



# The Living Truth Fellowship

MAGNIFYING JESUS CHRIST, THE LIVING TRUTH

## ***The Blame Game:***

### *Embracing Responsibility in a World of Excuses*

People are inherently programmed to resist and avoid negative or uncomfortable feelings that may arise from facing their own shortcomings or mistakes. This resistance is a fundamental aspect of human psychology, shaped by our instinctual desire to maintain a positive self-image and emotional well-being. In the quest to evade the discomfort of guilt or shame, individuals often adopt various strategies, and among these strategies, making excuses for their missteps is one of the most common tactics.

Consider the scenario of John or Joan, who find themselves grappling with the realization that they have committed some form of offense or wrongdoing. When confronted with the situation, their initial impulse might be to acknowledge their fault with a statement like, “Yes, I know I was wrong, but... (fill in the blank).” This phrase signifies the beginning of a defensive maneuver, where the acknowledgment of fault is quickly followed by a justification or an excuse meant to lessen the blow of their admission.

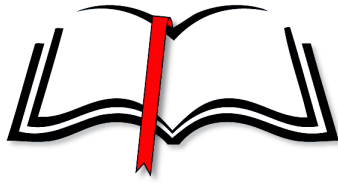
The discomfort associated with admitting wrongdoing can feel overwhelming, and so John or Joan instinctively attempt to create a buffer to protect themselves from the weight of their guilt. By offering an excuse, they seek to soften the impact of their actions — both for themselves and for others. This behavior is not merely a simple act of deflection; it reflects a deeper psychological need to cope with the emotional ramifications of their behavior.

What comes after the “but” in their statement often serves as a mechanism to mitigate the perceived severity of the offense. These excuses are crafted to provide a sense of relief, creating an illusion that allows them to regain a semblance of control over their lives. By framing the wrongdoing as an isolated incident or an anomaly within the broader context of their character, they can maintain a narrative where they are not defined solely by their mistakes. It gives them a temporary reprieve from their conscience and allows them to navigate their feelings without fully confronting the uncomfortable truths of their actions.

Moreover, this trend of making excuses is not just about alleviating personal guilt; it often extends to interactions with others. John or Joan may hope that by qualifying their admissions with justifications, they can persuade those around them to forgive or overlook the transgressions. This external validation can play a crucial role in their emotional regulation, as the support or understanding from others can further diminish the weight of their wrongdoing.

In essence, the behavior of making excuses for wrongdoing is a complex interplay of emotion, psychology, and social dynamics. It highlights the lengths to which individuals will go to protect themselves from the pain of admitting mistakes, striving to reconcile their self-image with their actions while navigating the intricacies of their emotional landscape. Ultimately, this coping mechanism underscores a fundamental aspect of human behavior: the instinct to evade discomfort, even at the cost of honesty and accountability.

The practice of making excuses dates back to the Garden of Eden. When confronted by God after his disobedience, Adam didn’t deny his actions; instead, he immediately shifted the blame to Eve, claiming she



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was responsible. In a particularly egregious move, he even suggested that God shared some responsibility for placing Eve in the Garden (Genesis 3:12). Following Adam's lead, Eve also deflected blame, asserting that it was the serpent's fault, not hers (Genesis 3:13). This early episode marked the unfortunate beginning of excuse-making in human history, a trend that has only intensified over the millennia.

Cain, the son of Adam and Eve, continued the family pattern of making excuses. After murdering his brother Abel, he behaved as if he bore no responsibility for Abel's death. Was it his duty to keep watch over Abel (Genesis 4:9)? Was he required to regard him as a fellow creature made in God's image (Genesis 1:27, 9:6)? In Cain's view, these obligations did not apply. So, in his perspective, why should he be held accountable for any wrongdoing? Abel had no right to present a superior sacrifice to God, and in Cain's mind, he was simply delivering the justice that Abel deserved.

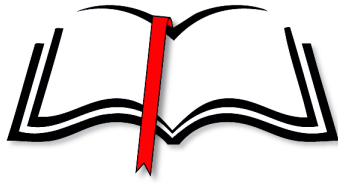
Then there's the moment when Joseph's brothers cast him into a pit in the wilderness, fully aware that he would likely be seized by a group of desert raiders, with uncertain intentions. Why did they act this way? If they hadn't taken that drastic step, they might have faced the prospect of bowing to Joseph, as he had foretold (Genesis 37:7-24). What other choices did they have?

