Shalom, and welcome! Let’s take a moment to learn and remind ourselves of our responsibilities as believers on this journey of faith here on earth.

There are times when we fail to act for God, telling ourselves, “God understands.” Yet, Scripture shows that these are *excuses* before Him, hindering our spiritual walk.

Common Understanding vs. Biblical Meaning of “Excuse”

Typically, an excuse is thought of as a false or deceptive reason to avoid responsibility. For example, if someone asks you to help with a task, and you respond with a made up story to avoid it, that’s a classic excuse.

But the Bible’s teaching is deeper. In Luke 14:16–24, Jesus tells a parable where invited guests provide genuine, reasonable reasons for not attending a banquet. These reasons seem valid, yet the host regards them as excuses (*Greek: λόγος προσχήματος*, “pretext” or “justification” that masks true refusal).

Let’s look at the passage from the NIV and ESV:

Luke 14:16-24 (NIV):

> *“A certain man was preparing a great banquet and invited many guests. At the time of the banquet he sent his servant to tell those who had been invited, ‘Come, for everything is now ready.’ But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said, ‘I have just bought a field, and I must go and see it. Please excuse me.’ Another said, ‘I have just bought five yoke of oxen, and I’m on my way to try them out. Please excuse me.’ Still another said, ‘I just got married, so I can’t come.’*
> *The servant came back and reported this to his master. Then the owner of the house became angry and ordered his servant, ‘Go out quickly into the streets and alleys of the town and bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame.’*
> *‘Sir,’ the servant said, ‘what you ordered has been done, but there is still room.’*
> *“Then the master told his servant, ‘Go out to the roads and country lanes and compel them to come in, so that my house will be full. I tell you, not one of those who were invited will get a taste of my banquet.’”*

- God’s Invitation Is Holy and Urgent: The banquet symbolizes the

Kingdom of God and the call to salvation and fellowship with Him (cf. Matthew 22:2-14).

- Excuses Reflect Worldly Priorities: The invited guests prioritize earthly affairs property, possessions, and personal pleasures over God’s invitation. These reflect misplaced values (Colossians 3:2).

- God’s Judgment on Rejection: The host’s anger and the invitation extended to the marginalized (poor, crippled, blind, lame) emphasize that God’s kingdom is open to all who respond, but those who reject Him face exclusion (Matthew 8:11-12).

- No Partiality: The banquet’s fullness symbolizes God’s desire for a full and willing heart (Romans 2:11).

Modern Application

Today, many avoid church or fellowship for seemingly valid reasons: demanding jobs, family commitments, or other responsibilities. They say, “God understands.” But Scripture warns that such reasoning may be a dangerous excuse, a subtle way of putting worldly priorities above God.

- Daniel’s Example: Despite threats from King Darius, Daniel refused to stop praying to God (Daniel 6). His faithfulness, even under persecution, is a model of unwavering devotion.

- Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego: They refused to worship Nebuchadnezzar’s idol, rejecting any excuse for disobedience (Daniel 3). God’s miraculous deliverance affirmed their faith.

Don’t Deceive Yourself

- If you serve your company six days a week but neglect God’s day, you risk stealing from God (Malachi 3:8-10).

- Don’t let work, family, or material concerns consume your worship time. Prioritize God above all (Matthew 6:33).

- Excuses today may exclude you from the *wedding feast of the Lamb* (Revelation 19:9).

> *“Not one of those who were invited will taste my banquet.” (Luke 14:24, NIV)*

Those who place personal interests above God risk missing the eternal joy of His kingdom.

Question to Reflect On:
Are you offering God sincere worship, or just *excuses*? The answer lies with you.

Maranatha!

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