

How do I respond to apathy in people who say that they follow Christ?

Apathy in Christians or in professing Christians is probably responsible for more people not desiring to follow Jesus Christ than all the books, speeches, and actions given by the raging atheists in every generation, whether it be the French philosopher Voltaire in the 18th century or the German philosopher Nietzsche in the 19th century, the harsh persecution of Christian multitudes during the Soviet empire in the 20th, or the antagonism of modern critics of the faith, like Bill Maher and Rosie O'Donnell today. This apathy results in a wide spectrum of behavior, from indifference, to gross hypocrisy. All of which horribly blurs mankind from the beauty, passion, and purity found in Jesus Christ.

The word “apathy” actually comes from two Greek words, “a” - *without* and “pathos” – *passion*, or literally “*suffering*”. It is a life without passion, because it is a life unwilling to experience suffering. It would seem that apathy is a form of selfishness! Usually, when we're selfish, its because we've bought into the argument that being so will make us 'happier'. The opposite *always* happens. We end up totally unmotivated in life, without passion, or 'apathetic'. According to the meaning of the word, we are simply not willing to suffer, or pay a price for anything, including our belief in Jesus Christ.

So...what do you do?

Challenge people about the sinfulness of apathy! Jesus deserves more! I was saved on a college campus because one of my friends challenged my sinful lifestyle. He shared with me what *Jesus* said, “*I would rather you be hot or cold than lukewarm. Because you are lukewarm, I will spit you out of my mouth.*” Instead of being offended, I was convicted. Four days later, I finally attended the campus meeting he had been inviting me to. There, I met this Jesus, and I was forever changed and will be forever grateful that Tom cared more about me and the honor of God on our campus than my feelings. I was set free from my (a)pathetic lifestyle! In today's politically correct culture, where everyone is obsessed with everyone else's feelings, we need to remember that God wants to deliver people from the miserable lifestyle of selfishness.

Model it yourself

As a Christian, are you willing to 'pay the price' (suffer) for your faith? The opposite is apathy. Nothing of value is cheap! I had to give up something to have a wonderful relationship with my wife, to father amazing children, to have a deep and fulfilling relationship with Jesus that continues to bless, challenge, and keep me in awe. We have nothing to be apologize for in an all out relationship with God, where we are continuing to give our lives to Him (Gal. 2:20). Instead of turning people off, it magnifies the attractive nature or our great Savior. Someone who is really living for something beyond themselves sticks out in today's apathetic culture. Let Jesus shine through you.