

Overcoming Excuses for Doing God's Will

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[0 : 00] This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia. It is our prayer that you will be blessed by the preaching of God's Word. So turn with me to Exodus chapter 4 if you would. And we have a story here of God sending, we have a story of God sending Moses to do the job he wants him to do.

And Moses making basically five excuses of why he doesn't want to go. So he's going to give some excuses. I don't really want to do what you want me to do, God.

And there's five things that I think are excuses that we make in our life when God calls on us to do things and to serve him and to give our lives to him. And we tend to make these same five excuses.

So go with me if you would to chapter 4 and verse 1. Excuse number 1, what will people think? I don't know if I want to do that because I'm not sure what people will think if I do it. Chapter 4 verse 1, Moses answered and said, But behold, they will not believe me nor hearken unto my voice, for they will say, The Lord has not appeared unto thee.

So the first thing that Moses says is, God, I would really like to go, but I mean, this would be a waste of time. They're not going to listen to me. They're not going to hear me. They're not going to believe me.

[1 : 11] They're not going to accept Christ. Nothing's going to happen. We make excuses about what people will think even when we know what God wants us to do. It's God telling Moses, I want you to go.

It's God telling Moses, I'm going to do something great. And Moses looks at God and says, I hate to tell you this, Lord, but it ain't going to work like you think it will. It's not going to happen that way. Moses was convinced they wouldn't believe him.

So we're going to run through this part quickly because I think you've heard it preached enough that we mentioned it a couple of weeks ago. So God gives Moses signs. And he said, I'm going to give you some things you can do that will prove that I sent you.

And so he tells him, he said, what do you have in your hand in chapter 4 and verse 2? And he has a rod in his hand. And he takes that rod. He said, well, you throw the rod down. He throws the rod down and the rod becomes a snake.

And he said, I grab the rod by the snake by the tail and pick it back up. And it becomes his rod again. And in verse 5, he said, that way they'll believe that they may believe. They're going to see that. He picks up the snake.

[2 : 11] The rod, it becomes a rod again. He's protected. Then he says, Moses, take your hand and stick it inside your clothes. And he sticks his hand inside his clothes. And his hand gets leprosy. It's white and rotting.

And the meat's falling off. I mean, that was the most horrible thing. That was the AIDS of their day. It was a horrible thing going on in his life. And he said, I'll stick your hand back in. He sticks it back in, pulls out.

And his body was well again. Then he says, if that's not enough, I'll tell you what you can do. Reach down and put some water up, verse 9. And if they don't take these two first signs, take this water out of there and drop it on the land.

And it will become blood. God gave Moses everything he would need to complete his assignment. God had a will for his life, and he gave Moses everything he would need.

God has a plan for your life. And he will give you everything you need. And I would just like to ask you, this is a serious question. Are you allowing God to do in your life what he wants to do?

[3 : 12] Or do you allow what other people think or what you think will be the results to keep you from doing what God's called you to do? Almost always it's like, well, I'm not sure what my parents will think.

I'm not sure what my friends will think. I'm not sure what others will think. Almost all of us are with the basic idea, I don't want to be too fanatical. I don't want people to think I'm too crazy. I don't want to be looked at as too odd and step out and do something for God.

And that's where old Moses was. And God laid it out for him in such a way he couldn't argue. Isn't it time to quit making excuses? Isn't it time to decide to step out by faith and do whatever it is that God's dealing with you about?

So after Moses, God says, Moses, go. Moses, I can't go. What do people think? They won't listen to me. They won't believe me. I won't get any results. And God says, look, I can do big stuff.

Watch this. Throw your rod down. Stick your hand in your jacket. Pick up the water. Turn it into blood. I can do big stuff. So Moses goes, okay, strike one. I didn't get away with that one, so let me try another one.

[4 : 14] He says, well, God, I can't speak. I'm not eloquent. Look, if you would, in your Bible, in Exodus 4, verse 10. And Moses said unto the Lord, oh, 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.

