

# **EXCUSE ME, LORD**

**By**  
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## **I AM PERSONALY INFERIOR**

“Excuse me!” How many times a day do you hear that expression? It is so common that we say it to one another almost without thought. And yet, the statement has profound meaning. To “excuse” means to release from responsibility, obligation, or duty. It is a petition asking release from a charge. To offer an “excuse” is to give a reason why one should not be held accountable.

It is well that our language has provided a vehicle by which we might seek forgiveness, explain failure or request release. It is right and proper to use an excuse in dealing with men. But when a man tries to excuse himself from doing the will of God, he becomes a sinner.

“But surely no one would do that, would he?” someone may protest. Yes, a man would. A classic example of a man asking to be excused from God’s service and

offering excuses why he would not obey the expressed will of God is found in Exodus 3.

Moses was on the backside of the desert keeping the flocks of Jethro, his father-in-law. He saw a bush which burned with fire without being consumed. His curiosity was aroused. Turning aside to find an explanation of the phenomena, Moses discovered himself in the presence of God. God spoke to Moses, saying, *“I am the God of thy fathers...Abraham...Isaac...Jacob...I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt...and I am come down to deliver them...Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt,”* Exodus 3:6-10.

God clearly identified Himself, He spoke of His loving mercy for the suffering Israelites. He declared His intention to deliver them. He promised to enable Moses to bring them out of Egypt. What was Moses' response? Immediately, he began to make excuses as to why he could not do what God had commissioned him to do. Moses offered five excuses, the last almost an act of rebellion against God. Let us examine these excuses. We need to hear them again today, and observe how God dealt with them. Men are still making similar excuses in trying to be free from obedience to God.

Moses' first excuse was, “Excuse me, Lord, because I am not personally capable of doing what you want done,” Exodus 3: 11-12. Have you ever used the excuse of personal inability? Consider it in the light of God's revelation.

### **Personal inferiority is based on a wrong evaluation of men**

Moses was amazed to hear God say, *“I will send thee unto Pharaoh.”* He responded, *“Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh?”* Pharaoh was the ruler of the nation which was mistress of the world. He held powers of life and death at his word. The last time Moses had been in Egypt, he was running to get away from the presence of Pharaoh because his life was in danger, Exodus 2:15. Surely God did not really expect him to go before the monarch again.

Yes, God did expect him to stand before Pharaoh. Moses plus God was more powerful than Pharaoh without God. Moses must not make the mistake of feeling inferior to any man. God's man is not inferior! In God's eyes all men are equal. If a man is elevated by his peers to a place of authority, he is exercising only that authority which God permits him to have, Romans 13: 1-8. It has been wisely observed, that God and one man is a majority under any situation.

Consider the prophet named Jeremiah, He was called to the prophetic office while still a young man. Hearing God's call, he replied, *“Ah, Lord God! Behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child.”* God replied, *“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,”* Jeremiah 1: 6-8. God taught Jeremiah the lesson he sought to teach Moses.

Many Christians are still held back from service by a wrong evaluation of man. There are believers who will witness to an adolescent who would not try to witness to an adult. There are some who would witness to a person on a lower economic or social level who would not dare to witness to a bank president or a college professor. How tragic! If you will evaluate men as God evaluates them, you will lose your fear. Apply to yourself God's words to Jeremiah, "Be not afraid of their faces: For I am with thee to deliver thee." No Christian who fears the appearance of a person will ever be an effective servant of God.

### **Personal inferiority is prompted by a remembrance of other failures**

Who is there among us who has not failed in some worthy cause? Such a failure may strengthen our resolve to try again, or it may keep us from ever trying again.

Moses has tried to help the poor enslaved Israelites. He had tried to establish justice in the Egyptians' dealing with the Jews. But in his efforts, he unwittingly killed an Egyptian. Pharaoh was told and vowed that Moses must pay with his life. This was the reason why Moses fled from the land of Egypt.

Moses probably thought, "I tried to help Israel one time and miserably failed. If I should try once more, it would be only to fail again." Moses was not taking God into account. He tried and failed because he was not in the will of God. If he followed God's instructions, failure would be impossible.

Does some memory of past failure in Christian service keep you from attempting further service? Dare to try again. "*God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work,*" II Corinthians 9:8. Resume your efforts to witness; assume the leadership of your class; take up the task that lies at hand. God will make you able. "*Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God,*" II Corinthians 3:5.

