

The Excuses Of Moses

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INTRODUCTION:

A. When the time was right for God to bring His people out of Egypt, He called for Moses!

1. A new king arose that began to mistreat God's people! (**Exodus 1:8**)
 - a. This new king did not know about Joseph and all the things Joseph did for Egypt
 - b. So the new king makes life for them miserable! He treats them shrewdly, increases their work load, and essentially makes their work impossible!
 - c. It is then the right time to bring them out of bondage! (**Ex. 2:23-25**)
 - d. The people were crying out to God for rescuing! What a comforting statement! God sees His people, He knows, and He can help!
2. So it was in this setting that we find God appearing to Moses in a burning bush calling him to go to Pharaoh and personally lead the children of Israel out of Egypt!
3. When we think about Moses we think about a man of great leadership! Yet before we see this develop in Moses we find him making excuses to get around service!

B. The excuses of Moses all have a very modern ring to them! I can say with almost certainty that we all have used them in regards to some aspect of serving God!

1. In considering personal evangelism we can see a parallel to God's call of Moses and us!
 - a. People all around us are daily suffering in bondage... the bondage of sin!
 - b. While some may be crying out to God literally – God hears the cries of their situation and the suffering they endure as a result of sin in their lives
 - c. They need to be rescued! Christ will deliver them, but its through the preaching of the gospel they come to know Him – This is where our responsibility comes in!
2. Let's spend our time together looking at the excuses Moses offered & seeing how we use the same when faced with reaching the lost with the gospel of Christ!

I. MOSES' FIRST EXCUSE: "WHO AM I?"

A. When God first called Moses, Moses responded, "WHO AM I?"

1. A great call of service is met by an excuse! (**Exodus 3:7-11**)
 - a. God is asking Moses to go before the most powerful man on the earth and make a very bold demand! Under normal circumstances, he could have Moses killed!
 - b. The excuse: "Who Am I" → "Why me?" or "What makes me the man for the job?"
2. There are some reasons Moses could have had that would seem good to us:
 - a. Moses was about 80 years old at this point – Maybe he felt too old!
 - b. He didn't leave Egypt on the best terms – Maybe he felt he had burned bridges!
 - c. He was a lowly shepherd in no-man's land – Maybe he didn't feel powerful enough!
 - d. Don't confuse Moses' response with humility! Moses' feelings of insignificance and inadequacy was handicapping his usefulness in God's service!
3. He may have felt insignificant; however, he had many things in his advantage!
 - a. Having been raised in Pharaoh's house he had a sort of "inside connection"
 - b. Being Hebrew by birth & having been trained by his mother while growing up in Pharaoh's house he would have been more easily trusted by God's people!
 - c. Moses was physically strong – He killed an Egyptian who he caught beating a Hebrew & worked as a shepherd, no doubt warding off lions & wolves!
 - d. He had the training of a shepherd! It was among flocks & herds where God found David... A great leader! That training provided much needed experience!
4. God's answer to Moses' excuse is a promise of His presence! (**Exodus 3:12**)
 - a. It mattered very little who Moses was because God was going to be with him
 - b. Moses and God's conversation should have ended here because this is good enough in and of itself – Yet Moses will continue to offer excuses!

B. Like Moses some today respond to serving God by asking "Who Am I?"

1. We may hesitate to teach the gospel to the lost due to our own struggles (**2 Tim 1:8-9**)
 - a. Maybe we feel hypocritical to point out another's sin because of our own past!

- b. Maybe we are afraid people will bring up our struggles & weaknesses!
- c. Paul certainly had struggles and weaknesses, but felt a responsibility to the lost to carry out Christ's purpose in & through His grace – Not his own goodness!
- 2. We need to remember the Lord makes the same promise to us that He made to Moses whenever we go to a brother who is in sin: **(Matthew 18:16, 20)**
 - a. Anyone who has ever gone to someone to point out sin in their lives knows firsthand the difficulty of it! It's one of the hardest things to do!
 - b. May also think, "Who am I to go to him, I have my own struggles & weaknesses"
 - c. Whatever the case, this is a great promise! God is with us & we're doing His will!
- 3.