Now, first off, we won't even discuss whether or not that was just a ball-faced lie to God. We won't even discuss the fact that he did graduate from the greatest universities of the day and the greatest nation of the day.

He had the greatest education of the day. He was in the most prominent family of the day. Truth of the matter to be told, probably not saying the truth here, but it's a common excuse, isn't it? We have dreams of big things for God.

We want to do them, but we believe that we're not able. And I want you to listen here. This is something I really believe goes on in almost everybody. In all the years I've pastored and all the years I've talked to hundreds, thousands of people, almost everybody says, man, I want to do something for God.

I really want to do something for God. I want my life to count. I don't want to just be ordinary. I don't want to be just regular. I want to do something big with my life. And then the very next sentence is almost always, well, what will people think?

[5 : 23] I might get embarrassed. It might not work. I don't know if it'll happen. And so they start backing off. And if that one doesn't do it, the second one is, I'm not able. I don't have the talents.

I don't have the ability. I'm not eloquent. So God's first answer to him was, Moses, I made your mouth. And I'll be able to give you what you need.

That's in verse 11. Look at chapter 4, verse 11. He said, who made your mouth, Moses? If I'm sending you and I can take a stick and turn it into a snake and a snake back into a stick, hey, if I can turn a hand that's healthy into an unhealthy hand and back into a healthy hand, if I can take water and turn it into blood, if I made your mouth, you can do it.

I can do stuff. I'm the man who made man's mouth. God promises to be with Moses' mouth and teach him. And he says, honestly, what more could you ask for? God's talking to you.

God's just shown you three big miracles, three things nobody would ever believe could happen. And then you look at him and say, but I'm not able to do it. And so he says in verse 12, now, therefore, go and I will be with your mouth.

[6 : 30] You go. Go ahead, Moses. I will be with your mouth and I will teach you what to say. Moses, I'll take care of it. First reason I won't go is because I'm afraid of what people might think.

I'm afraid. I don't want to look odd. I don't. Can I just tell you that there are a lot of times you're kind of embarrassed about being a pastor? You might not know that. But, you know, you're on a jet flying to another part of the world.

And, you know, I got my Bose headset. I put them on. I don't talk to people. I'm not the guy that gets on a plane and witnesses to everybody. I get on a plane. I put on my Bose headset and I go to work and do my own thing.

But I'm sitting there and somebody leans over and says, well, how are you? What are you going to Peru for? I'm going to go visit family. Have you ever been to Peru before? Yeah, I lived here 18 years.

Well, that's all. What kind of business are you in? I'm a missionary. Oh, what does that mean? And it's not exactly. What do you do? Well, I'm a businessman. I got a big shot here.

[7 : 28] I'm this and I'm that. And there's a part of us that says, I want people to think highly of me. I want to be able to say to them, here's my business card. And I really got a business. And I got an education.

And it wasn't some flunky-dunky Bible college. It was at Georgia Tech. I want to be somebody. And that's exactly what Moses says. Hey, I don't know what people think. Then Moses said, I'm not able.

And he keeps rebelling. In chapter 4, verse 13, he said, oh, my Lord, send, I pray thee, by the hand of him that you'll. God just send who you're going to send. That's what I ask you to do. That was rebellion.

That was a bad attitude. That was, hey, I don't want to do it. Look, if you would, in verse 14, as Moses keeps rebelling and God says, I'll send Aaron. Verse 14, and the anger of the Lord was kindled.

And God said, I am upset with you, Moses. I told you I could do this. I showed you what these three miracles I offered you. I told you I made your mouth. And now you're still rebelling against me.

[8 : 24] Well, I'll send Aaron. And Aaron can talk. I know he can speak well. That's what it says in chapter 4, verse 14. I know that he can speak well.

And Moses is simply going to tell Aaron what to say. And he said he's got a speech impediment. But now he's going to say that. Do you see how laughable that excuse is? Do you see?

Moses will get, he will, the fact is, after this chapter, basically after this chapter, Moses will take over and go to speaking. Basically, after this chapter, Moses will get over the hump and begin to speak.