### **Personal inferiority arises when we forget the promise of God's presence**

God promised Moses, "*Certainly I will be with thee,*" Exodus 3:12. God assures each Christian, "*Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world,*" Matthew 28:20, and "*I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee,*" Hebrews 13:5. "*So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me,*" Hebrews 13:6.

Does it really make that much difference when God's presence is with you? Yes, indeed! Listen to His words to Joshua, "*There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life... I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee... be strong and of a good courage; But not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the Lord thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest,*" Joshua 1:5,9.

Consider the implication of such a promise. To fear men is to account the personal presence of God as insufficient. *“Be not afraid of their faces,”* God says, *“for I am with thee to deliver thee,”* Jeremiah 1:8.

Christian, claim this promise. Let it fortify your heart. Memorize Romans 8:31. *“What shall we say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?”* Or, as a lad miss-quoted the words but caught the spirit, “If God is for us it doesn’t make any difference who is against us.”

Look on no man as your superior if you are a servant of the God of heaven. Let no memory of past failure break your spirit so that you never try again. Count on the presence of the sovereign God to provide all you need for effective service.

Here is a rule to follow: Give all of yourself to God and He will give all of Himself to you. In the sufficiency which He provides, you will have no reason to excuse yourself from service because of personal inferiority or inability. Instead, you will be able to testify, *“Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savor of his knowledge by us in every place,”* II Corinthians 2:14. *“Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God,”* II Corinthians 3:5.

## I HAVE LIMITED RELIGIOUS INSIGHT

“Alas, alas, excuses grow to turn our thoughts from God; to turn us from the house of prayer, the place our fathers trod.” From time immemorial, man has sought to release himself from responsibility for service or accountability for failure by offering excuses. The procedure has met with sufficient success in dealing with men, so that he has tried it in his dealings with God.

Perhaps you heard, or even used, excuses like these. (1) I cannot serve God because of personal inferiority; I just cannot do what He wants done. (2) I cannot serve God because my religious knowledge is too limited; I just do not know enough to serve. (3) I cannot serve God because I do not have powers of persuasion; I am not an influential person. (4) I cannot serve God because I am not talented; my defects for outweigh my assets. (5) God made a mistake in calling me; He should send someone else.

Such excuses are not new. Moses used all five of them almost 3,500 years ago. On the backside of the desert, on a mountain called Horeb, before a bush which burned with fire but was not consumed by the flame, Moses heard God call him to be the deliverer of Israel from the Egyptian bondage. Drawing back from the task, Moses attempted to excuse himself from divine service.

“Excuse me, Lord,” He said, “but my religious insight is too limited for me to be effective. I know you are God-almighty God. I know you are the God who revealed Himself to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. But if the Israelites were to ask me, *“What is*

*His name?"* I would not know what to say. So please excuse me, Lord, for my knowledge of You is too limited for me to serve."

Is this your excuse? Do you draw back from service because you do not know more about the Bible or because you do not have professional training? If so, consider these facts.

### **It is one's own fault if he lacks knowledge of spiritual things**

God can be known. He is available to the seeking heart. He has promised, "*You shall seek me and find me when you search with all your heart,*" Jeremiah 29:13. Jesus stated a beatitude which declares, "*Blessed are they which hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled,*" Matthew 5:6. If you lack knowledge of God, you can blame yourself for your lack. God wants to be known.

Revelation is God's initiative in making Himself known. It is His act of drawing back the curtain which hides the infinite from the finite and showing man what God is like. Why has God revealed Himself? Why has He spoken through nature (Psalm 19: 1-6), prophets (Hebrews 1:1), the written Word (Psalm 19:7-11), and finally in the person of His only begotten Son (Hebrews 1:1-4)? Why, indeed? Because He wants man to know Him and enter into a personal relationship with Him.

If a man does not know God, whose fault is it? It is the fault of man, not of God. God does not hide Himself from the seeking heart. Quite the contrary, you can go back to the garden of Eden and find who does the hiding. When God came walking in the garden in the cool of the day, He was ready to meet and fellowship with Adam and Eve. But, ashamed because of their sin, they hid themselves in the shrubbery of the garden. It has been observed that a sinner cannot find God for the same reason a criminal cannot find a policeman, He does not want to find him!