II. MOSES' SECOND EXCUSE: "WHAT SHALL I SAY?"

A. Though Moses had enough to go on, he has more questions for God!

- 1. Moses offers a second excuse: "What shall I say?" **(Exodus 3:13)**
 - a. Moses anticipates the children of Israel will not simply just line up and follow
 - b. He worries that they might ask questions like, "Who sent you? Who is this God?"
 - c. Judging by God's response it would seem that he is also somewhat uneasy about what to say when they ask, "Where are we going and why are we leaving?"
- 2. Moses' feelings of ignorance hindering him from going forward in obedience & service!
 - a. He was raised knowing God and surely His promises to Abraham, Isaac, & Jacob!
 - b. So while there's surely some sincerity, his hesitancy boils down to a mere excuse!
- 3. God responds by revealing Himself to Moses as "The Great I AM" **(vs. 14)**
 - a. By saying "I AM" God is revealing His nature: He is eternally existent!
 - b. Because God has promised to be with Him and God is the Great I AM – Moses should have nothing to worry about!
- 4. God leaves Moses with the exact things he should tell the children of Israel **(vs. 15ff)**
 - a. All he asked God for was a response to the question, "What is His (God's) name?" yet God left him with that information and anything else he'd need to know!
 - b. He was to assure them that God had seen their suffering and has compassion
 - c. God's desire was to lead them out of Egypt to the land of Canaan
 - d. God even tells Moses he'd be met with acceptance & rejection along the way: The Israelites would follow but he would face opposition from Pharaoh!

B. Many are don't try to reach the because they don't feel like they know what to say!

- 1. Many fears run through our minds as we consider talking to others:
 - a. What if they ask a question I don't know the answer to? Won't I lose them?
 - b. What if they start to argue with them about the truth and they present a twisted form of the gospel? What if I am unable to do a good job defending the truth?
 - c. How do I start the conversation? What will I say once we get to talking?
- 2. All of us has the duty of knowing what we believe and why! **(1 Peter 3:15; 2 Tim. 2:15)**
 - a. If you're afraid people will ask questions you can't answer you need to study them!
 - b. Too often, even in the Lord's church, people do not have a faith that is their own but can only say what the preacher believes or their parents!
 - c. Ignorance of God's will is no excuse for not teaching others! It's our duty to learn!
- 3. What do you have to know in order to teach someone the gospel?
 - a. If you are a Christian you certainly know about Jesus Christ – Who He is & His life
 - b. Surely you can answer the question, "What must I do to be saved?" **(Acts 2:37)**
 - c. The apostles preached the gospel – What is the gospel? **(Rom. 1:16; Eph 2:5ff)**
- 4. You may not have every answer to every one of their questions, but that's okay!
 - a. What's wrong with saying, "I don't know... let me study and get back with you?"
 - b. This really has a positive impact! It shows others that you are not just parroting dogma or are self righteous but are humbly seeking the truth!

III. MOSES' THIRD EXCUSE: "SUPPOSE THEY DO NOT BELIEVE ME"

A. Moses third excuse is an excuse based in fear:

1. Moses was feared that the people would reject him when he came! (**Exodus 4:1**)
 - a. The fear of rejection is a powerful things – Especially when it comes to laying ourselves on the line making great risks that depend on people’s acceptance!
 - b. God has already promised to be with him! His job was simply to obey!
 - c. Moses’ answer to God’s call did not depend on the people’s reaction! He was simply told to go and say, “God says... let My people go!”
 - d. You see... Moses was really worrying about God’s end of the stick!
2. God answers Moses’ fears by providing him several miraculous signs (**Exodus 4:2-9**)
 - a. There’s no way Moses could do these things through his own power!
 - b. The Egyptian magicians certainly tried to mimic them, however, they were only tricks of the eye and exposed as such when compared to the power of God!
 - c. **Illustration:** The spiritual gifts of the first century given to confirm the word of God!

B. The fear of not being believed causes many to hesitate to spread the gospel!

1. **Illustration:** Door knocking is easy when you think you know what the response will be!
 - a. Going to a house where there’s many signs of being religious yet I was rejected totally while the house where I least expected it, I found a door of opportunity!
 - b. The fear of being rejected was so great I nearly never knocked on that door!
 - c. See, the fear of rejection might keep us from seeing open doors of opportunity!
2. The fear of rejection is a powerful force keeping many from doing God’s will:
 - a. **Illustration:** A young guy fears asking a girl out because rejection hurts!
 - b. Because of this fear some may not step forward into a leadership role, may not try to preach the gospel, may not try to go talk to one who has left the Lord!
3. Paul & Barnabas didn’t let rejection stop them and saw great results! (**Acts 13:45, 48-50**)
 - a. Sometimes they would be thrown out of cities, stoned, jailed, or even killed!
 - b. Yet sometimes they would find good and honest hearts and many would respond!
 - c. What if the apostles never tried or gave up out of a fear of rejection?
4. We need to remind ourselves daily of what our job is: (**I Cor. 3:6; Mark 16:15-16**)
 - a. We want to see fruit and we want to save souls – But this is not our real job!
 - b. If we see our job as teaching the lost and letting the word of God work on their hearts than we can feel successful even when someone might reject us!
 - c. We plant the seed... God gives the increase! You do not know what someone’s heart is truly like nor how long it will take for gospel to penetrate!

