

The Dangers of Christian Apathy

“I am a nearly lifelong Christian who has recently begun to experience a profound sense of apathy toward religious activities. I have been an active Church member, leader and Bible teacher. My faith has always been the most important thing in my life. However, several very difficult life events during the past 4 years have left me in a state of spiritual shock and numbness. I am not happy about my current state of apathy, but I have been unable to rouse myself out of this condition. I am hoping to find assistance from believers anywhere and everywhere in how to "snap out of it". What causes such apathy? And what can I do about it?”

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**What is
Apathy?**

- * A lack of interest or concern: indifference.
- * The Absence or suppression of passion, emotion or excitement.
- * Shows up as laziness, inertia, or boredom.
- * Apathy can be so comfortable! The things that claim our allegiance, are not usually the worst sins nor the most horrendous crimes. They are more likely to be the good “little” things of everyday living that gradually drain our energies and waste our time.
- * Jesus knew this. He realized that we tend to become distracted. He said, “See *first* his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.” (Matthew 6:33)

Most importantly,

**Apathy slowly causes us to lose
focus of **our purpose!****

How do we recognize and diagnose apathy before it's too late? Next are seven symptoms of spiritual apathy in the local church:

- 1. Decline in attendance**—When there is a slacking of attendance, there is also a slacking in hunger for the preached Word of God.
- 2. Lack of concern for souls**—When soul winning and outreach times are attended by fewer and fewer people, there is a spiritual disconnect between what we say we believe (that the Great Commission is our great priority) and how we behave (that soul winning isn't a priority).
- 3. Lack of participation in congregational singing**—The Bible commands us to make a joyful noise unto the Lord. When Christians come to church with a heart of praise, the opportunity to sing is welcome. When they come distracted and bored, their singing reflects it.

- 4. Indifference to the needs of others**—Growing Christians are caring Christians. Scripture commands us to bear one another's burdens. When we don't care enough to know what the people around us are going through, we're slipping into self-focused apathy for sure.
- 5. No pastoral encouragement**—The Bible commands us to know those who labor among us and to remember them for their work's sake. Just as a maturing teenager or an adult will notice and be grateful for the care and sacrifices of their parent, so growing Christians will give thanks for spiritual shepherds who serve them.
- 6. Declining concern for missions**—When a church becomes inward focused, they are no longer concerned for the fields white unto harvest. They lose their sense of eternal realities and of spiritual responsibility to reach the world with the gospel.

7. **Failure to invest in the next generation**—When a church fails to see young men and women as their future and fails to invest in their development, apathy is setting in. Frankly, the church may not continue in the next generation.

How to Overcome Apathy

- 1. Ask God for strength and willpower** - Of all the steps, this is the simplest and most overlooked one. All too often, we forget that “with God all things are possible” (Mark 10:27) and “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me” (Philippians 4:13)
- 2. Understand where apathy comes from** - Apathy comes when we lose sight of this plan and its importance in our lives. When we have lost sight of what God is doing, we have distanced ourselves from God.
- 3. Get doing** - Once we realize that we need to be doing something, the next step is to go out and do it. Prayer and studying the Bible to better understand a topic of interest or a previously unexplored section of Scripture can help rekindle the fire as well.

The promise

The most important thing to remember is that with God, all things are possible. With His help, we can fight our way out of the grasp of apathy and finally slay the beast. With the promise of the future He has set before us and the opportunities we encounter every day to grow into the son or daughter He wants for us to be, there is no room for apathy in our lives — **so let's get doing!**

Discussion Time