

## Home Bible Classes and Excuses

H.L. Collett

Satan works hard to help us make excuses that sound reasonable. Satan gave Eve an excuse to partake of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. Satan helps the timid soul make excuses. He caused Moses to tell God he could not talk, but God provided a way superior to Satan's devices. Satan caused Jesus' disciples to "have little faith" when they were about to do the work of the Lord. Satan picks on us when we are weak. He picked on the Lord Jesus Christ when he had fasted for forty days and nights. Satan uses those of the inner circle (members of the church now) to accomplish his desires. Satan caused Judas to betray Christ and Peter to deny Him. The Devil is working with Christians today, striving to cause them to make light of the commands of the Lord to spread the gospel. He especially takes advantage of the untaught, the afraid, the sensitive and those that will make excuses for themselves not doing the Lord's work.

Let us now glance at some of the excuses to show how fruitless they are. Stumbling blocks must be removed before personal work can be effective.

1. ***Jesus Christ taught us to analyze all excuses.*** Read Luke 14:15-24. There are three excuses offered in this reading (a) "I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused." The fallacy of this excuse is that most men do not buy fields sight unseen; therefore, it was an excuse and not a reason. (b) "I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused." The same fallacy exists with this excuse as the previous one offered. (c) "I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come." Most men go where they want to with or without a wife. Besides, there is nobody that needs a free meal more than a young married couple. The final court of approval lies with the lord who has made the invitation, "for I say unto you, that none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper." These excuses are recorded that we may see the error of making excuses and the futility of trying to justify ourselves when we come face to face with spiritual opportunities.
2. ***"I cannot do personal work."*** You can and should do personal work. If anyone can win a friend for himself – he can also win a follower to Christ. Would you admit that you could win friends to yourself and not to the greatest friend of all – Jesus? Maybe if we put forth the same amount of effort that we do in winning friends for ourselves – we would win them to Christ.
3. ***"I do not know how to do it."*** Can you learn to do other things? Have you ever baked a cake? Have you ever followed a pattern and made a dress? Have you ever typed a letter? Have you ever repaired a leaky faucet? Have you ever changed a tire? Most would answer "yes" to some of these questions. Would we admit to God that we could learn about the things of this world that are sometimes more complicated than the things of God? Naturally we do not know how if we do not try to learn how.
4. ***"People do not want to listen to the Bible."*** In many instances this may be true but in many it is not. If some will not listen – take it to others that do want to listen. I had many friends when I was growing up that did not know about the church of Christ. Years later I mentioned Christ to one and he listened, learned and obeyed. More are

willing to listen than are willing to tell the old, old story – shame!

5. ***“I’ll wait until I learn all about it.”*** That day usually never arrives. Does the apprentice carpenter wait until he finishes the course to begin driving a nail? If you arrived in Germany on a vacation, would you wait until you learned all the German language before you began using that language to order food and make purchases? Your vacation would be over before you were able to buy anything. So will our life on this earth be over if we wait until we learn all about the Bible before beginning to tell others about it.
6. ***“I do not have time.”*** We have the time to do what we want to do, both in learning how and in trying to do it. Matthew 6:33 tells us to “seek ye first the kingdom of God” and Matthew 6:21 tells us: “for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” We usually make the time for what we want to do badly enough. One lady who claimed to be a Christian would repeatedly proclaim she did not have time to come to the mid-week services, but would just as regularly attend the movies that evening with her non-Christian husband. This lady did not want her husband to be converted to the Lord. Should that occur he would want to attend the services on Wednesday and so she would have to go too! She didn’t want that.
7. ***“I’m already doing my part.”*** Since when does a man do all he can do in the service of the Lord? If we have the talent for doing a thing and we are not doing it, we are not doing our part. Maybe someone else is shirking his duty, does that excuse us from doing our part? Maybe someone else does not do as much as you, but does that excuse you from doing more?
8. ***“I have nothing to do since I have no class to teach.”*** Every Christian can have a very important class. The class may have only one student. Teaching does not have to be limited to the organized Bible School department. One Christian was not called upon to teach, but did have the talent. The elders had not learned of her good talents. She did not grumble but invited all of the children in the neighborhood into her home every Saturday morning for a Bible class. Others have gone out and taught their co-laborers, neighbors, etc. Teaching INDIVIDUALS is a WIDE OPEN FIELD.
9. ***“My husband works hard all day and gets home late. I attend two nights a week and think I should spend the rest of the time with him.”*** It is wonderful to note that families try to stay home once in awhile in these days—also to note that wives want to be in the company of their husbands, but no Christian should allow the non-converted to keep him from doing his Christian duty. If there is work to be done, maybe the wife needs to do her personal work in the daytime when her husband is working. If it cannot be done then, it must be done or we will be held accountable. The good work that she does is worth more than all the personal pleasure in his company. Sermons preached in our lives are the best sermons that others can hear. If a young Christian girl continues her work as a Christian immediately after marriage, her husband will want to go with her. This illustration might be in order. If a Christian wants to break her husband of drinking, can she do it by drinking with him a little? Even so, Christians convert others by their good work, and not their lack of it, and not by the participation in the sins of others.
10. ***“I have too many children and do not have enough time.”*** If a mother recognizes her responsibility to children, it is commendable. She can still arrange her time so as to allow her children to help her, at least to not hinder her. If a mother wants to go other places, usually she arranges the time. We should consider our children God’s

blessings and not God's hindrances. God's children are like God's weather—good excuses for SOME. Parents should name their children "Excuse" rather than "Johnny" or "Susie", etc. let this parent arrange to do the Lord's work as she does other things, and not let the children hinder this important phase of her life.

11. ***"I'm afraid I'll hurt somebody."*** Certainly if the way we do it causes us to hurt someone, then we ought to be afraid, but the individual who presents the gospel properly only to have the individual hurt should realize that Christ did not make all happy. To the rich young ruler he gave the instructions of what to do, but "he went away sorrowful." We need to learn the lesson in Hebrews 4:12, 'For the word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword.' We do not become offended when we ask people to go to a football game with us and they refuse, or when we invite them to dinner and they refuse. People need to be aroused to a certain degree to cause them to be "pricked" in their hearts to cause them to "repent and be baptized." Isn't that what we are supposed to do; to find the way to arouse them? Strive to touch the heart on purpose, not accidentally.

(Adapted from "From House to House" H.L.)