God wants to be wanted. His desire to enter into a personal relationship with man is the heart of revealed religion. He wants to be personally related to you. He is ready to minister in your life, by the Holy Spirit, so that you will grow to full spiritual maturity. All that is lacking is the agreement of our heart to seek Him.

Draw near to God, from henceforth claiming the blessed promise of Jeremiah 29:12-13, "*Then ye shall call upon me... and I will hearken unto you. And ye shall seek me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart.*"

### **There can be no substitute for a continuing personal relationship to God**

The key to spiritual growth and spiritual knowledge is a personal relationship with God. In fact, this is the essence of being a true Christian. Relationship with God is always dynamic; it is never static. The nature of life is growth. Your spiritual life is incomplete unless you are growing in "*grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ,*" II Peter 3:18.

There is a grave spiritual danger in living in the past. Moses had heard from his mother how God spared his life. Pharaoh's daughter found the baby Moses in a basket

in the bull-rushes which grew in the Edgewater's of the Nile River. She recognized him as a Hebrew child who was sentenced to die by her father's command. Even so, she spared the infant, adopted him as her own son and reared him in Pharaoh's palace. Such events can be explained only in the light of God's sovereign intervention. Yes, God had done remarkable things in Moses' early life. But for forty years, Moses had little evidence of God's ministry. No man can afford to live in the past.

“What has God done in your life recently?” That is the question. Failure to grow is a tragedy. If human parents are broken hearted over improper development of their child, how must God view the lack of spiritual development in His children? Never be content with things as they are. Count no day complete unless it has brought you to greater spiritual maturity.

Second hand religion is poor substitute for reality in relationship with God. Move up higher. Learn to say with Job, *“I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee,”* Job 42:5. Do not stop short. There are wonderful spiritual treasures for those who seek God. *“As it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God..Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God,”* I Corinthians 2:9-10,12.

### **God will qualify you for service**

Here is the secret of spiritual growth and effective service. Trust God to make you sufficient. God's ability plus your availability will make you an able servant of the Lord Jesus Christ. *“Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God; Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament,”* II Corinthians 3:5-6a.

The believer is God's agent in service. It is up to God to provide the plans and the resources needed. *“The battle is the Lord's,”* II Chronicles 20:15. We are but soldiers in His army, Jesus said, *“Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain,”* John 15:16.

Moses said, “I cannot serve. I do not know God well enough.” God replied by giving His personal name, **“I AM.”** That name underscores His personal presence and unbroken existence. To each generation, He says, **“I AM!”** Moses learned to depend on the God who is. He found God faithful in Egypt, at the Red Sea, in the wilderness, and all the way to Canaan. He saw God provide food, water, protection, and direction all the way. He found God faithful.

When did Moses come to know for sure that God would make up any deficiencies? He learned it in the midst of service. Learn the lesson Moses

learned. You will never know the sufficiency of God until you launch out with God in service. When you commit yourself to His will, He will qualify you. The sufficiency is of God. Give up all thought of your personal ability to serve God. Make yourself available to His blessed sufficiency and no longer will you have to claim inability as an excuse for not serving God.

## **PEOPLE WILL NOT BELIEVE ME**

Who would dare say “No” to God? Would any mere mortal contend with the Almighty? The tragic fact is that not just one but many men sin against God by delay or refusal to do His will. A common excuse offered by men in an attempt to escape God’s call to service is expressed in Exodus 4:1-9. *“They will not believe me, nor harken unto my voice,”* Exodus 4:1b. Does that sound familiar? Can you remember having said, “I can’t teach a Bible class. No one would listen to me?” Or have you said, “I can’t be a soul-winner. No one would pay any attention to me?” If you have used such excuses, you need to hear God’s reply. Here are God’s guidelines to all who would excuse them-selves from divine service.

### **Transfer all trust from yourself to God**

God commissioned Moses, *“Go, and gather the elders of Israel together, and say unto them the Lord God of your fathers...appeared unto me, saying, I have surely visited you...I will bring you out of the affliction of Egypt...And they shall harken to thy voice,”* Exodus 3:16,17a,18a. Moses response, *“But, behold, they will not believe me, nor harken unto my voice, for they will say, The Lord hath not appeared unto thee,”* Exodus 4:1.

