

IN THE MARGINS: When you just don't care anymore

By Tony Martin

Editor

We've all been there—those seasons where everything feels like too much, and we're just... done. Maybe it's after facing disappointment after disappointment. Maybe it's exhaustion from battling the same struggles over and over. Maybe it's frustration from pouring ourselves out and seeing little return. Whatever the reason, we hit a wall. And instead of anger or sadness, what settles in is something more dangerous—apathy.

Apathy is a lack of feeling, emotion, or interest. It's indifference, a state of not caring. In its most basic form, apathy says, *What's the point?* It's that inner voice that whispers, *Why bother? No one notices. Nothing changes. It's not worth it.* It's the slow fade from passion to passivity, from engagement to withdrawal, from caring deeply to barely feeling anything at all.

Signs You're Slipping Into Apathy

Apathy can sneak up on us. It doesn't always announce itself with flashing lights; instead, it creeps in through small, unnoticed shifts in our thinking and behavior. Here are a few signs that apathy might be settling into your life:

- **Loss of passion:** The things you once cared about – your faith, relationships, responsibilities – now feel like a chore, or worse, they don't feel like anything at all.
- **Spiritual numbness:** Reading Scripture, prayer, worship, and church feel mechanical or pointless. There's no fire, no hunger, just obligation or avoidance.

- **Avoidance of responsibility:** You start letting things slide. Maybe it's commitments at work, at church, in your relationships, or in your personal spiritual life.
- **Cynicism and negativity:** Instead of believing in change, growth, or possibility, you assume nothing will ever be different. You roll your eyes instead of offering hope.
- **Emotional withdrawal:** You stop feeling deeply. Whether it's joy, sadness, excitement, or grief, everything becomes muted. You just don't care anymore.

Why Apathy Is Never an Option for the Christian

Here's the hard truth: apathy is never a harmless state of mind. It is a slow poison that numbs the soul and disconnects us from our God-given purpose.

As Christians, we are called to care. Jesus modeled a life of deep compassion, relentless love, and unwavering commitment. He didn't grow cold toward people, even when they rejected Him. He didn't withdraw when He was exhausted. He didn't shrug off the lost, the hurting, or the broken. He cared – even when it cost Him everything.

Scripture tells us:

- **“Let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.”** (Galatians 6:9, ESV)
- **“Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord.”** (Romans 12:11, ESV)
- **“As for you, brothers, do not grow weary in doing good.”** (2 Thessalonians 3:13, ESV)

Apathy is the opposite of the life God calls us to. He created us with purpose. He placed us in relationships that require investment. He gave us gifts that are meant to be used. He called us to love, to serve, to fight the good fight. And when

we choose apathy, we abandon the very calling He's placed on our lives.

How God Can Pull Us Out of Apathy

If you find yourself in a place of apathy, the good news is that God doesn't leave us there. He specializes in waking up sleeping souls, reviving dead hearts, and reigniting lost passion. Here's how He does it:

1. He reminds us of our identity.

Apathy makes us forget who we are. But God gently reminds us: *You are chosen. You are called. You are loved. You are not done yet.* (Isaiah 41:10, 1 Peter 2:9)

2. He stirs up our hearts.

When we ask Him, God can rekindle our passion. He can give us fresh vision, renewed strength, and a reason to care again. (Psalm 51:10, Ezekiel 36:26)

3. He calls us to action.

Sometimes, the way out of apathy is simply to move – pray when we don't feel like it, serve when we're tired, worship when we don't have the energy. Feelings often follow actions. (James 1:22, Colossians 3:23)

4. He surrounds us with community.

Isolation fuels apathy, but the right people can pull us out of it. God often uses friends, mentors, and church family to help us regain perspective and purpose. (Hebrews 10:24-25)

Never Give Up

Apathy is a thief. It steals our joy, our purpose, and our connection to God. But we don't have to let it win. The next time you feel like you just don't care anymore, remind yourself:

- God still has a purpose for you.

- Your life matters.
- The world needs what you have to offer.
- The enemy would love for you to quit, but God's not done with you yet.

So don't give up. Don't check out. Don't settle into a life of indifference. Cry out to God, let Him stir your heart, and keep moving forward. Because even when you don't care anymore – He still does. And that makes all the difference.