

Jeremiah's Excuses

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[0 : 00] When it comes to serving God, we can all make excuses. Jeremiah was one who did that. In Jeremiah chapter 1, from verse 4, it says, Then the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Before I formed thee in the belly, I knew thee, and before thou camest forth out of the womb, I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations.

Then said I, Ah, Lord God, behold, I cannot speak, for I am a child. But the Lord said unto me, Say not, I am a child, for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee, thou shalt speak.

Be not afraid of their faces, for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the Lord. Then the Lord put forth his hand and touched my mouth, and the Lord said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth.

God called young Jeremiah to serve him. He called on him to be his messenger, but Jeremiah was fearful, and he made all kinds of excuses.

Isn't that just like us? Some people are good at making excuses. I don't know how. I have something else to do. Someone else can do that. I'm not able. I'm too busy.

[1 : 19] I'm too tired, too old, too young. Ben Franklin wrote, He that is good for making excuses is seldom good for anything else. Excuses are really a way to try and avoid responsibilities.

It's how we try to get out of doing something we ought to do. Jeremiah had a load of excuses ready when God called on him to be a prophet. And we can be just like Jeremiah and say the same kind of things when God calls us to follow him.

Let's see the excuses that Jeremiah tried. First excuse. It's too hard. God called Jeremiah. Jeremiah was called to be a prophet unto the nations.

A prophet was a chosen and authorized spokesman for God who declared God's word to the people. A prophet challenged people about sin and they caught on people to get right with God. Jeremiah knew that the people God was sending him to would not listen. And they persecuted prophets. They were a wicked and violent nation. It was a tough job.

[2 : 31] This was a big God-given task. It would not always be easy. And now it's the same for us. God may give you a big task, but if he does, then he will keep you going.

God told Jeremiah, do not be afraid of their faces, for I am with you to deliver you. It could be God gives you something that may be hard to do, and maybe we'll feel like we don't want to do it. We might feel like giving up and saying that it's too hard, but we have the promise of God's purpose. God told Jeremiah, Jeremiah, I knew you before you were born. God had a purpose for you before you were born.

God knew Jeremiah. He chose Jeremiah. He appointed Jeremiah to serve him. And you also were created on purpose, for a purpose. So even if we might try the same excuse, it's too hard, God's purpose is the best for us.

We have to trust in God's plan and purpose for our life. A second excuse Jeremiah used was, I am not able.

[3 : 42] Here was another excuse. He said, Oh no, Lord God, look, I don't know how to speak. I'm only a youth. Jeremiah felt like he wasn't able to speak up.

Moses had also been like that in Exodus 4 verse 10. Even though we might feel like we aren't able, God can help us overcome this feeling of not being able, not being strong, not being strong enough. In fact, it's the one who feels inadequate who is usually the one who depends more on God, which is a good thing. When I feel weak, I can rely more on God.

His strength is made perfect in my weakness. God's glory works in the ones who feel weak and lean upon God's strength. His commands are his enablers.

If God sends us to do anything for him, then he will give us all the strength and ability that we need to do it. God always equips those he calls.

[4 : 44] He promises his help. In verse 9 it says, how the Lord reached out his hand and touched Jeremiah's mouth. He told Jeremiah, I have now filled your mouth with my words.

Verse 9. Lack of ability is no excuse. God uses not the most gifted and talented person, but the one who he touches by his hand.

God uses the most unlikely people to do his will. A third excuse Jeremiah used was, I am too young.

Jeremiah used the excuse, I'm only a youth. Jeremiah felt that he wasn't as able or experienced as others. It's like he was saying, I'm not ready. He was afraid of the task that God was giving to him. When God sends us to do something, we have the promise of God's presence. The Lord said to Jeremiah, I do not say I'm only a youth, for you will go to everyone I send you to and speak whatever I tell you.

[5 : 47] Do not be afraid of anyone, for I will be with you to deliver you. It's the same for you. You are not alone. God walks with you and his presence gives you the strength that you need to stand, no matter what the test is that you face.

God gave Jeremiah the courage and the strength to obey and he will enable us. God will fulfill his purpose in you. He will equip you and he will enable you.

He will protect you. He will be with you. God told Jeremiah to stop making excuses. It's the same today for us. God is telling us that whatever excuse that we have, they are not good enough for us to avoid God's calling.

God is with us. He is with you. He's with me. Wherever you go, wherever God leads you to, he will be there for you. And the story didn't end here.

Jeremiah answered God's calling. Though he tried a few excuses here, he eventually did accept God's job for him and he went and proclaimed God's message as his servant.

[6 : 54] He courageously walked the streets of Judah and he showed them the way to life. And God speaks to us in the here and now. How about you? The Lord Jesus died on the cross for your sin so that you can be saved.

He wants you to follow him. It's time to accept the will and purpose of our Heavenly Father. Rather than trying to dream up some excuse or invent some reason while you're not ready or not able, rather than make excuses, you can say, Here I am.