

## Whose Excuses Are They, Really?

Exodus 3:1 – 4:17 is a passage of scripture every Christian would do well to study. In this passage we see the Angel of the Lord appear to Moses from the midst of a burning bush for the purpose of calling him to a special task. God called Moses to deliver His chosen people from Egyptian bondage. God knew their sorrows (Exo 3:7) and He was going to deliver them from their captors and He knew Moses was the man for the job. God told Moses he would send him to Pharaoh for this purpose.

How did Moses react to this message from God? He began to make excuses as to why he shouldn't be the one to go. He reacted in the same way that many Christians react to tasks given us. Moses was to deliver the children of Israel from physical bondage. As God's children we are to work to deliver His message to deliver man from the bondage of sin (Mark 16:15 and 1 Peter 2:9-10). Sadly, many times we offer excuses as well. Let's look at the excuses Moses offered.

In Exodus 3:11 we see Moses offer the first of 5 excuses. He said to God "Who am I, that I should go?" Moses exhibits his humility in thinking he is insufficient for the task. At this time he is but a lowly shepherd, why should he be chosen for this great task? Why should he, an aged shepherd go into another country and deliver these people from bondage? God, of course, had an immediate answer to his question. God said, "Certainly I will be with thee" (Exodus 3:12). As written by Paul in Romans 8:31, if God be for us, who can be against us?

Many times we as Christians use this same excuse. Why should we, just lowly, common Christians go into the world and spread the Gospel? We try to excuse ourselves from responsibility by pointing out our shortcomings. But God will be with us in our efforts as well. It is true that we are insufficient in ourselves. We are nothing without God, but God makes us sufficient to fulfill any task he has set before us.

### **2Co 3:5-6**

**(5) Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency *is* of God;**

**(6) Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit: for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.**

Remember what Christ did with the apostles? They were uneducated men who spent time with Jesus and were inspired by the Holy Spirit. Yet they were all bold effective teachers.

### **Act 4:13**

**(13) Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were unlearned and ignorant men, they marvelled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.**

God has made the same provision to give us help through Christ that He gave Moses. In Matthew 28:20, Jesus is telling the apostles to go and teach and He makes them a promise. He says that he will be “with them always.” This is a wonderful promise. With Jesus helping us, how can we fail (Phi 4:14)?

Often this excuse is offered in order to keep from revealing the truth. That was the case with Moses and it is in a lot of cases today. Moses didn't really want to tell God what was on his mind, as we'll see in a couple of minutes.

As soon as God answered this excuse, Moses was ready with another. This excuse is found in Exodus 3:13. Moses knew that if he went to children of Israel and told them God had sent him, there would be some questions. He was afraid they would ask him God's name and he didn't know how to answer. Again, God was ready to answer this excuse (Ex 3:14-15). God told Moses how to answer their question.

We often try to use this same excuse today. We try to excuse ourselves by saying our knowledge is limited and we might not know how to answer questions we are asked. We have a responsibility to be ready to answer questions concerning the Gospel. 1 Peter 3:15 tells that we are to always be ready to give an answer of the hope that is within us. The basics of the Gospel are simple. How simple? God has given us what we need.

**Mar 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.**

**1Co 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:**

**1Co 2:2**

**(2) For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.**

Just as in the case of Moses, we have no reason to say, “What shall I say?” When we say this we are admitting 2 things that we shouldn't be eager to admit.

We are saying that we don't know what we did in order to become a Christian and we are admitting that we are not fulfilling the commandment to study as Paul gave Timothy in 2 Tim 2:15.

In Exodus 4:1 we see the third excuse offered by Moses. "But, behold, they will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice: for they will say, The LORD hath not appeared unto thee." God has already promised to be with him and he has told him how to answer their questions. Is he afraid of failing? God quickly responds to this excuse with several convincing proofs of who He is; Moses' rod that turns to serpent (Ex 4:2-5), his own hand that is afflicted with leprosy then cleansed (Ex 4:6-8), and the water that turns to blood when dropped on the dry ground (Ex 4:9).

Some hesitate to spread the Gospel today for the same reason. The fear of failure prevents them from even trying. But God has given us many proofs and much evidence just as He did Moses. We have The Word. God's word produces faith (Rom 10:17). The Word is full of signs and accounts of the miracles of Christ that are sufficient to convince those who are honestly seeking the truth (John 20:30-31). With all these things at our fingertips, how can we justify sitting by waiting for someone else to spread the Gospel? The answer is, "We can't!"

We see Moses quickly ready with another excuse in Exodus 4:10.

#### **Exo 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.**

Moses says that he is not an eloquent speaker, but God already knew what kind of speaker Moses was. He knows everything about man. Who knows more about something than its creator?

#### **Exo 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?**

God promises again to be with Moses, saying that He will teach him what to say (Ex 4:12). He even sends Aaron to be his spokesman (Ex 4:14-16). Christians try to use this same excuse today. We say we are not good speakers, so someone else should go and teach. Being a poor speaker didn't stop Paul.

#### **1Co 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:**

Being a poor speaker hasn't stopped many others, as well. I know of people who have overcome speech impediments to do whatever they wanted to do in life. I know of one who will preach the Gospel at every opportunity despite a stuttering problem. At the very least, we can work to set up Bible studies with others until we become more comfortable in that setting. There is something we all can do.

We have looked at 4 excuses offered by Moses, but I said earlier, these were just covering up his real reason for objection. We see in Exodus 4:13 that Moses just didn't want to go. He says to send whomever, just not him. Now that he has revealed the real reason for objection, God's anger is kindled against Moses and He sternly tells him what he will do.

#### **Exo 4:14-17**

- (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.**

The very same thing is true with us today. We offer many excuses, but they are just hiding our true feelings. We would prefer that God send anyone but us. We simply don't want to do what God has set forth for us to do. The anger of the Lord is kindled against those who do not live up to their calling. We know that Moses stopped offering excuses and did what God told him to do. We, too, have two choices. We can either go and do or we can have the anger of the Lord kindled against us. If we have been making excuses, we need to repent!

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