



ESSENTIAL CONNECTION

“Water is evangelism
without words.”

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WAKE-UP CALL!

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MEDIA: FRIEND OR ENEMY?

How TV, video games, & social media
fuel your boredom
See p. 61

FATHER'S DAY

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HOW TO COPE, HELP A FRIEND,
& WHY IT MATTERS

Bored? Lazy? Just don't care?

GET MOVING!

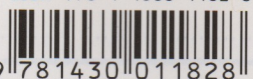
Learn the symptoms of apathy,
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Making peace in a family that fights

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Checking In

{ AN INTRODUCTION }

First Look

(YOUR FIRST LOOK AT THIS MONTH'S JOURNEY)



THE APATHY EPIDEMIC

Are you showing any symptoms?

You can see it in the way we stand idly by and watch as a bully attacks one of our classmates. You can see it in the way we have plenty of money for music and movie tickets but none to spare for the poor. You can see it in the way we're more likely to read status updates on Facebook than sit down and listen to a friend's problems.

It's most evident in the way we call ourselves Christians, but aren't interested enough in God to invest time in a meaningful relationship with Him.

It's everywhere, and in case you're wondering, "it" is apathy. According to the Merriam-Webster app on my phone, apathy can be defined as *a total lack of interest, feeling, emotion, or concern*. To put it simply, apathy is a bad case of the "I don't cares."

★ "I DON'T CARE."

Those three little words may as well be the mantra of the culture in which we live. A lack of concern is at the root of all the examples listed above.

We don't step in when a bully attacks because we don't care about the person being bullied.

We don't give our money to the poor because we care more about indulging our luxury than alleviating their suffering.

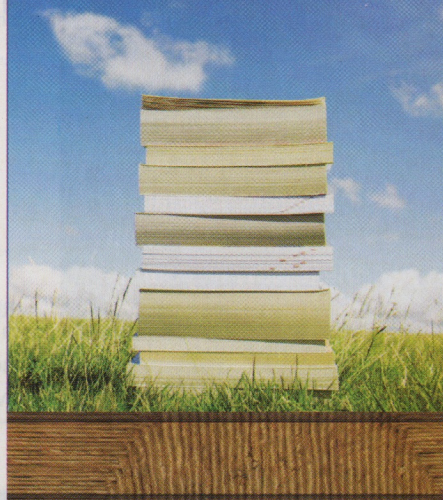
We don't listen to our friend's problems because we couldn't care less about their issues.

And we don't invest time in our relationships with God because we really don't care enough about Him to get to know Him.

★ DANGERS OF APATHY

Apathy is dangerous indeed, particularly when it comes to matters of faith. When we're caught

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But with so many options, it can be tough to determine which books to add to your summer reading list. To help out, we've built a web-based Summer Reading Guide featuring cover images, book descriptions, author names, purchase information, and more. So whether you're planning to read by the pool, on the beach, or in your own backyard, make LifeWay's Summer Reading Guide your first destination!

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be persistent in prayer. Share with the saints in their needs; pursue hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice; weep with those who weep."

God's Word calls believers to pursue a relationship with Him, care about the people around us, and empathize with others.

There's nothing apathetic about that.

And if Paul's words aren't enough to convince you, think about this: What if God didn't care about us? What if God hadn't so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son? How would the world be different?

Thankfully, God does care, and we know it because He acts like it. Someone who didn't care would never do what Jesus did when He died on the cross. In His life and death, we can see just how much God cares for us. There are no words for a love that great.

He loves us. Oh, how He loves us.

★ WE CARE BECAUSE HE CARES.

There's no room for the "I don't care" syndrome in a believer's life because every moment of Jesus' life screamed, "I care!" Our lives should broadcast the same message. So consider this question: Are you paralyzed by apathy or compelled by love?

If we really cared, we would step in to help stop the bullying.

If we really cared, we would give generously to the poor.

If we really cared, we would listen to our friends.

And if we really cared, we would spend each day falling deeper and deeper in love with Jesus.

What about you? Do you care? If you do, your life will show it.

—Leslie Ann Jones

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in its grip, we're content to sit beside the swimming pool instead of diving into the deep end. It lulls us into complacency and discourages us from growing into the people that God created us to be. The apathetic life is idle, indifferent, and stagnant. And our lives will only continue to become more listless and unresponsive—when we don't care about God, we don't care about others.

★ THE CURE TO THE EPIDEMIC

The Christian life, on the other hand, is anything but apathetic. Consider these words from the Apostle Paul in Romans 12:11-15:

"Do not lack diligence; be fervent in spirit; serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope; be patient in affliction;