Observe the audacity of unbelief. God said, *“They shall harken to thy voice.”* Moses replied, *“They will not believe me, nor harken unto my voice.”* This was nothing less than an outright denial of the specific promise of God. Such is the terrible sin of unbelief.

Why did Moses return such a flat denial to God’s promise? Because he was thinking of himself, his ability. Observe the personal pronouns used in the conversation. Moses said, “They will not believe ME, nor harken unto MY voice.” You see, his attention was concentrated on himself. He did not consider that he was God’s agent. He counted not on God’s power. He looked at himself and was afraid.

An undue emphasis on self will always make a person fearful. No man can serve God successfully if he depends on the strength of the flesh. *“For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places,”* Ephesians 6:12. Spiritual battles must be fought with spiritual strength.

Do you view the religious service committed to you in the light of your own

strength? If you do, you will surely be dismayed. Look to God, saying often to yourself, *“Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God,”* II Corinthians 3:5.

### **Expect God to take your little and make it much**

God challenged Moses by asking, *“What is that in thine hand?”* Moses answered, *“A rod”*. It was just a shepherd’s crook. Moses knew it for what it was—just a dead stick. He had cut it from a tree. One day he would throw it away and it would be forgotten. It had no power of itself and was of little value.

*“Cast it on the ground,”* God instructed. Moses did so and the dead stick became a live snake. It did not merely appear to be a serpent. It was alive—so real that Moses fled from it in fear. Held in Moses’ hand, it was only a shepherd’s staff. Cast down at the command of God, it had life and power. *“Put forth thine hand, and take it by the tail.”* In fearful obedience, Moses did so and it became a rod—a dead stick—once more.

What lessons did Moses learn from that experience? (1) He learned that a thing which is dead and impotent in the hands of a man may become alive and powerful when committed to God. If God can give life and power to a dead stick, what can He do with a living man who committed to Him? (2) Moses learned that a great change comes in that which is committed to God. Observe that the stick was simply a shepherd’s rod until Moses cast it down. But when he committed it to God, it was called *“the rod of God”* from henceforth, Exodus 4:20. The rod looked as it had before, but having been dedicated to God, it was charged with His power.

God specializes in using little means to accomplish great things. Jesus took twelve men whom the world called *“unlearned and ignorant”* (Acts 4:13) and turned the world upside down through their ministry. It has been thus throughout Christian history. Hear the testimony of the Apostle Paul: *“For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, nor many noble are called: But God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence,”* I Corinthians 1:26-29. There has never been a man too small to be used of God.

Offer yourself to God. Jesus multiplied five loaves of bread and two fish, making them sufficient to feed a multitude of more than 5,000 people, Matthew 14:15-21. *“And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work,”* II Corinthians 9:8. Expect God to take your little and make it much.

### **Trust God to verify His message**

God has promised, *“For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth the bud, that it*



*may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it”* Isaiah 55:10-11.

God will permit none of His word to fall to the ground. Be assured that His ministry will accompany your ministry. He will use signs, wonders, miracles, gifts of the Holy Spirit (Hebrews 2:4) to verify His message today as you give yourself to service.

Moses tried to excuse himself from God’s service by anticipating rejection by the people to whom he was sent. *“They will not believe me, nor harken unto my voice,”* he predicted. God gave Moses three miraculous signs to convince the people of his divine commission. **(1)** The shepherd’s rod became a living snake and returned to a rod again. **(2)** His hand was made leprous, and then restored to wholeness, simply by placing it in his bosom and removing it there from. **(3)** Water taken from the river became blood as it was poured out on dry land. These signs accompanied Moses’ testimony of the word of God to assure belief in God’s word. He will do no less for you.

Does someone object, “I do not have a gift of miracles!” So be it. Neither do I. We do not need them or God would have given them. According to Hebrews 2:4, *“signs and wonders and diverse miracles”* are only part of God’s way to verify His message. He also uses *“gifts of the Holy Spirit”* for the same purpose. You have a spiritual gift.

Each Christian has a spiritual gift. The Bible declares, *“The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit,”* and *the Spirit gives to each person individually as He wills,* I Corinthians 12:7,11. Yes, you have a spiritual gift which enables you to serve God effectively.

God expects you to do nothing except what He enables you to do. You minister out of the strength of God. I Peter 4:11 reads, in part, *“If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth.”*

We cannot control the response of men to the message of God. We can minister to them in Jesus’ name and make the way clear that they may come if they will. Let all excuses be gone. Commit yourself to service now and forever. *“And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation... Now then we are ambassadors for Christ,”* II Corinthians 5:18,20a.

