

23-0528a - Detailed Summary

23-0528a - *No Excuses, Tom Freed*

Bible Readers: Tom Freed and Roger Raines

This detailed summary by Grok, xAI, (Transcription by TurboScribe.ai)

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No Excuses

Summary of Transcript (0:04 - 34:46)

Scripture Readings:

1st Scripture Reading (0:04 - 0:35), Tom Freed

The sermon begins with Tom, the first scripture reader, presenting Genesis 3:11-13, which recounts God questioning Adam and Eve after they ate from the forbidden tree. Adam blames Eve, stating she gave him the fruit, while Eve blames the serpent for deceiving her.

2nd Scripture Reading (0:40 - 1:16), Roger Raines

Following this, Roger, the second scripture reader, reads 1 Corinthians 10:13, emphasizing that no temptation is beyond human endurance, and God provides a way to escape temptation.

Summary

Preacher: Tom Freed

(1:21 - 2:03) Introduction

Tom, also the preacher, introduces the sermon titled "No Excuses," humorously noting he gave Roger an easier reading task compared to the previous week. He acknowledges the previous preacher, Jim, who spoke about David, and mentions that his sermon, though prepared independently, shares similar themes, suggesting the Holy Spirit guides preachers toward common messages.

(2:05 - 3:42) Personal Anecdote and Theme Introduction

Tom introduces the central theme of the sermon: the human tendency to make excuses and blame others when confronted with mistakes or sins. He shares a personal story from his workplace at a steel mill, where he made a mistake that slowed production. Initially, he pointed fingers at others but eventually admitted his responsibility for not double-checking others' work. Tom connects this experience to universal situations in jobs, relationships, or other areas of life where people avoid taking blame, highlighting how blaming others is easier than accepting responsibility and making necessary changes.

(3:44 - 5:37) Biblical Example of Adam and Eve

Tom delves into the biblical narrative of Adam and Eve to illustrate the theme of avoiding responsibility. He recounts how they disobeyed God's command not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Despite Eve being deceived by the serpent and tempting Adam, Tom emphasizes that Adam was equally responsible, as he knew God's command. When confronted by God, both Adam and Eve deflected blame—Adam to Eve, and Eve to the serpent. Tom uses this story to show that from the beginning of humanity, people have struggled to own their mistakes, a trait that persists in modern times.

(5:38 - 8:18) Further Biblical Examples and Consequences of Excuses

Tom cites Abraham's story from Genesis 20:11-13, where Abraham misrepresented his wife Sarah as his sister to Abimelech, leading to complications. Abraham justified his actions with excuses, claiming he feared for his life and noting Sarah was technically his half-sister. Tom labels this a "lie of omission" and stresses that such excuses hinder personal and spiritual growth. He argues that failing to take responsibility prevents individuals from becoming better Christians and warns that God will not accept excuses on judgment day, as seen with Adam, Eve, and Abraham. Tom underscores that making excuses removes the opportunity for repentance and change, leaving individuals spiritually stunted.

(8:20 - 9:26) Universal Sin and the Need for Responsibility

Tom acknowledges that all humans sin, referencing Romans 3:23, which states everyone falls short of God's glory. He emphasizes that the issue is not whether people sin, but how they respond to it. Taking responsibility, rather than blaming others, is crucial for spiritual growth and reconciliation with God. He warns that excuses leave no room for learning from mistakes, and the devil exploits temptations to lead people into sin, particularly when they are vulnerable.

(9:28 - 10:09) Temptation and Sin's Origins

Tom clarifies that God does not tempt people to sin, but the devil does, using situations and desires to entice individuals. He references the previous week's sermon by Jim, who explained the dual meanings of "tempt" in Hebrew and Greek, noting that God tests for growth, while the devil tempts for destruction. Tom stresses that temptation often catches people off guard, especially in moments of weakness, making it easier to sin than to resist.

(10:12 - 11:48) The Process of Sin

Quoting James 1:13-15, Tom explains that temptation arises from personal desires, not from God. He describes sin as a process that begins in the mind, growing from thoughts to actions, akin to a pregnancy that eventually "gives birth" to sin. If unchecked, these actions lead to full-grown sin, resulting in addiction, pain, and spiritual death. This progression underscores the importance of addressing sinful thoughts early to prevent destructive outcomes.

