

May 15, 2026 Email Newsletter Wellness Block:

Is self-care selfish?

I still remember lunchtime as a mom to four young children. It was the messiest, stickiest, and neediest time of my day. Typically, I didn't eat when they ate. Sometimes I didn't eat until dinnertime because once they left the table, I was picking up the mess and going to the next task.

I wore this hunger as a badge of love for my kids. They needed food; my hunger could wait. *Wasn't that the loving thing to do?* However, by 2 PM I was not a loving mom. I felt exhausted and foggy. My patience was thin and I was irritable with my family. I didn't realize I had ignored MY needs to the detriment of my ability to love. What I needed then, and continue to need today, is to intentionally take care of myself.

Caring for oneself is often known as self-care. Sometimes this term can be misconstrued as selfish and indulgent. But when we consider self-care according to Scripture, we see an incredible invitation and command to steward our bodies so we can love others well.

“Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. Therefore, glorify God in your body.” 1 Corinthians 6:19 – 20

We practice self-care as a response to Christ's redemption of us through His precious blood. We are invited to care for our purchased bodies as the very temple of the Holy Spirit. We worship God with our body each time we make our health a priority through things like

- A 10-minute walk
- Talking with our insurance company to understand our benefits
- Connecting with a friend
- Setting healthy boundaries

Self-care not only glorifies God, but it also blesses our neighbor. We are commanded to love others as we love ourselves, as Jesus said in Mark 12:31. The emphasis in this passage is often focused on the command to love others. This is true! But notice we are to also love ourselves. The two are connected, and if we struggle to care for ourselves, we will struggle to sustain care for others.

A tired, stressed out, boundary-less, irritable person does not love as wholly and easily as a well fed, rested, healthy boundary, cared for body. It's the very challenge I

experienced as a young mom, and it's the challenge we face each day. Loving others requires us to care for ourselves as well.

Jesus demonstrated perfectly the command to love one another while also caring for Himself. He was completely selfless, yet still took time to sleep, eat, and rest. He withdrew and prayed. In Mark 6:31 we see Jesus encouraging His disciples to rest and rejuvenate. They cared for themselves, so they had energy and endurance for their ministry.

We see this tension on airplanes as well. Recall every flight attendant's pre-flight speech. We are told to "put on your own oxygen mask before you help someone put theirs on."

Why do they say this? You can think more clearly to help others if you put your mask on first. Neglect your own mask and you are at risk of oxygen deprivation and can help no one.

Taking care of ourselves isn't a detour from loving others; it helps us to serve. This week consider how you can glorify God by caring for your body holistically. What's one small act of body stewardship you can do today? Maybe it's scheduling an annual check-up or taking some deep breaths. It could be 5 minutes of prayer or adding a piece of fruit to your lunch. Each self-care choice you make glorifies God and helps you love with more energy. Where will you start today?