

Part Four: The Way Through // Andy Stanley // June 12, 2022

Whether fueled by fear, insecurity, or a past event, many of us construct a paper wall of excuses that holds us back.

Scripture: Ephesians 2:10 NIV

Discuss:

- 1. What was your biggest learning or question from this week's message?
- 2. How is fear often the root cause of our excuses? What are some of the things we fear that lead us to offer these justifications for our behaviour?
- 3. In what ways do you tend to "miss out" in life because of your excuses? And how does the world miss out on you?
- 4. Read <u>Ephesians 2:10</u> together. What is your primary purpose in life according to this verse? How do you run the risk of missing out on God's plan because of your excuses? How can excuses actually become a subtle way of resisting God's will? Have you experienced this personally?
- 5. Andy shared five not-so-easy steps for breaking through the excuses that are holding you back. Talk through each one and consider some examples:
 - **Identify them.** Why is it important to listen to your "becauses"? What do they reveal?
 - Interrogate them. What are some of the practical questions you should throw at your excuses? Which one(s) seem most difficult to ask? How so? What difference does this process make?
 - Re-label them. Tell yourself, "That's not a reason; that's an excuse!" How
 does this simple declaration change things? How does acknowledging
 that you "built" an excuse strip it of its power?
 - Answer the question, "What do I lose if I continue to excuse?" Use the
 example of refusing to reconcile with an estranged loved one, and tease
 out the answer. How could asking this question be a game changer
 moving forward? How could this keep you from a life of regret?
 - **Tell somebody.** What happens when you open up about your excuses vs. trying to keep them inside?
- 6. Which of these five steps seems most difficult and why? To what area do you need to apply them? What has not admitting you have been hiding behind a paper wall cost you so far? What could you gain if you stopped doing that?