the man for the job
5. As Moses was called by God so too we are called to serve God
6. Too often we act like Moses even using the same excuses he used
7. Read Ex 3:1-10 to review the call of Moses
  - a. The time
  - b. The purpose
  - c. The authority
8. Moses was the ideal choice for this work
  - a. He was once a member of the ruling family of Egypt
  - b. He received the best education that Egypt had to offer
  - c. He was familiar with the workings of the Egyptian court
9. Moses was to bring the Israelites out of bondage so that they could have happiness, hope and freedom to worship God
10. We are sent out into the world to deliver the gospel which is a message that can bring happiness, hope and freedom to the lost
11. Moses was to lead the children of Israel to a better land – one that was fertile, had abundance and beauty
12. We are to tell others about a better land – the land of heaven – a land of beauty and abundance
13. There used to be a song – a long time ago...

Excuses, excuses – you hear them every day  
The devil will supply you if from church you stay away  
When people come to know the Lord, the devil always loses  
And so to keep them from God’s house, he offers them excuses.

## I. Excuse #1 – Ex 3:11

**11** And Moses said unto God, Who *am* I, that I should go unto Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?

### A. “Who Am I?” - Inadequacy

- Reasons for Moses’ excuse
  - He was a lowly shepherd*
  - 40 yrs had passed since he was in Egypt*
  - He tried once to lead the Israelites - ended up killing an Egyptian*
  - He was 80 yrs old and the false confidence of his youth was gone*
  - Standing against Pharaoh would be a dangerous task and Moses certainly needed God’s help to fulfill the task*
- God’s response was quick and should have been adequate – Ex 3:12  
**12** And he said, **Certainly I will be with thee...**
  - “Certainly” – this is an emphatic promise*
  - God promised to be with Moses and this should have been enough*
  - It was not who Moses was, it was who God was*
  - It was not Moses’ abilities – it was God’s character*

### B. Some Use This Excuse Today

- We often try to excuse ourselves by believing that we are inadequate
  - It is true that, by ourselves, we are insufficient*
  - But God can make us sufficient – 2Cor 3:5-6*
  - Look what He did with the apostles – untrained and uneducated men – Acts 4:13*
- The promise of God’s presence is echoed throughout Scripture – need we ask more?
  - Jos 1:5 There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.*
  - Jer 1:8 Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the LORD.*
  - Mt 28:20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.*
- If God be for us, then who can be against us? – Rom 8:31
- With God’s help we can accomplish anything He has us to do – Phil 4:13
- God specializes in taking the weak and making them strong
- Those who think they can do it without God – He doesn’t use
- God has sent us, His presence is with us, His Word is in us, He is almighty – what else do we need?
- Making excuses is just a smokescreen

## II. Excuse #2 – Ex 3:13

**13** And Moses said unto God, Behold, *when* I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, *What is his name? what shall I say unto them?*

### A. “What Shall I Say?” - Insufficiency

1. Moses knew that if he did go to the children of Israel, there were bound to be questions
  - a) *“Who is this God who sent you to us?”*
  - b) *“Why are we to leave this country that we have come to consider our home after over 400 yrs?”*
  - c) *The Israelites had been away from God for so long that they didn’t even remember Him anymore.*
2. Again, God’s response was quick
  - a) **14** *And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you. 15 And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, The LORD God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you: this is my name for ever, and this is my memorial unto all generations.*
  - b) *God tells Moses what he should say*

### B. A Similar Excuse is Sometimes Used Today

1. We often try to excuse ourselves by saying that our knowledge is inadequate
  - a) *We don’t think that we are experienced enough*
  - b) *We don’t think that we know enough*
2. God has told us what to say – Mk 16:15-16  
**15** *And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. 16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.*
3. The gospel is stated clearly in 1Cor 15:1-4  
**1** *Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; 2 By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. 3 For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; 4 And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:*
4. We have no reason to say, “What shall I say?”
5. We live in a time when people don’t know God anymore

### III. Excuse #3 – Ex 4:1

1 And Moses answered and said, But, behold, they will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice: for they will say, The LORD hath not appeared unto thee.

#### A. “Suppose They Won’t Believe Me”

1. The previous excuses didn’t work so Moses tries a new one
2. They will not listen to me -- He is afraid of failure
3. Moses is really saying that there is nothing in his life that would verify what he was saying
4. God responds by giving Moses several convincing proofs
  - a) Rod to serpent
  - b) Hand to leprosy
  - c) Water to blood

#### B. Some Use This Same Excuse Today

1. The fear of failure keeps us from trying
2. We have the evidences necessary to convince an honest person
3. The Word of God is able to produce faith

**Ro 10:17** So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the ...
4. The gospel still has power to transform lives – Rom 1:16

**16** For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.
5. You would think that Moses by now would accept the call, but a fourth excuse is put forth
6. Lincoln – “With God I cannot fail, without God I cannot succeed.” (during the lowest part of the Civil War)

### IV. Excuse #4 – Ex 4:10

10 And Moses said unto the LORD, O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant: but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue.