(11:49 - 12:38) Consequences of Sin and the Need for Repentance

Tom references Romans 5:12, noting that sin, introduced by Adam and Eve, brought spiritual and

eventual physical death to humanity. He emphasizes that sin causes spiritual death, necessitating repentance and conversion to Christianity to wash away sins. The devil, likened to a roaring lion (1 Peter 5:8), targets people at their weakest, exploiting complacency or boredom to lead them into sin.

(12:39 - 13:33) Dangers of Complacency in Faith

Tom warns that long-term Christians, like himself (a Christian for 20 years), can become complacent over time. Early in faith, believers are often fervent, but as years pass, they may grow lukewarm, making them vulnerable to the devil's temptations. He stresses that the devil seizes these moments of spiritual weakness to entice believers into sin, reinforcing the need for vigilance and responsibility.

This first part of the sermon establishes the theme of taking responsibility for one's actions, using personal anecdotes, biblical examples, and theological insights to illustrate the dangers of making excuses and the importance of owning up to sins for spiritual growth.

(13:34 - 16:34) Vulnerability to Sin and David's Fall

Tom continues his sermon by comparing the devil's tactics to a lion hunting weak or isolated prey, emphasizing that Christians must remain vigilant to avoid temptation. He notes that even the most faithful, like King David, can fall into sin when complacent. Referencing Jim's prior sermon, Tom highlights David's passion for God, evident in his exuberant worship when bringing the Ark of the Covenant home, yet even David, described in Acts 13:22 as a man after God's own heart, succumbed to temptation. While on his palace roof, David saw Bathsheba bathing, committed adultery, and impregnated her. Instead of confessing, he orchestrated the death of her husband, Uriah, by sending him to the front lines and ordering troops to retreat. Tom explains that this cycle of sin—committing further wrongs to cover initial ones, such as lying to conceal lies—is common, illustrating how David's complacency led to grave moral failures.

(16:34 - 16:56) God's Omnipresence

Tom underscores that no sin escapes God's notice, quoting Jeremiah 23:24 to affirm that God fills heaven and earth and sees all actions. This brief section reinforces the futility of hiding sins, as God's omnipresence ensures accountability.

(16:58 - 20:46) Accountability and David's Repentance

Expanding on God's omniscience, Tom cites Psalm 139:7-8 and Hebrews 4:13 to emphasize that no one can hide from God, as all actions are laid bare before Him. He notes that while God does not punish every sin immediately, He will eventually expose and call individuals to account. Returning to David's story, Tom describes how the prophet Nathan confronted David with a parable, leading him to admit his wrongs. In 2 Samuel 12:13, David confesses, "I have sinned against the Lord," and Nathan assures him that God has forgiven him, sparing his life. However, David still faced consequences: the child from the adulterous union died, and his son publicly shamed him. Tom praises David for taking responsibility, contrasting this with lesser kings who might have silenced critics. He quotes 1 John 1:9-10, stressing that confessing sins leads to forgiveness, while denial hinders spiritual growth. Tom clarifies that while God forgives, earthly consequences, like legal

penalties, may persist, as seen in David's case.

(20:47 - 21:07) Choosing Responsibility

Tom succinctly reiterates the sermon's core message: when faced with sin, individuals can either make excuses or take responsibility like David. Confessing sins and seeking to make amends leads to forgiveness and better life outcomes, aligning with God's will.

(21:08 - 24:23) God's Provision Against Temptation

Tom emphasizes that no excuse justifies sin, as God always provides an escape from temptation, referencing 1 Corinthians 10:13. He acknowledges that some temptations are strong, and people often fail to choose God's way out due to desire or weakness. Revisiting David's sin, Tom notes he could have walked away from Bathsheba but succumbed to temptation. He identifies sexual sin as particularly challenging, even for someone like David with multiple wives. Tom contrasts David with Joseph, who, in Genesis 39:12, fled from Potiphar's wife when faced with sexual temptation. He encourages Christians to emulate Joseph by running from sin, citing 1 Corinthians 6:18, which urges fleeing sexual immorality due to its unique harm to the body.

(24:24 - 24:52) Following God's Way

Tom briefly reinforces that adhering to God's guidance, such as fleeing sin, prevents pain and heartache. He connects this to Jim's sermon, which advised avoiding lustful thoughts to prevent sin from taking root.

