

# THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



## # 1560 Another Four-Letter Word You Shouldn't Use

I'm here today to discuss the continuous and almost brazen use of a certain four-letter word. You've heard it, and I'll bet you've used on occasion. You probably used it to let someone know that you weren't easy. You used it to let someone know that they were dealing with a person who would stand up for themselves. You likely used it as a weapon, to make the person you were dealing with give up, and leave you be. If you've used this four-letter word once, you've probably used it dozens, no, maybe hundreds of times. I'm Jerry Roberts, and I'm calling you out for your continuous, egregious, wanton, reckless, and perhaps self-gratifying use of this horrible, demeaning, ego-deflating four letters. That's next on The Extra Point.

During the break, maybe you ran down the list of all the four-letter words you've heard at work, at home, in traffic, and those you've used yourself. I guarantee that you missed one, and it's one you don't even think about. You likely use it freely, without giving it any thought at all.

The four-letter word I'm thinking of is *busy*.

"Wait," you say...busy does have four letters, but that's not the point, is it"

You are very perceptive. You see, as I put forth in the introduction to today's commentary, we use the word "busy" as a weapon of sorts, when we don't want to engage with someone.

Oh come on, you've never told anyone that you were too busy, trying to get out of a situation, maybe an invitation to an event you did not want to attend?

Let's get real here. People use their supposed busyness in an attempt to shield them from all kinds of things.

"I'd love to talk with you about (fill in the blanks), but I'm just soooooo busy."

"You know I want to be a part of your very

important (fill in the blanks), but I'm so busy. It's just impossible."

"Lunch would be great, but my calendar is slammed. I am super busy and I don't have any lunch openings until....let's see...are you free June 10th, 2027?"

In his book, *Essentialism: The Disciplined Pursuit of Less*, author Greg McKeown wrote: "The truth is, when we say we're 'too busy,' what we're really saying is that something else — or someone else — is a higher priority."

Now we would never say that to anyone, to tell them they are a low priority. We don't want to hurt anyone's feelings. Instead, we use the four-letter word.

Make no mistake about it, the word "busy" is seen as a form of profanity by many people. They know it's usually a cop-out, you're trying to get rid of them, and that you think invoking your busyness is the magic that will free you.

There is another side to this, that one's inability to prioritize and then to effectively handle their tasks and commitments has squeezed their schedule. They can't deal with distractions, and often feel like they're always behind.

Yes, this person is busy, but it's not because of the work they do; it's because of how they approach their work.

My suggestion is to drop the term "busy" from your everyday vocabulary. Most working folks have a lot on their plate. Yet, just about everybody could squeeze five or ten minutes out of their schedule if they wanted to.

Let's think of alternatives. Instead of saying, "I'd love to talk with you about (fill in the blanks), but I'm just soooooo busy"...say, "I have a report due in a half-hour, but I can offer you 10 minutes at 4:15. If that's not good, send me an email and I'll respond to you by tomorrow."  
(Con't.)

Instead of saying, “You know I want to be a part of your very important (fill in the blanks), but I’m so busy. It’s just impossible”...say “With my current workload I can’t be an active part. However, let me know what you need and I’ll try to support you in any way I can.”

If you can’t do lunch, try coffee. If you can’t give someone 30 minutes, suggest 15 and stress that you’ll have to close it off after that.

If you don’t want to meet with people because you’re not in a position to do business with them, be up front about it. This is common when dealing with salespeople.

“I like your product but our budget is tapped. I can’t buy until next year.”

“I’m interested in what you have, but I can’t focus on it right now. I’m not saying no, but I can’t say yes. Do this...send me an email with your best reasoning for why I should move forward. I promise I’ll look at it this week, and message you back. We’ll see where it goes. No promises.”

Let me close with this thought. Far too many people feel that being busy is some sort of badge of honor. Or, it’s a good excuse for whatever you don’t want to do.

Hopefully, what we’ve discussed today will give you a different perspective.

That’s the Extra Point. Be responsible and make something good happen today. For 93.3FM, the Ray Gibson Show, and First Hawaiian Bank, I’m Jerry Roberts.

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