

Not Now

Do you use an out-of-office autoresponder?

“Thank you for your email. I am out of the office this week and will not be able to respond to your email. Please contact Sally if you need immediate assistance.”

There are many derivatives of the out-of-office message, but the over-arching message is clear: “I won’t respond now.” It’s not that the person “can’t,” it’s that they “won’t.” Big difference.

How long before someone develops an auto-non-responder to text messaging? It’s probably already available somewhere because we need help demonstrating we aren’t available.

Auto-responders in email were an important tool before digital connectivity. Today, we all know, email is available on our phone. “Can’t” left the building a decade ago.

My biggest concern with an autoresponse is that I never know who will write to me with an important request or question. I make customer service promises at the beginning of a relationship.

My handshake didn’t come with an asterisk attached:

* “Here to serve you except when I don’t want to.”

Yes, it is important to rest and refresh. But we can do that and find a few moments to respond when needed. I don’t need protection from customers who pay for my vacation.

The disciples told Jesus to send away a crowd who gathered in front of them just after a tiring few days of ministry. The disciples felt they earned a time of rest.

Jesus challenged their heart, not their stamina:

“Have you no compassion?”

What’s the heart message your autoresponder is sending?