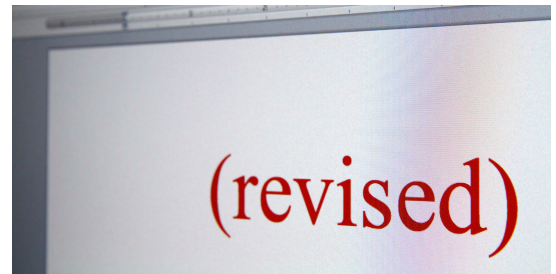


onechurch

bigIdea

Excuses. We all have them. “It’s not the right time.” “My family wouldn’t understand.” “When my children get bigger, I’ll then I will get involved.” “When I get out of debt, I’ll start giving.” But when we give excuses, we are saying yes to a lesser life and no to the bigger life Jesus wants us to live. So what areas in your life are you giving excuses to God?



BIG IDEA: If God is going to make your story big, you’re going to have to make Him big in your story.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What is your favorite excuse for not doing something?
2. *With your Bible or YouVersion, read and discuss Luke 9:57-62.* How does Jesus respond to the excuses offered by these perspective followers?
3. How many times is the word *first* used in this passage? Why do you think that is emphasized?

It is all about priorities. In order for God to change your life, He has to be first in your life. If you’re going to follow Jesus and have that big story, He has to be big—He has to be first in your life. Jesus doesn’t want to be an addendum to your life. Jesus wants to be our life. God doesn’t want to be in it after you finished whatever you have to finish. He wants it before you start anything new. God wants to have first place.

4. In your own opinion, what was the first guy’s hang-up in following Jesus? How does Jesus cut straight to his motives with Jesus’ answer in verse 58? If Jesus wasn’t first in this guy’s life, what was?
5. The first guy approached Jesus with the right talk, but didn’t back it up. What do you think honors God more: Saying the right things and doing nothing, or saying nothing and doing the right things? Why?
6. The second guy was approached by Jesus. “Follow Me.” Does Jesus response sound cruel? What was going on culturally behind the scenes that give a different perspective to Jesus’ response?

It was the custom of the day that the older child stayed home and took care of the affairs of the house until his father passed. Then, when his father dies, he will receive the inheritance and he would move on with his life. But in that culture, he was obligated to take care of his mother and his father until they were deceased. So, this request isn’t, “My father died of a heart attack, let me make funeral arrangements.” He was saying, “As soon as mom and dad die, then I will get around to be committed to you. Jesus wait until after...”

7. The second guy’s hang-up in following Jesus was his plan. He was willing to follow Jesus after... When have you told God, “I will follow though after _____?” In what areas of your life have you put your plan above God’s plan? ***What are you waiting for before you get serious about God?***
8. The third guy’s request was to say goodbye to family. What was at home that caused Jesus concern?

(revised)

9. Jesus knows that these people would have the influence to talk him out of following Him. Have you ever had anyone (friends or family) ever talked you out of doing the right thing? Something you knew you should do? What were the repercussions of you vacillating?
10. In your own words, what do each of Jesus' sayings mean? What is Jesus' point?
11. Chris said, "Delayed obedience is disobedience." What do you think this means? Do you agree or disagree? Why?
12. If Jesus were to say to you "Follow Me—*today*," and you were to use one of your favorite excuses for putting things off, what would happen?
13. What areas in your life is Jesus calling you to a bigger story, but you're not obeying and offering excuses?

MOVING FORWARD

All of us offer excuses. But by saying, "No" to God's plan, we are saying, "Yes" to a lesser plan. Discuss in your group areas in your life that you give God excuses. Find an accountability partner in your group of the same sex, and give them permission to ask you about that area every week.

CHANGING YOUR MIND

Another said, "Yes, Lord, I will follow you, but first..." Luke 9:61 (NLT)

(revised)