Be done with all excuses. Commit yourself to service and know the joy of the Lord’s “Well done, good and faithful servant.”

## **MY ABILITY IS TOO LIMITED**

How would you react to hearing someone say, “Of course, God is wise and makes no mistakes, but He should not expect me to serve Him. My personal talents are so few and so small that I just cannot do what He expects of me.” You would probably be shocked at hearing someone impugn God’s wisdom with such rash words.

And yet, this is exactly what one says when he draws back from serving God. Whether consciously or unconsciously, this is what you have said if you have debated about investing yourself in the work of the Kingdom of God.

Exodus 4 reveals how God deals with a man’s excuse that his ability is too limited for him to serve. Moses said to God, “I cannot go to Egypt to lead Israel from bondage. That would necessitate my speaking before the elders of Israel and the count of Pharaoh. Lord, you know I am not eloquent. In fact, I have a speech impediment which causes me to speak very halting. I have had this problem all my life—a full 80 years. No, Lord, I cannot do your bidding.” God replied, “*Who hath made man’s mouth?..Now therefore go, and I will be with mouth, and teach thee what thou shalt say,*” Exodus 4:10-12.

God makes up for a man’s deficiencies. No excuse is valid before Him. Even so, men still try to get a release from their duty to serve. To claim lack of ability to do the task assigned by God is not just to berate one’s self, it is to speak against God!

### **To complain of lack of ability is to say that God cannot use your talent**

Moses’ complaint was, “I am not eloquent; I am slow of speech.” It did not seem to occur to him that God could use him with such a limitation. He made the mistake of majoring on one disability and thereby disqualifying himself altogether. Be careful you do not make the same mistake.

Moses was God’s man for the job. True, he had a speech impediment which was a limitation to him. But consider his assets which qualified him for the task. **(1)** He was a Hebrew by birth and would be accepted by the Israelites as one of the people of Israel. **(2)** He had already risked his life in an effort to alleviate the sufferings of Israel and this would cause them to be kindly disposed toward him. **(3)** He had been reared in Pharaoh’s palace; he was well acquainted with the Egyptian court and how to conduct himself there. **(4)** He had lived for 40 years in the Peninsula of Sinai—the territory through which Israel would pass—and was accustomed to survival in the desert. **(5)** He had met God personally and was a recipient of a divine commission. Sure, Moses had some liabilities, but his assets far outweighed them. Moses was God’s man for the job.

Moses complained, “*Oh my Lord, I am not eloquent... I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue.*” God replied, “*I made man’s mouth... Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth.*” God’s commission carries with it a promise of divine enablement. Who cares that he lacks eloquence so long as God is with his mouth and teaches him what to say? Success lies not in the talents of men, but in the power of God.

Jesus gave a parable which illustrated this truth, Matthew 25:14-29. He told of a nobleman who made a long journey. Before leaving, he called his servants together and gave each a portion of his wealth. Each was to use the amount entrusted to him and make profit for his master. God will do no less for you. He will entrust to you all the resources you need to enable you to do all He asks of you.

Devote yourself, all you are and all you can become, to God. He can use what ability as need requires. Even if your service is limited, He will honor it in proportion to your devotion to Him.

### **To complain of lack of ability is to say that God cannot increase your ability**

Is God so helpless that He must make do with whatever natural ability a man has? Is He who multiplied loaves and fish to feed a multitude unable to multiply a man's talent to serve? Do not entertain such sinful doubts. He is able!

Moses' complaint of a speech impediment brought a two-fold response from God. (1) He questioned, "*Who made man's mouth?*" as if to say, "He who made the mouth can make a stammering mouth speak distinctly." (2) He promised, "*I will be with thy mouth.*" God's limitlessness is the answer to man's limitedness.

Jesus desired to feed a hungry multitude out in a desert place. The only food available was a lunch hardly sufficient for Him and His disciples-seven loaves of bread and a few small fish. He took them, gave thanks to God, broke them and caused them to be distributed. When a multitude of 4,000 men, plus the women and children, had dined sufficiently, there were 12 baskets full of fragments left over, He makes much out of little, Matthew 15:32-38.