One of the most outrageous excuses ever given came from Aaron as he tried to defend his actions while Moses was on Mount Sinai with God. In his absence, Aaron collected gold from the people and crafted an idol—the golden calf. He then allowed the community to tarnish their reputations as they rejoiced over their newfound "god," which they believed had delivered them from Egyptian bondage. Ignoring the fact that the golden calf was a lifeless idol that could neither move, see, hear, eat, nor smell (Deuteronomy 4:28; Psalms 135:16-17; Jeremiah 10:4), Aaron's only defense when confronted by Moses was, "It wasn't me. The people made me do it" (Exodus 32:1-24). This excuse surely deserves a place in the Hall of Fame for Bad Excuses!

I could easily dive into a lengthy discussion of the excuses made by Biblical figures and those who mirrored their patterns in the centuries that followed, but I intend to keep this article under 500 pages! While excuses have been a constant throughout human history, God has consistently opposed them. This is unmistakably highlighted in Romans 1:20, where it is stated that those who suppress the truth in unrighteousness "are without excuse."

God never told Adam, "Maybe creating the woman wasn't such a great idea. I should have anticipated the trouble she'd cause you. My mistake." He didn't tell Eve, "You're right; you didn't do anything wrong. The serpent is to blame, not you. I apologize for raising my voice; I was just a little upset." God didn't say to Cain, "I overlooked the fact that you aren't responsible for your brother. You were justified in your actions." Nor did He reassure Joseph's brothers, saying, "Good job on doing what you believed was right. Joseph was a bit arrogant; how dare he expect you to bow to him!" God also didn't advise Moses to ease up on Aaron, remarking, "Come on Moses, cut Aaron some slack; he was just following the crowd. You're being too harsh!" God never made any of those statements.

The reality is that Adam, Eve, Cain, Joseph's brothers, and Aaron had no valid defenses in the sight of God's judgment. Their justifications offered no relief from their guilt, as God was uninterested in their excuses. Instead, those excuses merely nourished the sinful ground, leading only to a harvest of pain and suffering. It



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would have been far wiser for them to abandon their justifications and plead for mercy, especially before God. He is rich in mercy and longs to extend it to those who reject their excuses and instead seek the true solution to sin — the salvation offered through the Gospel of Christ.

## **Romans 1:16**

*“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.”*

Inventing excuses can be mentally exhausting and draining. In contrast, salvation is achieved through a straightforward trust in the gospel of Christ. Importantly, unlike excuses, which often fail, salvation consistently delivers what it promises. Even when one feels overwhelmed by sin and death, the gospel of Christ extends a life raft to anyone who confesses Jesus as Lord and believes that God raised Him from the dead.

## **Romans 10:9-10**

*“That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”*

To “confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus” signifies that you recognize Jesus as the truth and acknowledge your own shortcomings. It means choosing to let Jesus illuminate your path as you journey through life. There's no need to justify your sins, as Jesus has already addressed them through His death and resurrection. He accomplished this thoroughly (Hebrews 7:26-27, 9:28), completely redeeming you and granting you eternal life (Romans 6:23). Through Christ Jesus, God has proclaimed you righteous (Romans 3:21-22, 4:5, 5:17-18) and you have been fully justified by Him (Romans 4:25, 5:16-18). Rather than making excuses, it is far more fitting to offer praise and gratitude to our heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ!

## **Ephesians 1:13**

*“In whom ye also [trusted], after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise.”*

When an unsaved person confesses Jesus as Lord and believes that God raised Him from the dead, their heart is instantly filled with the gift of holy spirit (Acts 21:5, 2:38). This spirit is sealed by God, ensuring that the devil cannot touch it. That spirit cannot sin (1 John 3:9) and serves as the assurance of eternal life in the coming paradise, where sin and death will no longer exist. Excuses hold no weight in the face of this truth. The salvation offered through the gospel of Jesus Christ assures eternal success (Hebrews 5:9). There are no justifications; only the gift of salvation remains. Embrace it and offer thanks to God for this incredible blessing!

In Christ's love,

*Rich Robson*