

Title: EXCUSES THAT COULD KEEP YOU OUT OF HEAVEN

Text: Luke 14:16-22

Intro: Summarize the passage. An EXCUSE is something said to hide the real reason for wrong actions. It is an attempt to cover up a shortcoming or sin. For example, every man has excuses for his neglect of duty; the debtor makes excuses for delay of payment; the student for being absent or failing in exams. Beware! Excuses can damn not only the character but the souls of men. Today we look at seven excuses that have kept millions of disobedient souls from heaven and into hell.

1. Everybody else is doing it.

Every great man of God that was used of God was a non-conformist. The Bible commands us not to be conformed to this world (**Rom. 12:2; I John 2:15**). Enoch did not conform to the world. He walked with God. Noah in his day was different. Abraham took God's path when everyone including Lot went to Sodom. Daniel and his three friends were different. Paul and the rest of the Apostles did the thing God wanted them to do, but were unpopular by human standards!

Friend, the majority is not always right! They were wrong during the time of Noah; wrong during the time of Lot; wrong during the time of Elijah; wrong during the crucifixion of Jesus! They will also be wrong in our time! (**Prov. 16:25**)

2. Times have changed.

They sure have, but God and His word have not changed. Weather, politics, society, fashion and even religion change but God's word does not! (**Mal. 3:6; Isa. 40:8**). In this present hi-tech world, the wages of sin is still death, both physical and eternal. Science and technology have greatly aided us but have also sped up sin and rebellion against God!

3. I have my own religion.

Some say, "*I was raised up in another church or religion. It does not matter what religion you have.*" The question is – do you have salvation? Do you know that your sins are forgiven and that you have eternal life? God makes it clear that you can be saved from hell even now (**John 1:12; I John 5:11-13**).

4. *It doesn't matter what you believe for, as long as you are sincere, God will accept you.*

Satan has used this excuse more than any other to send people to hell. Friend, you may have faith but unless your faith is in Jesus, you can't be saved. You may have good morality but unless you have Jesus, you cannot enter heaven (**John 14:6**). Salvation is found not in religion or anything else on earth but in the person and finished work of Jesus at Calvary!

5. *I don't understand the Bible and have questions.*

Ignorance is no excuse for not being saved in God's way! **Rom. 1:20** says we are without excuse. We don't need to know everything before we can believe and accept things. We live in a world full of things that we don't fully understand like—conception, birth, death—but we believe and accept such!

6. *I'll postpone my decision till a convenient time.*

The Bible is full of people who put the issue off and perished!

- A.** The rich young ruler (**Luke 18:18-24**)
- B.** The rich man in hell (**Luke 16:19-25**)
- C.** Governor Felix (**Acts 24:22-25**)
- D.** King Agrippa (**Acts 26:27-28**)

7. *I am too bad to be forgiven.*

In Acts 2 Peter preached on Pentecost and saw some of the men who crucified Jesus believe. The Apostle Paul called himself "the chief of sinners" (**I Tim. 1:15**). God can instantly forgive any repentant sinner right now (**Isa. 1:18**)

Conclusion: Say you were sitting on the railroad tracks and a fast train was coming toward you. You can make one of three possible decisions: (#1) You can totally ignore the train and pretend like it was not coming until it hits you! (#2) You can say, "The train is still quite far off and I still have time. I'll just wait till it gets closer then move away." (#3) You can heed the warning and get off the track quickly and be saved.

Only one of these responses will save your life. Which one will you make? Be wise and heed the warning of God in His word – **Luke 19:10; 13:3; II Pet. 3:9**. Unsaved friend, entrust your soul and eternal destiny to Jesus Christ.....NOW!