



Welcome to TPO's News Cleanse!

Good news: Easter's coming! Bad news: News Cleanse is ending after Resurrection Day. But don't worry. You'll keep getting reflections from our founder, Jason, on healthy news habits in his Sunday newsletter, News Health. And if you want to keep getting headline-focused, Scripture-soaked prayers from our writer Steph, [subscribe to Praying the News here](#).

New here? Glad to have you. [Click here](#) to read (or print!) the first six devotionals.

PONDER | PRAY | PRACTICE

Is your news making you paralyzed or purposeful?

When I hear about a natural disaster, I don't participate in search-and-rescue operations. When I hear about layoffs, I don't help people find jobs. When I see issues in Congress, I don't draft legislation or run for office. The problem is that there's just too much! Every day, the news shows us more than we can handle—wars, natural disasters, starvation, abuse, and political oppression. It's easy to feel paralyzed and helpless.

But here's the truth: I'm human. I'm finite. And that's not a flaw.

God is omnipresent (all places at once), omniscient (all knowing), and omnipotent (all-powerful), and we are not. While our desire to be "like God" in these ways goes all the way back to Adam and Eve eating the fruit in Genesis 3, our history as creatures with limits goes even further back, to Genesis 1–2. God designed us to be dependent on Him, on one another, and on the rest of creation. This dependence is not the result of sin; it's a part of God's very good design.

If we haven't come to terms with our limits, passages like this one, where Jesus describes the good works of His disciples, can feel daunting:

"For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat; I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink; I was a stranger and you took me in; I was naked and you clothed me; I was sick and you took care of me; I was in prison and you visited me."

Matthew 25:35-36 (CSB)

But we miss something important in most English translations: every time Jesus says "you" in this passage, it's *plural*. If Jesus were in Texas, he'd have said, "**y'all** fed me, **y'all** gave me a drink, **y'all** took me in, **y'all** clothed me, **y'all** cared for me, **y'all** visited me." Yes, *we* are called to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, care for the sick, and visit the imprisoned—yes, *we* are called to respond to disasters and tragedies in the news—but *I* am not expected to do all those things alone. Jesus is describing a collective responsibility, not a solo mission. Embracing our finitude frees us from impossible expectations and allows us to follow God's call on our lives in a way that is life-giving rather than soul-crushing.

Our role is to serve where God has placed us and to support other Christians serving where God has placed them.

Let tragedies in the news serve as a reminder that needs exist *everywhere*, including in your community. When news of a devastating earthquake in India stirs you, do something to support that local body of Christ (e.g., pray, give), then quickly get back to serving the people in your life.

There are needs in your community that you're uniquely positioned to help meet, even if they're not making international headlines. So, confidently serve people where God has placed you and let the rest be carried by others in the Body, and ultimately by Christ Himself.



In Christ,
Jason Woodruff

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

When you read about a need in the news, what's your gut reaction—guilt, anxiety, anger, numbness, something else? What does that response reveal about how you are relating with God or others?

Is there a person or group in your life whom you sense God stirring you to serve?

PONDER | PRAY | PRACTICE

Almighty, infinite, eternal Father,
You are a God without limits—
Your presence is boundless, Your power unmatched,
Your knowledge never-ending.

In Your wisdom You have drawn a boundary
around my power, my time, my resources.

I cannot be the parent of every orphan,
the comforter of every widow,
the shelter for the homeless and displaced,
the provider for the war-torn and disaster-ravaged,
the solution to government inadequacies,
the straightener of crooked leaders,
or the righteous judge who rights every wrong.

I confess that I have squirmed under my limits,
longing to blow past the boundaries You have set.

I have refused to walk by faith,
instead running independently, straining ahead under my own power,
exhausted and despairing.

God my Helper,
wisen me to walk faithfully in the tension
of facing overwhelming needs, being finite by design, *and*
called to devote myself to good works.

Open my eyes to how I have been serving myself
with the power, time, and resources You have given me;
open my eyes to the needs of others in my own home and community;
and open my eyes to the good work You've put right in front of me.

When I feel powerless and paralyzed to respond to heartache in the headlines,
strengthen my faith, bring me to my knees before You,
loosen wealth's grip so I might be inclined toward generosity,
and mobilize Your body for courageous, costly love
to the very ends of the earth.

May I pour myself out for others in sacrificial service
for the glory of Your name and the good of my neighbor,
ever conscious that every drop I offer overflows from You.

Amen.



Yours in Christ,
Steph Juliot
Writer | The Pour Over

Thank you for joining us in prayer! How can our staff pray for you?

[Please let us know here.](#)

PONDER | PRAY | **PRACTICE**

You have two tasks this week:

1. Set a 2-minute timer and pray after reading the news. While you cannot take action on everything in the headlines, God can, and He listens to the prayers of His people. (Without a timer, it's tempting to rush through this practice.)
2. Serve the needs of people in your community. Mow your elderly neighbor's lawn, babysit for an overwhelmed parent, sit and eat with someone who is homeless, or just ask your local church how you can serve.

Too often, we unintentionally trade serving the people in our lives for being aware of something far away (and out of our control). What would the world look like if we consumed less news and served our neighbors more?

Has the News Cleanse helped you change your news habits? Please [take this 1-minute survey](#) to let us know (and share other feedback)!