

I'm Responsible!

“I’m responsible!”—those are words that come with difficulty to some people’s lips. Many times, the words imply that there is fault of which one is guilty and no one likes to admit guilt. However, the words can also imply the need for one to “take charge.” Most of the time, no one wants to be in charge—what if something goes wrong?

Traveling down the highway of life, it is very tempting, even easy, to take the road of excuse.



Scripture shows us that even people of great faith turn down the path of excuse. Remember Moses? He was to be God’s man in charge for leading the Hebrew people from captivity, but what did Moses say? *“What if they will not believe me or listen to what I say? For they may say, ‘The LORD has not appeared to you’”* (**Exodus 4:1**). *“Please, Lord, I have never been eloquent, neither recently nor in time past, nor since You have spoken to Your servant; for I am slow of speech and slow of tongue”* (**Exodus 4:10**). Of course, God did not accept Moses’ excuses and Moses went on to be a very responsible man in God’s purpose.

Think of the great responsibility placed on people of faith. There are those like Noah, who, in the midst of a hostile world, had to continue to prepare for a event of judgment from God. There are those like Elijah, who had to endeavor to show a rebellious royal family that God is truly God. There are those like Ezekiel, who was set as a watchman for God’s people even though he had already been informed by God that He was *“sending you to them who are stubborn and obstinate children”* (**Ezekiel 2:4**). There are those like Paul, who understand the need to present the gospel of God: *“For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for I am under compulsion; for woe is me if I do not preach the gospel”* (**1Corinthians 9:16**).

Why is it that people of God have such great responsibility?

Responsibility grows out of a natural relationship. Parents are naturally responsible for the physical and spiritual welfare of their children (**Proverbs 22:6; Ephesians 6:4**). God is our Father and He expects us to be as children, humbling ourselves before Him in obedience and dependence (**Matthew 18:1-6; 19:14**). There is also the natural relationship of siblings—we are brothers and sisters in Christ.

Responsibility grows out of special position. As mentioned, Noah, Moses, Ezekiel, Paul and others had tremendous responsibilities due to the special position that had been given by God. We often think of elders as having a position of responsibility—and they do (**Acts 20:28-31; Titus 1:9**). Evangelists and teachers also have grave responsibilities (**2Timothy 4:1-5; James 3:1**). However, all disciples are in a special position—*“A CHOSEN RACE, A royal PRIESTHOOD, A HOLY NATION, A PEOPLE FOR God’s OWN POSSESSION, so that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light”* (**1Peter 2:9**).

Responsibility grows out of superior knowledge. This superior knowledge must not engender an attitude of “I know more than you,” but must be the attitude of a guide through the wilderness who takes responsibility because he has superior knowledge of the trail. This is why Ezekiel was set as a watchman—he had knowledge of the message of God. The child of God has responsibility because he has come to know God (**1John 4:16**) and should have intimate knowledge of His gospel (**Romans 1:16; 1Corinthians 1:18-24**).

Responsibility grows out of greater opportunity. Since we know what is right, we must do it. James, after describing God as authoritative over all things and reminding us that we should say, “*If the Lord wills, we will live and also do this or that*” (**James 4:15**), he tells us, “*Therefore, to one who knows the right thing to do and does not do it, to him it is sin*” (**James 4:17**).

Responsibility grows out of possible influence. We never know who might be watching—disciples must always then be salt and light (**Matthew 5:13-16**). Christians must watch and never be a stumbling block to those who are weak (**1Corinthians 8**). Christians are to “*do all things without grumbling or disputing; so that you will prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world, holding fast the word of life*” (**Philippians 2:14-16**).

Responsibility grows out of direct command. The Lord gave His apostles the responsibility of making disciples of all nations: “*Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit*” (**Matthew 28:19**). Part of that responsibility was to make sure that the new disciples were taught to do the same thing that the apostles were commanded: “*teaching them to observe all that I commanded you*” (**Matthew 28:20**).

How many of us are ready to stand up and say, “I’m responsible!”?

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