Moses is simply trying to get out of doing what God wanted him to do. God had an answer for every part of Moses' argument about being unable to do the work. God will also take care to give you the ability that you need to do his will for your life.

You may need to move slowly, improve yourself, and grow and learn. But you can be used of God. I'd like to say this to you. Most of us want to be used. It's amazing to me.

[9 : 23] Tons of people, when they really get right with God, they think they ought to be a preacher. They think they ought to be a missionary. They think they ought to be a pastor. And then everybody cools them down real quick, and they back off, and they're not wanting to get into it.

One of the excuses we use is, what are people going to think? Another one is, I may not be able to do it. Third thing he says to him, the third reason he does it, he hasn't been the spiritual leader in his home. Look, if you would, at chapter 4, verse 25.

This may be what hinders more of us from doing what God wants us to do. God wants you to do something. God has a plan for your life. And it's not just to live like a lost man and give 10% to God and call it off.

It's not just to live a normal life and be a regular guy, and just as long as you throw enough money in the offering plate. That's not the plan. God wants his gospel carried to the world. And here's what happens.

Chapter 4, verse 25. Zipporah took a sharp stone and cut off the foreskin of her son and cast it at his feet and said, Surely a bloody husband art thou to me.

[10 : 22] Surely a bloody husband art thou to me. What happens in the story is Moses is about to go back to Israel. Israelites are all circumcised. Circumcision is a sign of the covenant between God and them.

It's a national thing. It's not something you need to be worried about. Not something you need to do, but it was a sign between Israelites and God. And so here he is, and he hasn't circumcised his son.

And he turns to his wife, and he says, We've got to circumcise our son. Well, that's a very painful and a horrible thing. She takes a rock. She cuts him with a rock. I mean, that's got to be the most horrible thing. Takes the foreskin, throws it at him, and says, You're a bloody man to me.

Check out what's going on in that story. Do you understand? Moses left Egypt on the run because he believed God. Moses left Egypt on the run because he was a man of God.

Hebrews chapter 11 and verse 24, the Bible says, By faith, Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, esteeming the reproach of Christ's greater riches than the treasures in Egypt.

[11 : 36] For he had respect unto the recompense. By faith, he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king. For he endured as seeing him who is invisible. Now, if you've got your Bible open to Hebrews, I want you to underline some things.

Look here. Moses is 40 years old. When he's 40 years old, he's a full-grown man. He's out of college. He's a grown man now. He's left his teenage years. He's left his youth. He's a grown man, and he says, I don't want to be known as an Egyptian.

I was born of an Israelite. I was born of the people of God. Most likely, his mother taught him enough Bible to know that. Most likely, while he was still at home, mom taught him enough to know that. And at 40, he stood up and said, I will not be a worldly man.

I will be a godly man. I will not live among them. I will live as God would have me to live. And so he chooses, verse 25, he chooses. I would rather go out there with the slaves than I would to stay here in the palace where I am.

And he chooses to go be with the people of God, verse 25. He says, the reproaches of Christ, the people making fun of me because I belong to the nation of Israel, the people making fun of me, the great Egyptian who was such a big man becoming a slave, it's worth it because I see him who is invisible.

[12 : 51] He wanted to serve God. But on meeting his wife and starting a family, he let something slide, some things that were very important in his faith.

He gets out there. He meets Zipporah. I don't know what happened. The man who was willing to kill a man and bury him in the sand, the man who was willing to suffer the reproaches, the man who was a man of God on his way out somewhere along the way, let some things slip.

And his wife obviously didn't understand the truths about circumcision. He was getting his son circumcised because it was an honor thing.

It was to serve God. It was to mark him as God's man. It was to be a part of that. But Moses hadn't told her. Had he told her anything? Did he teach his wife about his faith? Was it a shock to her the day he looked at her and said, I'm an Israelite?

I chose God over the world. I chose serving Jesus as to do what everybody else does. Was it something different? The child should have gotten circumcised on the eighth day.

[13 : 55] He should have been circumcised a long time ago. But evidently, old Moses had fallen short in leading his home. So as Moses goes to lead Israel out of Egypt, he has not even been leading his own family.