IV. MOSES FOURTH EXCUSE: “I AM SLOW OF SPEECH AND SLOW OF TONGUE”

A. Having been given the words to use, Moses expresses his feelings of inadequate speech:

1. Moses offers the excuse of not being a very eloquent speaker (**Exodus 4:10**)
 - a. Basically put, Moses is saying that he just cannot talk very well at all!
 - b. Maybe Moses feared the people wouldn’t believe him unless his speech was impressive or he felt he needed to be a great orator to go before the king
 - c. Had Moses so soon forgotten God’s response to his first excuse? God’s promise of being with him should have been all he needed to go!
2. God reminds Moses that He knew him because he created him! (**Exodus 4:11-12**)
 - a. God wouldn’t have called Moses if Moses was not capable of carrying out His will!
 - b. God never asks man to go somewhere where God will not first lead him or to do something that He will not give man the ability to do!
 - c. God created Moses and will give him whatever he needs to complete the task!
3. Not only does give Moses assurance, but designates a spokesman for him! (**Ex 4:14-16**)

B. Sometimes the very same feelings hold us up from service to the Lord!

1. Sometimes we allow our physical weaknesses & lack of abilities to hinder us:
 - a. We may say, “I really wish I could talk to more people, but I just am not able to” or “I wish I could go do this... but someone with more talent will surely do it”
 - b. It may be that we have a tough time expressing our ideas, it may be that we have a stuttering problem, or maybe a physical problem that limits our mobility

2. Although Paul had this problem it didn't stop him from spreading the word! **(1 Cor. 2:1-4)**
 - a. It's apparent in his later writing this his speech and physical appearance was so weak some who opposed him used it to try to attack his apostle-ship!
 - b. Despite whatever his physical infirmities were, he still taught others about the Lord!
3. In fact, Paul shows that its through our own weaknesses that the power of the gospel is shown even more powerfully! **(2 Cor. 13:3-4; 2 Cor. 12:8-9)**
 - a. **Illustration:** Compare responses to a great orator preaching & one who struggles
 - b. Really, God uses our weaknesses so that His power can be even more evident!
 - c. Some people are more willing to listen to someone who they can see is struggling than someone who appears to do it professionally – There are advantages!
4. If you aren't able to teach someone, bring them to someone who can! **(John 1:40-42)**
 - a. I promise! I will never get upset at you bringing someone to me to study with them!
 - b. It's the highest evangelistic tool → TEAM EVANGELISM! One person makes the contact, another studies with them, another encourages – All play a part!
 - c. Whatever role you can play in reaching lost souls – Go out and do it!

V. MOSES' REAL RELUCTANCE SEEN: "PLEASE SEND SOMEONE ELSE!"

A. It would seem that Moses' real problem is that he did not want to go!

1. Moses finally expresses his true desires – Send anyone but me! **(Exodus 4:13)**
 - a. When you consider all of Moses questions and then this statement you can see why I understand his questions to be nothing more than excuses!
 - b. Moses wanted God to call someone else to carry out His will! He basically looks at God and says, "Here am I... send somebody... ANYBODY... else!"
2. His attitude is the exact opposite of Isaiah's: "Here am I... send me!" **(Isaiah 6:8)**
 - a. Isaiah would be bringing some messages of hope; however many of the messages Isaiah brought from God were messages of judgment and destruction!
 - b. Like Moses he too would be sent to kings bringing messages they may not like!
3. Why would Moses not want to go?
 - a. The last time he saw or heard from Pharaoh, he was going to kill him! **(Ex 2:15)**
 - b. Maybe he feared change... stepping outside of his comfort zone! He had a new job, his own family, and a new life! This call would change life as he knew it!
4. When Moses shows his true desires God becomes angry with him!
 - a. While we can't hear the exact sound of the voice, the tone God uses comes out!
 - b. He was calling Moses into service and Moses was all but saying NO!

B. Sometimes the reality is that we just want someone else to carry out God's will!

1. When we begin to make excuses for not doing what we know we should, we need to understand that they are no more than dressed up lies! **(Luke 14:18-24)**
 - a. All of these people had reasons in their minds not to come – Excuses were made
 - b. But the heart of the issue is that they really did not want to come in the first place
 - c. Their excuses are clearly seen through! There's great holes in their excuses!
2. Would we be so bold as to admit that we really don't want to get involved:
 - a. **Illustration:** Katherine Geonovese (Kitty) being killed as 38 people watched doing nothing because they said they did not want to get involved!
 - b. Does that make you angry? Yet we do it on the spiritual level... more devastating!
 - c. We don't want to get involved in people's problems, we don't want the discomfort of an awkward situation, or we don't want to leave our comfort zone!
3. When there is not a desire to spread the gospel message, there is a problem of the heart!
 - a. If we truly loved & appreciated God, wouldn't we tell others about Him?
 - b. If we really loved others and had a desire to see others saved, what would keep us from teaching them the gospel and the way of truth? **(Rom. 1:13-15)**
 - c. If there is no motivation & zeal we have become spiritually apathetic!

CONCLUSION: XX