

Stop Treating God's Love Like a Puddle

In episode 3 of my new series, *Questions With God*, I ask the question, "What is the point of one-time encounters if there is no follow-up?" This has been a criticism I have faced in my films since the very beginning, and it's honestly one I have wrestled with myself. But I also think that sometimes this question is laced more with self-righteousness than love.

We love when people make decisions for Christ. It's measurable, hard data that whatever ministry tactics we are currently using are working. Ministries and churches often dance the line between being a lifeboat for the sick and dying and being a corporation designed to swell the ranks of believers for the kingdom (or for their own existence). Please hear me; I want the whole world to be saved, but not because I want to see more churches. I have tasted a life of friendship with a loving God, and I want everyone to experience this loving servant-king for themselves. He's the most amazing Person in the Universe, and He is the reason you were created.

That being said, as my pastor, Chad Norris, says, whenever a decision trumps the baseline of love, then we're simply peddling religion, and it's gross. In my movies, we often film people encountering God in a variety of ways, whether it's through a miraculous healing or a feeling of deep peace and love that they've never felt before. These experiences are powerful moments in the lives of whomever we're praying for, and that in itself should be celebrated. But often we look at moments like this and wonder, "Well, what was the point if they didn't get saved?"

I'm not sure all encounters with God need to involve a transaction. God is dealing with His children, and sometimes a Father gives good gifts to His kids simply because He loves

them. Only we would take a beautiful moment between a Father and His child and then turn around and ask, "Well, what was the point of *that*?"

I understand people's need for things to be done for a reason. No one wants to waste their time on anything. But I'm not sure ministering to someone ever constitutes a waste of time, regardless of what they do or don't choose to do with that encounter. God's love and pursuit of us is endless, but too often we treat it as a non-renewable resource, as if it can be used up if not applied properly. But God wasn't joking when He told us exactly what we can expect when it comes to His love:

"...neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 8:38-39).

God's love for us and others is an endless ocean. It's time we stopped treating it like a puddle. What's the point of a one-time encounter with God if there's no follow up? Well, that question often assumes that God Himself isn't going to follow it up in His own way. After all, this is His child, and He's proven Himself to be a relentless Father who will stop at nothing to get every single one of His kids back.