

MATTMCWILLIAMS

Live with Passion. Lead with Purpose. Leave a Legacy.

The Hidden Danger of Making Excuses

The worst part of making excuses isn't the missed opportunities. It isn't the guilt you might feel afterwards for lying to yourself. It's not the money they will cost you, the relationships they will end, or the broken dreams. The worst part of making excuses, the hidden danger, is that you eventually start to believe them.

The longer you make excuses, the more you actually start to believe them. The longer you tell any lie, the most likely it is that someday you will no longer tell it as a lie, but as the truth.

You no longer cringe when you realize that what you are saying is false. The conviction you once felt disappears. The lie becomes the truth. The excuse becomes reality.

Do you want to get well?

Two thousand years ago, there was a man who had been paralyzed for thirty-eight years. 38 years!

I have a mental picture of this man. Old, decrepit, skin and bones. Helpless, defeated, and uninspiring. In those days, people like him were often referred to as "invalids." Think about that term for a moment. In-valid. The opposite "valid." In other words, he was unworthy, un-useful, a mistake.

For thirty-eight years, that is what he probably thought of himself. That he was inferior, unworthy, a mistake.

Every day, this man wished for healing. Every day, he laid by the pool in Jerusalem that was known to heal people when the waters were stirred. But, he never got in.

Enter Jesus. A man known to heal. A man known to show compassion on the hurting, the sick, and the lame. A man known to have the power of God in Him.

And what does Jesus ask this man?

He asks, "Do you want to get well?"

What? Does he want to get well? What a terrible question. This guy has been paralyzed for thirty-eight years. He has missed out on the joys that most of us take for granted and Jesus has the nerve to ask that question?

The question makes no sense until the man responds. He begins to make excuses.

"No one helps me."

"Someone else always cuts in front of me."

"I've been this way for too long. I don't know any other way."

The question was entirely appropriate. Do you want to get well or do you want to continue to identify with your excuses? Do you want to get well or do you want to believe the lies you've told yourself for so long?

Do you *really* want to get well?

Do you *really* want your life to change?

Do you *really* want to live out your dreams?

Do you *really* want to start that business?

Do you *really* want to write that book?

Do you *really* want to teach?

Do you *really* want your marriage to last?

Do you *really* want to be a great leader?

Do you *really* want to impact other people?

Do you *really* want to change the world?

Do you *really* want to _____?

Or would you rather believe the lies?

The easier path

It's much easier to believe the excuses. It's much easier continue to identify with whatever lies you've told yourself for so long.

Getting well is sometimes painful. If you've ever had surgery to correct something wrong with your body, you know that the healing phase is often more painful than it was pre-surgery. Giving up the excuses is the same way. It can hurt.

But it is absolutely necessary if you want to be well.

Years ago, I gave up on a dream. Less than two years after ranking 14th in the nation in college golf, I gave it up because of an injury.

The injury was fixable with surgery. I would have spent a full year in rehab and the road to wellness would be long and hard. The pain, I was told, would be excruciating for months. But on the other

side of that pain was freedom. On the other side of that pain was the ability to chase my dreams without interference.

I did not have that surgery. Instead, I gave up on my dream.

Regrets

Today, I don't regret that I didn't achieve my dream of playing on the PGA Tour. I regret not trying. I regret not going through the pain. I regret not wanting to get well. I regret lying to myself and believing the excuses.

Don't live your life with any regrets that come from excuses. Don't believe the lies.

Choose to get well. Choose to live free.

Do you want to get well?