

WEEK 2 — NO MORE EXCUSES

Scripture Reading: John 5:6–9

Don't allow your excuses to keep you from responding to God's calling.

Introduction

Last week, we talked about how easy it is to become accustomed to our routines and stop growing spiritually. Today, we're going to talk about something that often prevents us from moving forward: the reasons we give ourselves for not taking the next step.

When Jesus asked the man at Bethesda if he wanted to be healed, he responded by explaining why he couldn't get into the pool. He said he had nobody to help him and that whenever he tried to reach the water, someone else got there first. His obstacles were real. But Jesus didn't begin discussing everything that had prevented him from reaching the water.

Instead, Jesus told him: "Rise, take up your bed and walk." Sometimes we do something similar in our own lives. We recognize that God is calling us to grow, serve, or become more involved, but immediately begin thinking about why we can't. "I don't have enough time." "My family needs me." "I'm too tired." "I don't know enough about the Bible." "I'm not good at those things." "I'll do it when my life becomes more stable."

And let's recognize something important: many women genuinely carry heavy responsibilities. Some are balancing work and motherhood. Others are navigating difficult relationships, major life transitions, or seasons of uncertainty. These aren't imaginary challenges, and we shouldn't minimize them. But we can still ask ourselves whether there are areas where fear, insecurity, or the belief that we're not capable have kept us from moving forward.

1. Excuses can become permanent obstacles.

We all have responsibilities, difficulties, and challenging seasons.

The problem isn't recognizing our limitations. The problem is allowing them to become a permanent reason to never take a step forward.

For example, someone might say: "I can't serve because I don't know enough." But nobody begins knowing everything. We all need opportunities to learn, receive guidance, and grow. Or someone might say: "I don't have anything special to offer." But 1 Peter 4:10 reminds us that each person has received gifts that can be used to serve others.

Maybe you're a woman who is naturally compassionate. Maybe you're organized, patient, creative, or good at encouraging others. Maybe your life experiences have taught you perseverance, wisdom, or how to support someone going through a difficult season. Those qualities matter.

And sometimes the very things we overlook in ourselves are the things God can use to bless someone else. We should also remember that recognizing a genuine need for rest, safety, healing, or support is not making an excuse. The invitation is to examine our hearts honestly, not to ignore our well-being.

2. God can use what you already have.

Sometimes we assume that serving God requires extraordinary abilities. We look at women who teach, lead ministries, organize events, or serve consistently and think: "I could never do that."

But Romans 12:4–8 reminds us that we have different gifts and functions within the body of Christ. God isn't asking every woman to do the same thing. Perhaps you've learned to manage a household, organize schedules, care for children, communicate with different personalities, or support others through difficult circumstances.

Perhaps you're good at creating welcoming environments, listening, cooking, teaching, planning, or encouraging people. These experiences and abilities can become tools for serving others.

And even if you feel that your confidence has diminished over time, that doesn't mean your gifts have disappeared. You can continue developing them. You can learn new things. You can discover abilities you never knew you had. Your usefulness in God's Kingdom isn't determined by how visible your role is or how much recognition you receive.

3. Obedience begins when we decide to respond.

When Jesus instructed the man to get up, he responded. The Bible tells us that he was immediately healed, picked up his bed, and began walking. His response reminds us of the importance of taking action when God calls us. Sometimes we wait until we feel completely prepared before beginning something new.

We want to know we'll be good at it. We want to know we won't make mistakes. We want to know we won't disappoint anyone. And sometimes, after spending so much time meeting other people's expectations, we become afraid to try something unfamiliar.

But growth often begins when we take a step outside what we already know. Maybe your first step isn't leading a ministry. Maybe it's helping with an event, attending a training, joining a team, or simply asking how you can contribute. Perhaps your first step is reconnecting with church after a difficult season. Or maybe it's allowing someone trustworthy to walk alongside you as you rebuild your relationship with God.

Obedience doesn't always begin with something big. Sometimes it begins with one small decision.

Conclusion

It's possible that we've spent a long time saying we'll begin serving someday. When the children are older. When our schedules become easier. When things at home settle down. When we feel more confident. When we feel spiritually prepared. But if we're always waiting for the perfect moment, that moment may never come.

God can guide us to begin with small, meaningful steps. And He doesn't ask us to become someone else before He can work through us.

Your circumstances may influence how you serve, but they don't erase the gifts and purpose God has placed within you.

Interactive Questions

1. What do you think most often prevents women from becoming more involved in serving God? Is it lack of time, fear, insecurity, responsibilities, or feeling that they're not capable?
2. What gifts, abilities, or experiences has God given you that could become a blessing to other women or families? Is there something valuable in yourself that you've overlooked?
3. In what area or ministry of the church do you see yourself serving, and what has kept you from taking that step? What kind of support would help you begin?

Weekly Challenge — TAKE THE FIRST STEP

This week, identify one area of ministry or opportunity to serve that interests you. Talk with someone already serving in that area and ask what their responsibilities look like, what training is available, and how you could begin.

If you're in a season where additional responsibilities aren't realistic, consider a smaller way to contribute or take a step toward receiving the support you need.

You don't have to make a major commitment immediately.

Remember: You don't need to have everything figured out to begin discovering where God can use you.