The same Lord will "multiply your seed sown, and increase the fruits of your righteousness" (II Corinthians 9:10) as you make yourself available to Him. Trust Him to use the ability you already have and to increase your ability as increased ability is needed.

Listen to Moses at the end of the exodus. He speaks clearly. The book of Deuteronomy is an address which Moses delivered to Israel "according unto all that the Lord had given him in commandment." Read the book aloud and determine whether God's enablement was sufficient. Fear not to commit yourself wholly to God's purpose for your life. He will make you able.

### **To complain of lack of ability is to doubt God**

Jesus promised, "*My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus,*" Philippians 4:19.

Under the guidance of God, Moses overcame his slow tongue and stammering speech. He gained the eloquence which he lacked. But the change took a period of years. How was his problem overcome in the interim? God took care of that, too. He moved on the heart of Aaron, Moses' brother, to leave Egypt in search of Moses. God said of Aaron, "*I know that he can speak well...and thou shalt speak unto him, and*

*put words in his mouth; and I will be with thy mouth and with his mouth... And he shall be thy spokesman unto the people,” Exodus 4:14-16.*

Trust God to make up your deficiencies. You will never be able to do everything, but you can do something. Be content to do what you can do, trusting God to increase your abilities or to provide other workers. You will soon join the Apostle Paul in saying, *“Thanks be unto God which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savor of his knowledge by us in every place,”* II Corinthians 2:14. As Jesus gave His disciples power to perform His commissions, even to the performing of miracles and casting out demons, so He will qualify you. Fear not. Trust God to make up any area of need in your life.

Think of the congregation of your church as a crew of workmen. Each one has a duty to perform according to his respective ability. It is enough that he do his job. You, too, are one of God’s workmen. He requires nothing from you which He will not qualify you to do. Give Him the best you have. Give Him the best you can become. Trust Him to enable. He will. Here is His promise which you may claim for assurance: *“Be not afraid nor dismayed... for the battle is not yours, but God’s... Ye shall not need to fight in this battle: set yourselves, stand ye still, and see the salvation of the Lord with you,”* II Chronicles 20:15b,17a.

Never again will you need to say, “Excuse me, Lord, because my ability is too limited,” Instead, you will say, *“I can do all things through Christ which strengthened me,”* Philippians 4:13.

## **SEND SOMEONE ELSE**

It is easy to expect someone else to show deep dedication to the Lord. It is not so easy to realize a like dedication yourself. And yet, personal commitment to God is the heart of the Christian religion. The Christian recognizes God as his father and Jesus as his Savior and his Lord. This makes the Christian a “saved servant” of God.

I’m sure you are familiar with the hymn of commitment which contains the prayer, “Take my life and let it be consecrated, Lord, to Thee.” Worshipers in one congregation were surprised to hear the hymn sung a little differently, so it is told. Instead of singing, “Take my life and let it be...” a certain man was heard to sing, “Take my wife and let me be...”

I doubt the incident occurred in reality, and yet, I am sure it does occur in spirit. How many people, would you suppose, have sung similar words of commitment while saying “No” in their hearts to God’s call? It happens far too often.

“Not I,” some may protest, “for God has never called me to be a pastor, or an evangelist, or a missionary.” Such a response indicates a misunderstanding of the Christian life. God select some people for special areas of service, it is true, but every Christian is called to serve. To each believer’s heart comes the question, “Who will consecrate himself unto the Lord?” God’s expectation is that each one respond, “Here

am I, send me.” Praise God, multitudes respond with that spirit. Others draw back and try to excuse themselves from service. When excuses are not accepted, some make the commitment while others steadfastly refuse to obey. It is such an act of rebellion-the refusal to serve-which we consider in the study. “Excuse me, Lord, and send someone else.”

God’s longsuffering grace was manifest as He spoke with Moses on Mount Horeb before the bush that burned with fire and was not consumed. God said, “I have chosen you to lead Israel out of her bondage in Egypt and into her permanent home in Canaan. Moses responded with a series of excuses as to why he could not serve. God has an answer to each excuse and held the man to face the call.

(1) Moses said, “I am personally inferior.” God replies, “*Surely I will be with you,*” Exodus 3:11-12. (2) Moses said, “My knowledge of God is too limited.” God replied, “*I will reveal myself to you. I AM THAT I AM,*” Exodus 3:13-22. (3) Moses said, “The people will not believe God has sent me.” God replied, “*I will enable you to do miracles which will convince them,*” Exodus 4:1-9. (4) Moses said, “I have a speech impediment and cannot speak well.” God replied, “*I will be with your mouth and teach you what should say,*” Exodus 4:10-17.

