

Why Some Do Not Obey

INTRODUCTION:

I. Excuses are Timeless: Luke 14:15-24. Note especially verse 18. People have been making excuses why not to accept the Lord's invitation to be saved since He offered salvation to man. If you have not obeyed the Lord, you will hear His invitation again today. If you do not obey, what excuse will you offer the Master? Why will you not come dine at His table? Do you despise His food? Have you bought a field, five yoke of oxen, or married a wife? Do you think that you have a better excuse than that?

II. Why We Examine the Excuses of Sinners

A) To Relieve Sinners of All Such Excuses: If there is anyone in the audience today who thinks he has an excuse, I hope to relieve you of that burden.

B) To Help Those Striving To Teach:

1. To determine the validity of excuses
2. To learn how to answer them

C) Christians Face Common Challenges: Christians often make the same kinds of excuses that sinners do. Therefore, debunking their excuses will help us abandon our own.

BODY:

I. The One Who Has Heard And Has Not Acted Accordingly: Luke 6:49; Ezekiel 33:1-4.

A) Lack of commitment: That's all you can say for some people who hear and do not obey.

1. I'm too evil: Some sinners think, "I have been too evil for God to forgive." Every sinner was terribly evil before they came to Christ, but all can be forgiven: Titus 3:3-7.

a) the Corinthians were not too evil: The Corinthians had been guilty of some terrible sins: 1 Corinthians 6:9-11a. None of these sins were so terrible that God could not or would not forgive them. In fact, He forgave them all: verse 11b.

b) the murderers of Christ were not too evil: When Peter told the Jews who were in Jerusalem on Pentecost that they had put to death the Messiah

(Acts 2:23), his message pierced their hearts (verse 37). Has the truth pierced your conscience? Because if it has, you also will cry out for the solution to your alienation from God. And any Christian can tell you the solution. The solution is the same today as it was for the Jews who had killed Jesus: verse 38. There are no deeds as dastardly as putting the Savior to death, and yet even Jesus' murderers could be forgiven. And those who obeyed were: verse 41.

You cannot be the worst sinner who was ever forgiven, because the apostle Paul says that he claims that distinction for himself: 1 Timothy 1:15-16. You see, Paul had used every fiber of his being to oppose God's eternal plan to save men in Christ. He tried to eradicate Christianity. Yet God's grace saved him. He promises to do the same for you: John 6:37. Now what's your excuse?

2. I'm not qualified

a) all believers are qualified: No one who believes in Jesus is unqualified to become a child of God: John 1:12. Yet some think, "But I can't lead songs, lead prayers, preach a sermon, or teach a class." Who said you had to do those things to be a Christian. Ants have the busiest colonies in the world, but not all ants do the same job. Nor does everyone in the body of Christ have the same talents or roles to fill.

b) God expects our best: Acts 2:38 does not say, "Repent, be baptized, and lead songs the first Sunday after you are baptized." God does expect us to do our best but that is all He expects of anyone. And that is something everyone can give. So, now what's your excuse?

3. I'm imperfect: "If I obey the gospel now, I know I'll sin after I become a Christian." Actually, this hits home to me. At one point in my life when I was unfaithful to God, this attitude hindered me. But my mother finally helped me see that it is a foolish excuse.

a) you will never be perfect: If you have to wait until you are every sin and every inclination to sin is completely eradicated in your life, you will never obey the gospel.

b) you must grow: If a convert had to be perfect, God would not command Christians to grow. But He does: 2 Peter 3:18. Christians are not perfect but they long for spiritual nourishment so they can grow: 1 Peter 2:2. Mature Christians as well as babes are continually in the process of working out their salvation: Philippians 2:12. Now what's your excuse?

B) Love of the world: Others who hear but do not obey not because they are noncommittal, but because they are committed to the wrong cause.

1. people: Is it possible to have too much love for people? Yes, some love friends and family too much. To these people, obeying God and gaining eternal life is not worth losing the friendship of life long friends or the approval of family members.

It is certainly true that committed Christians face ridicule from the world. King Zedekiah had Jeremiah thrown into a mud hole up to his armpits for telling him the truth. Some do not obey because they are not willing to pay the cost; they are ashamed of Jesus' words: Luke 9:26.