He has simply been living life and has allowed things to develop however they developed. She saw circumcision as cruelty rather than the beautiful sign that it was.

And I would like to ask you this question. How's your spiritual leadership at home? God wants to use us. You really count. Honestly, you're not supposed to be a spectator.

You're supposed to be on the field playing. You're supposed to be seeing people saved. You're supposed to be reaching new people. You're supposed to be discipling people. You're supposed to be living a productive Christian life that does something for Jesus.

You were never called to come to church and sit, soak, and sour. You were called to come to church and get involved and get excited and carry the gospel and see people saved and make a difference with your life. You were called to go out there in the world and be soft and light.

[15 : 01] You were called to go where you work and people say, that's a man of God. It ought not be an unusual thing if somebody were to hear you talking about Jesus because they ought to know you know Jesus. They ought to know that. How's the spiritual leadership at home?

Are you teaching your wife and helping her grow in her faith? Gentlemen, I'll just speak to the men just for a second here. But do you know the main, one of my personal things about homes would be that I ought to be the pastor of the men and you men ought to be the pastors in your home.

And you should be the one who's primarily concerned with watching your wife grow in the Lord. You should be the one who's primarily concerned with helping your wife be a good, godly woman. You should be the one who's primarily concerned about seeing to it your wife grows.

But in American Christianity, it kind of works a different way. The wife decides we shouldn't go to church. The wife decides we should stay home. The wife decides we should go to church. The wife has complaints. The wife, the wife, the wife.

Moses must have let that happen in his life. Because now it's time to go do what God's called him to do. He's now 80 years old and his wife doesn't even understand.

[16 : 12] Does your family know that you are a real man of God? A man of faith, character, and integrity. I'll just go ahead and make you mad on point number three before we get these other two.

They'll get worse. But if we took out your wife's godly influence in your home, would you be the man of God? You ought to be.

It ought not be that your wife has to say, come on, get up, let's go to bed. It ought not be your wife who has to say, we got to keep serving Jesus. It ought not be your wife.

You ought to be the leader in your home. Number four. The fourth thing, I'll go back to verse 24 with me. He hadn't been living out his faith. That's the thing.

I want to go do something for God. I feel in my heart that God would like to do something with me. All of us have those dreams. And any time we have real revival, any time we get really close to God, we all start thinking, man, I want to do something for God.

[17:12] I want my life to count. I really do. But what will people think? And I'm not able. And then maybe we haven't been spiritual leaders in our own home. We haven't led our wife. We haven't led our children. We're not drawing them close to God.

We've not got the Bible out. We're not the leader in our home. But the real problem is we're not living out our faith. We're not living out who we are. Verse 24, it said, it came to pass by the way in the end, the Lord met him and sought to kill him.

Chapter 4, verse 24. It came to pass by the way in the end that the Lord met him and sought to kill him. Could this be the biggest excuse for not serving God?

You didn't worry about doing God's will in your own life nor in your children's life when they were small. You didn't teach them or your wife what to do. You know a lot of truth, but you aren't living it out.

You've rebelled against God. And before he can use you, he must break you and make you realize that he expects obedience. How can you tell others to do what you aren't doing and what you refuse to do?

[18:14] Here's the story. Moses, I want you to go to Egypt. And I want you to get the nation of Israel. And I want you to bring them out. I'm going to do some big stuff. I'm going to show how great I am. I'm going to show my power.

God, excuse me. They won't believe me. Everybody there knows who I was. They all know I killed the Egyptian. Everybody, I ran. I got a bad opinion of me. It's not going to work. I just don't think I should go and do that.

And God said, yes, you can. Yes, you can. Yes, you can. Then he said, well, wait a minute, God. I'm not able. You understand? You can send somebody else. Somebody smarter than me. Somebody better looking to me. Somebody that has more qualities or characteristics than others.

Somebody else could do it. I can't do it. I can't do it. Then he said, I haven't even been leading my own family. My wife doesn't even understand the most basic spiritual truths. What ought to happen to a baby on the eighth day?