(5) Finally, there were no excuses left. So Moses said, “*O my Lord, send, I pray thee, by the hand of him whom thou wilt send,*” Exodus 4:13. This sounds like surrender. Moses is not saying, “Lord, choose anyone you want to send and send him, even if it is me you will send.” Not at all. Moses is actually saying, “Lord, choose anyone you please and send him, but don’t expect me to go.” Moses was daring to say a final “no” to God’s call. No wonder the scripture declares, “*And the anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses,*” Exodus 4:14. Consider the sinful audacity of the man who rejects God’s call. He is saying...

### **I refuse to go**

You might expect such a response from a heathen. The Pharaoh of Egypt might be expected to say, “*Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice..I know not the Lord,*” Exodus 5:2. But no one would expect such a reply from a person who is a child of God by faith in Jesus, God’s Son. And yet, professing Christians often respond thus to the will of their heavenly Father. How tragic!

How seriously does God view the sin of disobedience? He calls it rebellion. How serious is the sin of rebellion? The Bible answers, “*Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, (which carried a death penalty in ancient Israel) and stubbornness is as iniquity (willful sin) and idolatry (which also carried the death penalty),*” I Samuel 15:22b-23a. Therefore, rebellion against God’s holy will deserves capital punishment upon the transgressor.

God does not return immediate justice upon the rebel. He gives time for repentance. He pleads by His Holy Spirit . He calls and waits and calls again. If a

man responds, well. If not, he will suffer loss in that dread day when “*every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward,*” Hebrews 2:2. Learn to fear to say “No” to God. His mercy delays judgment, but judgment will come upon the disobedient and rebellious. To reject God’s call is to say to him:

### **You are making a mistake in choosing me**

Careful, now. God does nothing by chance nor without aforethought. “*Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world,*” Acts 15:18.

He declares the end from the beginning; from ancient times he tells things which have not yet come to pass. He says, “*I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass: I have purposed it, I will also do it,*” Isaiah 46:11b. Would he, therefore, make a mistake in selecting a mortal man for service? Never! You can read in Holy Scripture, “*The gifts and calling of God are without repentance,*” Romans 11:29.

Suppose you were planning a long across-country trip by automobile. You would study a map and lay out your route. You would designate points of interest to see and make reservations where you wished to spend the night. Before you started you would know where you intended to go, what you planned to do, and how long it would take.

Would you expect God to run the universe with less planning? Oh, no. He, too, works by plan. If you have a place in it, do not sin against God by withdrawing from your assigned ministry in His redemptive ministry among men. To reject God’s call is say to Him:

### **I will risk your displeasure**

Never challenge God to a contest. You will not win. Jonah tried it. After three days and nights in the belly of a great fish, he was ready to obey God. Replace pride with humility. “*God resisteth (sets Himself to do battle against) the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble,*” James 4:6b.

Take warning from a truth expressed in Psalm 76:7, “*Thou, even thou, are to be feared: and who may stand in thy sight when once thou art angry?*” The prophet Nahum proposed these questions, “*Who can stand before his indignation? And who can abide in the fierceness of his anger?*” Nahum 1:6a. The obvious answer is that no one can risk the displeasure of God without risking great eternal loss. Do not be reckless in your own life. Submit yourself to God.

What finally happened to Moses? He procrastinated. He presented excuses. He openly rebelled, saying “No” to God. The anger of the Lord was kindled against him. But in the end, he yielded. When all the discussion was over, “*Moses took his wife and his sons...and he returned to the land of Egypt: and Moses took the rod of God in his hand,*” Exodus 4:20. Then what happened? After a series of miracles and judgments in Egypt, Moses led Israel from bondage into freedom just as God said he would. God was able; Moses was available; the exodus was the result.

How good God is to forgive our sins and to use us. Perhaps you have been running from God. You may have offered excuses or openly rebelled against divine service. It is not too late for you to meet God in peace, submit to His will and be a blessing to others in His name. Begin with confession of your sin of rebellion and offer yourself to God for whatever work He may assign you. You will hear Him say, *“As I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee,”* Joshua 1:5b.