2. desires: The state of some is so depraved that they follow every lust of the flesh: Romans 1:24. Love of sensual, worldly pleasure chokes out the Word: Luke 8:14.

3. things: With some people, the truth is choked out by riches: Luke 8:14.

With regard to all of the aforementioned excuses for not obeying the gospel, it is true that "one excuse is as good as another." However, none of them are good; none are valid reasons for remaining in sin.

II. The One Who Has Not Heard: Ezekiel 33:5-8. Notice that the wicked man is still held responsible, for God holds all men accountable for learning of Him. Notice also, however, that God also holds responsible the watchman who did not sound the warning.

A) They have heard much false doctrine: Many people have heard false religious teachings but have never heard the truth. This sounds astounding when we consider that there are entire TV and radio stations devoted to airing religious programs twenty-four hours a day. On these stations, we hear constantly the words, "Jesus," "church," and "God. Can it be true that with thousands of hours devoted to religious topics there are still people out there who have never heard? It is hard to believe! But I did not say that most people had never heard of Jesus or the Bible. Most people that I have taught the gospel had heard about God, Jesus, and the Bible. They had also assimilated some denominational doctrines, but most had never before heard the truth.

1. Some have accepted it: It is no surprise that many people have accepted false doctrine in the absence of the knowledge of any alternative.

2. Some have rejected it: Most people do not realize that the gospel so simple or that there are groups attempting to follow the Bible alone. Thus, many have rejected a perversion of gospel and not true revelation of Jesus

Did you know that most of the time when Madeline Murray O'hair speaks about religion, I agree with her? For example, when she talks about the foolishness of a fragmented people arguing that they have the truth, she is

correct. When she speaks of the folly of the doctrine of total depravity, I agree with her.

As a matter of fact, I cannot prove that Mrs. O'Hair has ever rejected the truth. She refuses to accept false doctrine, as she should. But has she heard the truth? The world heard has heard a lot about religion but the world has not heard a lot of truth about religion.

B) They have never heard the truth: This fact should affect how we look at people. We need to cultivate the compassionate attitude Jesus had toward the lost: Matthew 9:36-38.

Two shoe salesmen went overseas to the same third world country. The first salesman sent a message back to company headquarters stating, "Send no more shoes, no 1 wears here." But the second salesman sent this message back home, "Send more shoes, every 1 needs shoes here!" How do we see the world? Sinners often do not see themselves as lost, so we must make them aware of their desperate condition.

If you ask the average person, "What must one do to be saved?" he will respond, "Receive Jesus as your personal Savior." Now, what does that mean? It's not found in the Bible. We need to challenge people when they use terminology not found or rooted in the Bible. Let us proclaim that the Bible speaks of receiving Jesus by receiving the words of the apostles: Matthew 10:40,14.

C) Someone must teach them the truth: Ezekiel 33:5-8.

To be sure, faith is a popular subject in the religious world today. Faith is important: Romans 5:1; Hebrews 11:6. But few know what faith really is much less the kind of faith God says is necessary to gain eternal life. Whose fault is it that there is such widespread ignorance of such an important Bible subject? Well, God did not place any denomination, cult, or organization here on this earth to teach the truth about faith except the church. If no one had ever heard of DuPont in Florence, Alabama, that would not be the fault of some Procter & Gamble employee. We need to start doing a better job teaching and living the kind of faith described in the Bible.

A poll was taken in 1993 which showed that one in four people have changed religious affiliation at least once. Why are not more changing in the direction of the truth? Could it be that God's people do not speak as openly about Jesus as they do about their favorite sports or movie star?

CONCLUSION:

I. Individual Accountability to Obey: I think the Bible will bear out this fact: anyone who wants to know the truth can know it and will know it. And if you have faith in Christ, you must obey the gospel today. Saving faith takes away every objection to obedience we have looked at today, and any additional objection you can think of. You are invited to the feast this evening. You have the responsibility. I and the brethren at Brookhill have

fulfilled our duty. Have you?

II. Our Accountability to Teach: Do we know that God does not want anyone to spend eternity in hell (2 Peter 3:9)? If we know this and do not do something about it, God will punish us: Luke 12:47. Does not everyone have the right to hear the gospel at least once? There may be someone you know who has never had that opportunity. Don't let him face you on Judgment Day saying, "You Never Mentioned Him to Me."