We haven't even done that at our home. Then he says, as he gets ready to leave, God stops him and says, stop it, Moses. Stop it. There's no need in you going back to Egypt until you get right with me.

[19:15] No need in you going to lead people if you're not going to be right with me. And many of us, God's not using us. God's not going to work in our lives because we're not dealing with issues in our own lives to help us grow.

No. God wants to use you. You are special in his economy. He does have a plan for your life. It is more than just sitting there.

It's possible that you're going to raise the next great servant of God. It's possible in your Sunday school class, young boys and girls are going to get saved and lives are going to get changed. And eternity is going to get changed. God's going to use you.

But it's time to stop making excuses. And maybe the biggest excuses, Moses in his own personal life hadn't lived out his faith. How did he live with this woman for 40 years and her not know he was circumcised?

How did he live with her for 40 years and her not say, why are you circumcised? What did he say when she did ask? What did he say when she said, you're an Egyptian but an Israelite but an Egyptian?

[20 : 15] Explain your story to me. What did he say? I mean, think about it. What did he say? Somehow Zipporah lived with the guy all these years.

And she's like, if you're a man of God, I didn't know it. That's got to be like a big shock. And then as he heads back to town, God says, and you're not.

There's some things in your life you need to get right. Let me give you the last one. He was afraid to go alone. Look if you would in chapter 4, verse 27. And the Lord said to Aaron, go into the wilderness to meet Moses.

And he went and he met with him in the mount of God and he kissed him. Okay, so it's a wild story. Moses, I'm going to use you to do great and wonderful things.

By the way, Moses knew that when he was 40. I just got to get you to remember that. At the age of 40, Moses stood up one day and said, that's it. I'm not going to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter anymore.

[21 : 13] I'm not going to live like an Egyptian anymore. I'm not going to live like one of the people that are big shots in this country. I'm going to go out and live with the slaves and make it very clear whose side I'm on.

I'm going to go out with the people that no one respects and no one loves. That's who I'm going to be. He steps out to those people in his own willful pride, tries to lead them, ends up killing a man, digging a hole, burying the guy.

And the next day he goes out and they remind him what he's done wrong. And he takes off and runs for his life. He gets out in the wilderness. He lived 40 years in Egypt. Now he's going to live 40 years out in the wilderness.

And while he's out in the wilderness, he's going to marry a girl named Zipporah. And they're going to be married and they're going to have children. And now it's time for Moses to be used of God. And Moses is making excuses.

Moses is afraid that no one will listen to him. Moses is afraid he is not able. Moses' very own wife doesn't want to follow him. Moses hasn't lived out his faith. He hasn't made it clear who he was.

[22 : 08] He hasn't been. He's kind of like, I made my one shot. I took my one chance. I tried to do something for God and I failed. And so I'll just quit. Doesn't that sum up most Baptist? And he's been sitting on the sidelines.

Now God's calling him. He's seen the burning bush. God's spoken to him. And finally God says, go Moses. And Moses said, can't go by myself. Look if you would at chapter 4 and verse 28.

By the way, Moses, God provides Moses with exactly what he needs, a friend. He sends his brother. And by the way, when you step out to do God's will, you'll find some very sweet fellowship with others that have the same heart and the same goals.

Chapter 4, verse 28. And Moses told Aaron all the words of the Lord who had sent him and all the signs which he had commanded him. I don't know if you, I don't know what you see in that little story.

But here, I can just see this. It's that wrestling thing that goes on between a man when he's going to decide whether or not he'll serve God or not. God starts dealing with Moses.

[23 : 08] It's all alone. It's all private. Nobody knows about it. It's Moses over here by himself. And Moses said, no, God, I can't do it. I know what you want me to do, but it's just impossible. I can't do it. I'm sorry. People won't believe me.

God says, don't talk to me about what people will believe. Take your rod. Throw it on the ground. Stick your hand in your vest. Pull it out. Put it back in. See that? Pick up the water. Drop the water. See that? They'll believe you because I'm with you.

