

# Sorry, God. I'm Too Busy. Send Someone Else.

I once read a book about a long-distance runner who would block off entire days to run, with no particular route in mind. He'd grab \$20, a bottle of water and just go. He was never sure what the day would bring but he was open to wherever the road took him.

I remember reading that and thinking we as Christians should approach life in that way. We should regularly set aside time—even full days—where we walk out our front doors with a little cash in our pockets and a prayer that God would use us as He sees fit, guiding us to cross paths with people in need of His love and care.

Of course, doing this would likely require some type of sacrifice, that is unless you are living on a trust fund and have no one to care for other than yourself! However, for the rest of us, it would mean giving up a free Saturday afternoon. Instead of watching basketball on the couch or going shopping with friends, we could volunteer at a shelter or soup kitchen. Or maybe it means we forgo our lunch hour once a week and end up driving around the city streets, handing out care packages with food, socks, body wipes and deodorant. There are a lot of small ways we can start loving our neighbors but first we have to loosen our grip on our own personal comfort and make space to do it.

It's not so simple, is it? The concept of sacrifice is foreign to society today. Some of the loudest messages across network television, social media and podcasts encourage us to put ourselves first. "Do what makes you happy" and "self-care" are not just expressions; they're a way of life preached by people who believe that only by caring for and embracing yourself can you "live your best life." It's all about pursuing the career

that you want, getting the salary you deserve, designing your life around YOUR truth. It's a secular heaven and it encourages self-worship.

For those who do not have a relationship with Jesus, this makes sense. They have no reason to put the interests of anyone else above themselves. As Christians, living a me-centered life means we've pushed God off His throne and put ourselves there in His place.

A lot of us have also wrapped our brains around this idea that we are the providers. This mindset positions us in making that a false God too. The core reality of the Christian faith is that God is our provider. He provides everything we need. He created everything, owns everything and gives everything.

God did not provide us with all that we have so that we can buy a bigger house, a better vacation or fewer wrinkles. He provided us with what we have so that we can choose to use it for His mission to love others in the world.

So here is the closing thought ... Yes, God's goal is global—to the ends of the earth. But loving your neighbor starts small and local. It doesn't always involve plane tickets. But as followers of Christ, and servants of God's mission in the world, we should be receptive to the Father's direction. The heart of our Father breaks if people are hurting or suffering, or if they don't know their real value and haven't experienced God's true love. No matter where they are, we need to be ready to act. {eoa}

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