



Links Players

CATEGORIES

LORD, who may dwell in your sacred tent? Who may live on your holy mountain? Psalm 15:1 NIV

Categories permeate every aspect of our human existence. In the golf world, we have professionals and amateurs, low-handicappers and high-handicappers, Americans and Internationals, juniors and seniors. We also find categories within particular populations, socio-economic standings, politics, and career paths.

We categorize places, people, and activities as “sacred” or “secular.” For example, we might say Sunday Church is sacred, but playing a round of golf is secular. Or maybe we bring our best selves to our weekly Links Fellowship, but the rest of the week, we fail in kindness, compassion, and service to others, perhaps harming others with our words and attitudes.

Skye Jethani writes in the With God Daily (May 19, 2023) devotional, “We are tempted to isolate our sacred relationship with God from our ordinary relationships with our friends, neighbors, and enemies. This explains why the most religious and theologically informed people are sometimes the nastiest. They may recognize the words of God in Scripture, but then fail to recognize the image of God in their neighbor.”

When we see some people and activities as important to God and others as unimportant, we have gravely missed the mark.

David’s opening question in Psalm 15 should make us stop and consider how we live. Who may live with God? When we put our trust in Jesus – the Way, the Truth, and the Life (John 14:1 ESV), our eternal destiny is set to dwell with God. However, this doesn’t magically change our choices or behaviors. The ordinary days and moments are just as important.

Jethani shares, “David affirms the person who lives with integrity and treats others justly. David rejects the sacred/secular categories common to most religious thinking and instead links our relationship with God to our relationship with others. He recognizes the interplay and overlap between the holy and the ordinary.”

The breakdown of sacred and secular categories is on full display when Jesus is born in a stable to those who are at the bottom of the social rung. It was the marginalized of society who welcomed and received Jesus as God’s anointed, while those who held social and political power rejected him (the ones who established the categories in the first place).

Those who dwell and live with God exhibit integrity and remain right with God (Psalm 15:2), speak the truth in their hearts and do not slander (vs 3), do no wrong to their neighbors nor gossip (vs 3), treat others justly and remain faithful despite their hurts (vs 4), don’t exploit or violate another who is in difficulty (vs 5). It is only with God’s strength working within us that we can come close to attaining any of these characteristics.

How are the categories of sacred and secular keeping you from being like the one who dwells and lives with God?

Prayer: Lord, thank you for revealing yourself to us through your Word. Teach me to break down the categories that keep me from dwelling with you with all of my heart.

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