

# Excuses For Sin

Mankind is certainly creative at coming up with ways to minimize, justify, and excuse sin. We live in a day and time when people around us are failing to take responsibility for their actions. We make excuses for what is done or not done. We believe some behavior is excused due to the environment in which we live. It is “society’s fault!” People have been making excuses for centuries.

In Luke 14:15-24, people were invited to a feast but three men had the same attitude or spirit. They did not value the honor of being invited, nor the man’s friendship. The first excuse combined the ground of necessity with the affairs of the world. Sinners often plead that they are too busy to be concerned with affairs of the soul. The second excuse reveals a guest who should have tested the oxen before buying or at least tested them at another time. The third excuse is really no excuse at all. He didn’t even offer one. He said, “I cannot come” because of family ties.

All of these events could have been put off. Time is of the essence. There is no prejudice in the kingdom; all could come to the feast. The well of mercy is not dry. The blood of Christ’s atonement still is able to wash away sins, even after millions have been saved. It is important to accept the gracious invitation without delay. Many excuses are made for not obeying the Lord and responding to His invitation to become a Christian.

## ***Seven Shallow Excuses Commonly Heard***

1. “Just wait a little longer. You have plenty of time.” That is Satan talking. The Bible never records that a more convenient time ever came for Felix (Acts 24:24-25). We are not guaranteed another day. James 4:14 says, “Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.” A lot of us are “too busy” to obey the Lord. We will never be too busy to die, though.
2. “You are already a good enough person.” We cannot be “good enough” to save ourselves no matter what works of righteousness we have done (Titus 3:4-5). Salvation is only found in Christ (John 14:6). Second Timothy 2:10 adds, “But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.” Acts 10:2 says that Cornelius was a just man with a good reputation; but he needed to be baptized in order to be saved (cp. Acts 11:14). Regardless of how good we are, unless our sins are washed away, we will be lost. Acts 22:16 begs, “Arise, and be baptized and wash away thy sins ...” Galatians 3:27 adds, “For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.”
3. “Life in Christ is too hard!” God does not expect sinless perfection (1 John 1:8). There was only one who was sinless (Hebrews 4:15). But by being watchful and careful,

we can live the life God wants and expects of us (1 Peter 4:8; 2 Timothy 4:8). If one is sick, he doesn't refuse treatment for fear he will get sick again.

4. "Your family won't like it." We are called to put God first (Matthew 10:37-38). Maybe by seeing you obey God, they will also. Peter exhorted, "Likewise, ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands; that, if any obey not the word, they also may without the word be won by the conversation of the wives; While they behold your chaste conversation coupled with fear" (1 Peter 3:1-2). Someone might ask, "What about my mother who never was baptized?" Well, what would she do if she knew what you knew?
5. "Hypocrites are in the church." They will not be in Heaven. Not a single one. Christ said, "But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in" (Matthew 23:13). Don't allow someone else to stand between you and salvation. If you do not decide to obey God and become a Christian, you will spend an eternity with these same hypocrites (Matthew 23:33). Ananias and Sapphira were hypocrites, but Peter sure didn't forsake the kingdom because of them (Acts 5:1-10).
6. "We all sin, so don't judge me!" When people say, "We all sin," they have not denied that their behavior is indeed sinful; they are simply trying to minimize the significance of their sin by spreading the blame around. In fact, it would appear they are actually admitting to their sin. That, in and of itself, is a judgment. Calling anything "sin" is making a judgment. In fact, they are not only judging their own behavior as "sin," they are judging other's behavior as "sin" as well. Essentially they are saying, "You're not allowed to judge me as having sinned, because I have already judged you as having sinned." Isn't that a glaring double standard? When people say, "We all sin," they are often trying to justify continuing in a particular behavior. And that is the problem! Yes, we all sin; the difference is that some people have repented and others are determined to continue in sin. The gospel is about being convicted of our sin, realizing we stand before God guilty, and saying, "I don't want this life anymore. I don't want this sin anymore. I want to be forgiven by the blood of Jesus Christ. I want to live for God's glory."
7. "God knows my heart." When confronted with their sins, it's not uncommon to hear people say, "Yeah, but God knows my heart." I usually take this to mean, "What I'm doing might be wrong, but in my heart, I'm a good person. God knows that. So I don't think He will hold me accountable for my actions." These people obviously believe in God and believe in sin, but they believe that having a "good heart" is justification for their sin. God says that's not true. Go back and read about Cornelius in excuse #2. He was a good man, but he was not saved.

### ***Your Sins Proceed From Your Heart***

According to Jesus, no one sins in spite of having a clean heart. On the contrary, our sins are evidence of the impurity of our heart. Jesus said, "But those things which

proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies: These are the things which defile a man: but to eat with unwashed hands defileth not a man” (Matthew 15:18-20).

You can't use profanity and – when someone calls you on it – say, “Well, God knows my heart.” Your heart is the place from which that profanity came. If you're living with someone you're not married to, the excuse that God knows your heart won't cut it. Your sexual immorality is the product of your unclean heart. You don't sin in spite of having a clean heart; you sin because there is something wrong in your heart.

### ***Your Heart Is Hidden From Man, But Not From God***

The realization that God knows our hearts should humble us to repent, not embolden us to sin. Jeremiah 20:12 says, “But, O Lord of hosts, that triest the righteous, and seest the reins and the heart, let me see thy vengeance on them: for unto thee have I opened my cause.” You can hide your heart from the world. You can appear righteous and godly to others, even if your heart is rotten to the core, but God knows the truth. He sees your heart.

The Pharisees wanted people to believe they were righteous, when really they were evil. What they were was not evident to the people because the people couldn't see their hearts, but God could. Jesus said they were like cups that were clean on the outside, but filthy on the inside (Matthew 23:25-26). He said they were like “whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness” (Matthew 23:27). Jesus could see what others could not. He could see their hearts (John 2:25).

### ***No Matter How Bad Your Life Is, Your Heart Is Worse***

All of this should teach us that our heart is not better than our life, it is almost always worse. There are things lurking in the darkness of our hearts that have not yet manifested themselves outwardly. But God knows our dirty little secrets. He knows our greed, our lust, our selfishness, our pride, and our bitterness. He knows our life as well. He knows what we've said, the people we've hurt, the places we've gone, and the good deeds we've failed to do. He knows all of it.

### ***The Cross, Not Your Heart, Is Where You'll Find Justification***

When I think about the fact that God knows my heart, it drives me to pray, as David did: “Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin ... Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit” (Psalm 51:1-2, 10-12).

The realization that God knows my heart makes me realize what a wretch I am. It makes me so thankful for the blood of Jesus. It makes me look — not to my heart for justification — but to the cross for justification. I have sinned outwardly and I have sinned inwardly. The only hope all of us have is Jesus, so listen to James: “Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Be wretched and mourn and weep. Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you” (James 4:8-10).

Stop making excuses! Paul declared, “Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation” (2 Corinthians 6:2). All will be present on the judgment day with no exceptions (2 Corinthians 5:10-11)! You have been invited to a great feast, so believe the gospel, repent of your sins, confess Jesus as Christ, and be baptized for the forgiveness of your sins.

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