(24:53 - 25:54) Sin Begins in the Mind

Tom elaborates on the mental origins of sin, using David's story to show how seeing Bathsheba led to lustful fixation. Quoting Matthew 5:28, where Jesus equates lustful looking with adultery in the heart, Tom stresses that sin starts in the mind and grows into action if not addressed. He urges repentance and redirecting thoughts to avoid physical sin, reinforcing the need to control one's mind to prevent spiritual downfall.

(25:56 - 27:15) Disciplining the Body

Tom advocates for self-discipline, citing 1 Corinthians 9:27, where Paul describes beating his body into submission to avoid disqualification. He explains the Greek term for "beat" as akin to a wrestler subduing an opponent, illustrating the need to control the body through self-denial and labor. Tom presents the body as an adversary that must be subdued to prevent it from enslaving the soul, emphasizing that Christians must conquer fleshly desires or face spiritual consequences.

(27:16 - 27:53) Judgment and Accountability

Tom warns that everyone will face God's judgment, referencing 2 Corinthians 5:10, which states all will account for their actions. He adds that even careless words will be judged (Matthew 12:36), but Christians can take comfort in God's forgiveness, as their sins will not be remembered if confessed.

(28:20 - 29:24) God's Forgiveness

Tom highlights God's mercy, quoting Isaiah 43:25, Micah 7:19, and Psalm 103:12 to illustrate that God removes sins, casting them into the sea or as far as east is from west. He reassures Christians that, through repentance, they can stand before God without fear of past sins, as God does not hold forgiven transgressions against them.

(29:26 - 30:48) Universal Accountability and Christ's Resurrection

Tom concludes this part by stressing the universal call to repentance, citing Acts 17:30-31, which notes that God once overlooked ignorance but now commands all to repent ahead of judgment. He underscores Jesus' resurrection as proof of His divinity (Acts 17:31), distinguishing Christianity from other faiths whose founders' bodies remain, as per 2 Timothy 1:10. This resurrection validates Jesus' victory over death, reinforcing the certainty of judgment and the need for accountability.

(30:49 - 31:41) Christ's Resurrection as Proof of Divinity

Tom concludes his discussion of Jesus' victory over death by affirming that Jesus' resurrection, as recorded in Matthew's Gospel, proves His divinity. He notes that Jesus is no longer in the tomb, having risen as He predicted, and emphasizes the strength of eyewitness testimony, mentioning over 500 people who saw the risen Christ, as discussed in his apologetics class. These firsthand accounts, along with Romans 8:34, which describes Jesus as risen and seated at God's right hand interceding for believers, provide powerful evidence of His divine authority. Tom underscores that Jesus' absence from earthly remains distinguishes Him from other religious figures, reinforcing the truth of Christianity.

(31:43 - 32:43) No Excuse for Disobedience

Tom challenges the congregation to consider what excuse they could offer God for failing to obey His word and become a Christian. He cites Romans 1:20, which states that God's existence is evident through creation's design, leaving humanity without excuse for disbelief. The complexity and order of the world, Tom argues, clearly point to a purposeful intelligent design, making denial of God untenable. He warns that those who have not become Christians or who persist in unconfessed sin will face a day of reckoning, as everyone will stand before God to account for their actions.

(32:45 - 34:18) Judgment and the Urgency of Salvation

Tom intensifies his call to action, quoting John 5:28-29, which describes a coming hour when all will be resurrected—some to eternal life, others to condemnation, based on their deeds. He stresses the unpredictability of this judgment, noting it could occur at any moment or upon one's death, and references Matthew 7:23, where Jesus rejects those who practice lawlessness, saying, "I never knew you." Tom asserts that no excuse, wealth, or smooth talking will secure entry to heaven; only obedience to the gospel can save. He urges non-Christians to be baptized and wash away their sins (Acts 22:16) and encourages Christians caught in sin, like David, to take responsibility and repent immediately to restore their relationship with God.

(34:19 - 34:46) Call to Action

In the sermon's closing, Tom emphasizes the urgency of responding to God's call, quoting 2 Corinthians 6:2, which declares "today is the day of salvation." He invites those who wish to become Christians or need congregational prayers to come forward, stressing that there is no better time than the present to obey God's word and make things right. Tom concludes by thanking the congregation, leaving the invitation open for immediate action.