



Links Players

Trust - Part 2

When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon, and the stars that you have established, what are human beings that you are mindful of them, mortals that you care for them? (Psalms 8:3-4 NRSV)

I was filled with anticipation when Netflix released the first season of Full Swing. By the time I arrived at the second episode, contrasting Koepka and Scheffler, I was hooked.

After watching Koepka reflect on his misfortunes, I had two impressions. My first was to feel compassion. My second was that Koepka's entire identity seemed inextricably tied to golf, particularly his performance in the Majors.

What struck me was the profound reminder of what happens to any of us when we tie our ultimate identity to anything other than our Maker and his purposes in creation and redemption—we will eventually become disillusioned, dissatisfied, disappointed, and depressed.

The issue surrounding our identity is embedded in a much larger and related question. After the Psalmist peered into the heavens and marveled at the vastness of the sun, moon, and stars, he had, essentially, two responses—the first was awestruck wonder at the majesty of God, and the second was to ask what has now become the pressing question of the ages—What is man?

Scripture says we are the workmanship of a Creator with a divine purpose for which we are uniquely equipped to discover and deploy.

If, however, humanity is nothing more than "...an interesting accidental outcome of the workings of physical laws, which are themselves accidental....," then we are helplessly abandoned to find ultimate meaning in some aspect of our temporal and rapidly dwindling existence, golf or otherwise.

Heaven help us if our ultimate identity revolves around what we shoot, the car we drive, the house we live in, the wealth we accumulate, the number of academic degrees we hold, or how many clubs we belong to.

In the current cultural moment, we are told to "be true to yourself." One writer observed, "The biggest problem with the advice to be true to yourself is that to do so, you must know who you are."

Sadly, since many no longer look to the Christian faith to discover who they are, that search will end in futility. As N. T. Wright lamented, "If you are true to 'yourself,' you will end up a complete mess."

Timothy Keller writes, "Our need for worth is so powerful that whatever we base our identity and value on, we essentially deify. If it is anything other than God, then we are guilty of idolatry." Or, as another one put it, "When we take a good thing and try to make it the best thing, we turn it into a bad thing."

As we all should know, all idols will disappoint us, leaving us profoundly disillusioned and deeply dissatisfied with life. If, on the other hand, we find our ultimate identity in Christ, then the ebb and flow of life, with all its ups and downs, wins and losses, and successes and failures, will not determine our worth.

Prayer: Jesus! Teach us how to locate our identity in you.

READING: Psalm 8; Genesis 1:26-28; Hebrews 2:5-11

1. Why might our identities revolve around things like our handicap, the score we shot, the match we won or lost, or how we hit the ball on any given day?

2. After thinking about the suggested texts for today, how are we to think about ourselves? That is, what is the ultimate foundation for our identity?

3. Application: Thought Experiment- If our ultimate identity is found in knowing and being known by God, how should that impact us when life doesn't go our way?