#### A. “I am Slow of Speech and Slow of Tongue” - Ineffectiveness

1. Here Moses claimed that he is not an eloquent speaker
2. God is not moved by this objection
  - a) *He already knows our inabilities* – Ex 4:11

**11** And the LORD said unto him, Who hath made man's mouth? or who maketh the dumb, or deaf, or the seeing, or the blind? have not I the LORD?
  - b) *God is able to make up for our shortcomings*
  - c) *Again God promised to be with Moses* – Ex 4:12

**12** Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say.
3. Moses became one of the best speakers ever - Deut is the preaching of Moses preparing the children of Israel for the promised land

## **B. Some Christians Try to Use This Excuse As Well**

1. This did not stop the apostle Paul – 1Cor 2:1-4  
1 And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. 2 For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. 3 And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. 4 And my speech and my preaching *was* not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power:
2. It has not stopped others who overcame speech problems or other difficulties in order to preach

## **V. Excuse #5 – Ex 4:13**

**13** And he said, O my Lord, send, I pray thee, by the hand *of him whom thou wilt send.*

### **A. “Send Someone Else”**

1. The other excuses were just a smokescreen to hide this excuse
2. Now that the smokescreen has been removed, God’s impatience with Moses became evident
  - a) *His anger was kindled against Moses – 4:14a*
  - b) *Read vs 15-17 with emphasis on “shall” to appreciate the anger of the Lord*

**Ex 4:14** And the anger of the LORD was kindled against Moses, and he said, *Is not Aaron the Levite thy brother? I know that he can speak well. And also, behold, he cometh forth to meet thee: and when he seeth thee, he will be glad in his heart. 15* And thou shalt speak unto him, and put words in his mouth: and I will be with thy mouth, and with his mouth, and will teach you what ye shall do. **16** And he shall be thy spokesman unto the people: and he shall be, *even* he shall be to thee instead of a mouth, and thou shalt be to him instead of God. **17** And thou shalt take this rod in thine hand, wherewith thou shalt do signs.

### **B. The Same is True with Us Today**

1. Every excuse that we can offer is just a smokescreen
2. We really want God to send someone else
3. We really don’t want to do what God has called us to do
4. If you have been making excuses, then repent and get busy for the Lord

## Conclusion:

1. In the case of Moses, we know the rest of the story
  - a. He answered the call and went to Egypt
  - b. With the help of the Lord, Moses delivered the children of Israel
2. What about us? What will be the rest of the story?
  - a. Let us heed the call to take the gospel to the lost
  - b. Or will we make excuses for not doing what God said to do?
3. Our problem generally is not that we aspire to too much, the problem is that we often settle for too little
4. What about the call to accept Christ as Savior?
  - a. Are you making excuses for not trusting Jesus as Savior?
  - b. "I'm pretty good – I'm not as bad as others."
  - c. "I've been baptized."
  - d. "I'm a church member."

In *Decision* magazine, Peggy DesNoyers writes:

My job as a psychiatric home-health nurse brought me in touch with many people who were hurt or angry and who were searching for answers to problems in their lives. I knew that Jesus was the answer, but I couldn't bring myself to talk to them about him. I was the master of excuses. [Until] one patient changed my life.

Wanda was a 56-year-old widow in chronic depression. All of her family had died, some of them tragically, within a span of 16 years. The loss and her grief overwhelmed her until life for her became a burden she was unable to bear.

One day she quit her job, went home, pulled the curtains, and refused to leave her house. Eventually she stopped eating, and even the smallest of tasks became too difficult for her to do.

An observant neighbor had noticed the change in Wanda's behavior, and that neighbor made arrangements for her to be taken to a hospital where she was admitted to the psychiatric ward. At the end of her hospital stay, when she went home, I was assigned to be her home-health nurse. I visited her weekly to make sure she was taking her medication and was eating and taking care of herself.

Over the course of six months, Wanda continued to recover. Although I knew she needed to meet Jesus as her Savior, I reasoned that she would soon be attending church and would hear about him there.

One day I went to Wanda's house for my regular visit, and I was surprised to find the door ajar. I knocked and when there was no response, I pushed the door open and stepped inside. The living room was vacant, so I went to her bedroom and found her lifeless body on the bed. There were several empty medication bottles beside her, and in her hand she held a note addressed to me.

I sat on the bed beside her and took the note. I read: "Dear Peggy, I'm so sorry. I tried it your way, but I got tired. Please forgive me. I tried. I just couldn't do it. I got tired."

I slid off the bed onto my knees and cried my heart out to my loving, forgiving Father:

"Lord Jesus, she tried it my way. I gave her the best that I had. But it was my way. I didn't tell her about you. I didn't tell her about your way."

On my knees beside [Wanda's] lifeless body I promised God that I would never pass by another opportunity to tell someone about him.

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The next time you feel like GOD can't use you, just remember...

Noah was a drunk

Abraham was too old

Isaac was a daydreamer

Jacob was a liar

Leah was ugly

Joseph was abused

Moses had a stuttering problem

Gideon was afraid

Samson had long hair and was a womanizer

Rahab was a prostitute

Jeremiah and Timothy were too young

David had an affair and was a murderer

Elijah was suicidal

Jonah ran from God

Naomi was a widow

Job went bankrupt

Peter denied Christ

The Disciples fell asleep while praying

Martha worried about everything

The Samaritan woman who was divorced, more than once

Zaccheus was too short

Paul was too religious

Timothy had an ulcer..AND

Lazarus was dead!

Now! No more excuses!

God can use you to your full potential.

Besides you aren't the message, you are just the Messenger.