

No More Excuses

Exodus 4:1-17

January 27-28, 2007

Introduction

ILLUS – Fear of the dark

1. Fear can be debilitating. Even when there is a promise of God's very presence, fear can overshadow that provision.
2. How do we overcome such fear?
3. How can we stop the cycle of excuses and answer the call of God for our lives?
4. Today, we are going to continue our study in Exodus and uncover some important principles for ending fear motivated excuses.

READ – Exodus 4:1-17

Context

1. After 400 years in Egypt, God, in accordance with His Word to Abraham in Genesis 15, has come to deliver Israel from slavery.
2. The angel of the Lord, a preincarnate appearance of the second person of the Trinity, Jesus Christ, commissioned Moses to be His agent through which the deliverance would be achieved.
3. God sought to reassure Moses when He promised to be with Moses in this endeavor.
4. God also revealed His sufficiency to meet the needs of Moses and Israel when He declared His name, "I am who I am."

I. Step Out In Faith (1-9)

A. "What if's" are quicksand (1)

1. Moses had been rejected 40 years ago in Egypt
 - a. He killed an Egyptian who was beating a fellow Israelite slave
 - b. Moses thought Israel would recognize that he was their deliverer

- c. But they rejected his leadership because they were not ready to leave and he was not ready to lead.
2. Moses was a broken man, humbled after 40 years of tending his father-in-law's sheep
 - a. He was blessed to hear that God wanted to deliver Israel
 - b. But he did not want to step out and obey God's calling because he was fearful of rejection and failure

APPL – Though we are broken and humbled we are not useless!

ILLUS – God redeemed my failures at Levitz Furniture

3. Fear will deafen our ears to God's promises

Exodus 3:18, "And they will pay heed to what you say;"

APPL – Faith can not stand on "what if's"

- **What people think is not the issue**
- **Whether or not people will listen is not the issue**
- **How people respond is not our responsibility**

ILLUS – Announcing to my family that I was not going to law school

- **We are called to step out in faith!**
- **Faith is reality not "what if's"**

ILLUS – Talking with Pastor Rich about starting a church in Dallas

Romans 8:31-39 (Here are some better questions to consider)

B. God's promises are solid ground (2-9)

1. Notice how patient God was with Moses
 - a. Moses had been humbled
 - b. Now God was building a man of faith!
2. God already promised His presence but now He provided additional proofs to help strengthen his floundering servant's faith (Three-fold witness!)

- a. Staff into snake – signified Moses’ authority over Egypt/ability to animate an inanimate object
- b. Afflict with leprosy/cleanse from leprosy – Israel will be delivered from defiled Egypt and be cleansed for service to God/God’s ability to afflict and cleanse
- c. Nile water turned to blood – The Nile was considered the source of life/Osiris, the Egyptian god, was credited with providing all blessings. Blood signified death. Moses had the power to destroy the Egyptian gods and punish the land with death

APPL – Now how many of us are thinking, “Give me some of those signs and I will step out in faith too”? But God, in His wisdom has given us signs and promises to stand on too!

➤ *The empty tomb! Jesus is alive!*

1 Corinthians 15:1-8

➤ *The Gospel message*

Romans 1:16, “For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.”

➤ *Your testimony – a changed life!*

APPL – I am not saying that stepping out in faith will guarantee a life on “Easy Street!” There will be setbacks and trials. But when those trials come stand on the promises of God by faith!

ILLUS – G. Campbell Morgan’s testimony

II. Focus On God’s Sufficiency (10-17)

A. Not on your inadequacy (10)

1. The real issue; Moses felt inadequate!
2. But this appears to be another groundless excuse!

Acts 7:22, “And Moses was educated in all the learning of the Egyptians, and he was a man of power in words and deeds.”

3. Since Moses had failed to persuade Israel slaves to follow him, how could he persuade Israel’s elders or the great king of Egypt?

APPL – I am sure that all of us can relate to feelings of inferiority, right?

ILLUS - Inferiority

APPL – This is a common response to God’s calling by many of His servants... but not an excuse for resisting His call!

Jeremiah 1:4-9

ILLUS – My second attempt at teaching a mid-week service!

2 Corinthians 3:4-6, “And such confidence we have through Christ toward God. Not that we are adequate in ourselves to consider anything as coming from ourselves, but our adequacy is from God, who also made us adequate as servants of the new covenant, not of the letter, but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.”

Transition – “Who you are” does not matter! “Whose you are” is what matters! Keep your focus on God and also realize...

B. God’s work is “on the job training” (11-17)

1. God has made us the way we are
 - a. He gives abilities and opportunities
 - b. He gives talents and gifts

1 Corinthians 12:4-7, “Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are varieties of ministries, but the same Lord. And there are varieties of effects, but the same God who works all things in all persons. But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.”

ILLUS – Evangelism class with a teacher that had a speech impediment

2. God told Moses that He would teach him what to say!
 - a. Seminary and Bible College are profitable
 - b. But walking by faith means that you will encounter places, people, and situations that will stretch you and force you to lean wholeheartedly upon the Lord
 - c. This is God's plan so that your confidence and the confidence of those you are serving will rest on the Lord and not on you!

1 Corinthians 2:1-5

3. Still Moses resisted the Lord and said, "Please, Lord, send the message by whomever Thou wilt."
 - a. Translation – "I don't want to go!"
 - b. The anger of the Lord burned
 1. Moses wasn't being humble
 2. Moses wasn't being insecure
 3. Moses was in rebellion!

APPL – Don't resist the Lord and miss out on what He wants to do in you and through you.

ILLUS – Rejecting Pastor Rich's invitation to teach after struggling through a semester of preaching class

- Ushering, media ministry
- Children's ministry
- Growth group ministry
- Teaching a bible study at work
- Leading your family through a bible study
- Sharing your faith
- Mowing your neighbors lawn
- Bringing a meal to a friend or writing a card of encouragement

APPL - Whatever God has called you to do, do it!

- **He will be with you.**
- **He will give you what you need.**

Conclusion

I must confess how convicted I am regarding this passage. Too many times I have been like Moses, looking at the wrong person, making excuses, running from opportunity... not trusting God!

May this verse bless your heart and encourage you to end the cycle of excuses and step out in faith like it has for me...

Philippians 3:12-14, "Not that I have already obtained it, or have already become perfect, but I press on in order that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."