Look at all I'm doing. Okay, God, I got it. You could do it if you wanted to, but I can't. It's not in me. There's no way I could do this. I'm not eloquent. I don't speak well. Oh, my goodness.

I just turned a stick into a snake. I just changed your hand. I just changed water. I can use you. I made your mouth. I know you made my mouth, but God, I got a stuttering problem.

And I just don't think I could be used. God says, just, that's it. Go. And then he turns to his wife. And his wife says, you're a bloody man. I've never seen you really be a man of God.

[24 : 06] Now you want me to circumcise my son. You're a bloody man. She's angry. She's upset. And then he's not living it out himself. He wants a friend. And God sends Moses.

Now, can you see Moses and Aaron talking? The battle's kind of over. Moses lost. I'm going to do what God wants me to do. I'm going to do what God wants me to do. And Aaron shows up, and they hug and kiss like they would in that culture.

And they're sitting there, and Moses is saying, you're not going to believe it. God wants to do something big with me. And this is how the story went. And he probably embellished it a little bit and made it look like he probably painted it just a little bit better for himself.

And he said, I can throw my rod down. It'll become a snake, and we can pick it back up. By the way, when we get there in front of the Israelites over in Egypt, I want you to throw the rod down.

Not me. I mean, he told me it would work, but you take the risk. All right? You do it. And he said, well, if you say so, brother. He said, by the way, by the way, by the way, you'll be able to stick your hand in and get leprosy.

[25 : 07] Really? Yeah. You'll get leprosy. Okay. They're talking and having this wild conversation. And God said, Moses, you just tell Aaron what to say, tell Aaron what to do. You be like God to him.

You won't listen to me. Maybe he'll listen to you. But he sends a friend along to do the work that God's called him to do. Having others to go with is a blessing. We often need help, especially when we're first getting started in the ministry.

Chapter 4, verse 29. And Moses and Aaron went and gathered together all the elders of the children of Israel. And Aaron spakes and does exactly what it says. Verse 30. And Aaron spake all the words which the Lord had spoken unto Moses.

And he did the signs. Aaron did the signs in the sight of the people. And God touched hearts in verse 31. And the people believed. It happened.

Just like God said it would. So what are you waiting for? What's holding you back? Why don't you step forward and let God use you? He'll raise up everything you need to do the work.

[26 : 10] He'll provide the friends. He'll provide the mentors. Why don't you step out and see what God would do with your life? Now, I'll just be honest with you. I'm just preaching through the Bible. Well, that's a missionary preaching message if I ever heard one.

That's a step out and do something big for God message if I ever heard one. That's what the chapter's about. That's what the chapter's about. The chapter's about you sitting there like a knot on a log, not doing what God wants you to do.

It's about you living life out there in the wilderness, taking care of your father's sheep, making money, living comfortable, coming home, and watching direct TV, and checking out all the episodes you've been missing, and checking out Facebook, and doing all the life, and doing everything.

Even putting verses on Facebook. I mean, you're putting verses on Facebook, but you're not really sold out to Jesus. And you've been making excuses. But by the end of chapter 4, no more excuses.

So I'd like to ask you, if you ever ask God what he wants from you, how you could serve him, how you could magnify him, how your life could make an eternal difference.

[27 : 11] Christianity is a whole lot more than just get saved and learn a bunch of Bible stuff and fill your head up, pay enough money to keep the pastor happy. It's a lot more than that.

God has a big plan for our lives. Let's seek him. Father in heaven, I love you, and I praise you, and I magnify you, and I pray that your name would be glorified.

I pray you'd call some people out to serve you. I pray you'd deal with some people's hearts that they might be. Your preachers, your missionaries, that you could send them forth through the work. I pray for some laymen who would get so actively involved in discipling and teaching and training and working with others and praying for people and being yoke fellows.

And that the ministry, that being around you and talking about you would become more important than any other thing. I pray, God, you'd show your power and move in our lives. And I will give you great glory for all that you do.

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[28 : 23] Thanks.