

# PAPER WALLS

MOVING BEYOND  
THE EXCUSES  
THAT HOLD YOU BACK

## Because

*Andy Stanley*

*Note: The following content is a raw transcript and has not been edited for grammar, punctuation, and word usage.*

**0:00:00.4 Andy Stanley:** Now, there are... And you know this, there are a lot of things that are worth carrying forward in our lives from one season to the next, one year to the next, good friends, good habits, and then there are some things that we should leave behind, things that are not worth carrying from one season to the next. From one year to the next. So, for the next few weeks, we're gonna talk about one of those things. Because one of those things that all of us should get in the habit of leaving behind are excuses. Excuses. Excuses are like paper walls, that from a distance they look like real obstacles, from a distance they look impenetrable, from a distance they look like we really don't have any choice but to do what we're doing, or not to do what we're not doing, or to not try or to not try again. In fact, from a distance, an excuse looks like an actual reason. Now, there's a reason I can't throw a 97 mile an hour fast ball. But there is no actual reason for me not to... Well, I'm not sure I know you well enough to finish that sentence, but there are some things that I need to do that I have reasons for, but if you were to push a little bit you may discover that my reasons aren't really good reasons, they're really just excuses.

**0:01:27.5 AS:** So excuses get passed off as reasons and excuses easily become, in the real world, because. Because all of us have some because that we habitually hide behind when certain things come up. "Why don't you..." "Well, because..." "Why haven't you..." "Well, because..." "Why do you just keep on with that?" "Well, because..." "Why don't you start..." "Because..." "Why don't you stop..." "Because..." "Why don't you just..." "Why don't you just forgive her?" "Well, because..." "Why did you quit? Why did you stay? Why did you choose to leave? Why don't you just tell him? Why don't you just tell her? Because... Because, because, because. We've got because, excuses, pass themselves off as reasons and then in our real world vocabulary, they become because.

**0:02:18.2 AS:** There's a fine line. We're gonna talk about this for a few weeks. There's actually a fine line between a reason and an excuse. And one always disguises itself as the other. In fact, the way that we talk about or refer to excuses when we're talking about other people, actually underscores this. What do we say when we think somebody's... They're making up excuses. We just say, "hey, you are making excuses." In other words you don't have any real reasons, you're passing these off as reasons, we hear because, because, because, because, because, because, but the truth is I see what's going on here, you are making excuses, that is you are just making things up. We say quit making excuses. You are fabricating things, you are inventing things. Again, and implication is, these aren't real, you think they're real, you're trying to pass them off as real, but I see what's going on here. Implication, you're just making stuff up, you've created in your mind a paper wall and you're trying to convince me that it's actually a real wall, you've created in your mind a paper wall and you're trying to pass it off as an actual obstacle.

**0:03:28.3 AS:** What you're doing is you're dressing up an excuse, you're dressing up an excuse in an attempt to pass it off as a reason. And isn't it true? This is so easy to see in our children. It is so easy to see in our grandchildren, it was so easy for our parents to see in us when we were children living at home. It's pretty easy to see when our employees are doing it, even when a friend is doing it or a neighbor's doing it, or a boss. If you've ever been in one of those meetings, if your boss, your manager calls everybody together and they start explaining something and they start giving the reasons, and you're smart you see right through it, it's like, That's not a reason.