



Links Players

God, Golf, and The Good Life Satisfaction Quotient

All things are full of weariness; a man cannot utter it; the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing. (Ecclesiastes 1:2-3; 8, ESV)

“He did not say that! Did he?” The commentator burst out in disbelief after hearing the older Tour Player say, “I quit; this game is just no fun anymore. I cannot keep up with these long knockers.”

It is safe to assume that, at least occasionally, we can relate to this pro’s verbal tirade. For some of us who are a bit “longer in the tooth,” this game does not provide the same level of satisfaction that we once enjoyed.

The ball does not carry like it used to, our irons are not as crisp as they once were, and we work hard to hide the yips. When the orthopedist says, “Your rotator cuff is torn,” you wonder, “Are my days playing golf over?”

We held a raffle at a recent Links Fellowship to kick things off. More than anything, it was just for “kicks and giggles.” The facilitator introduced the three items as “age-appropriate” gifts: Aleve, Liquid IV, and Voltaren (arthritis cream).

“Enough is enough with all this age-related joint pain discussion,” you say. “Let’s be optimistic,” someone argues. Another voice from the back of the room opines, “Age is just a number!” Ok, Socrates!

We don’t want to be pessimistic or naively optimistic; instead, we aim to take a sustained look in the metaphorical mirror, assess where we find ourselves on the age continuum, and evaluate our SQ—our Satisfaction Quotient. In short, are you deeply satisfied with your life?

The writer of Ecclesiastes reasons from exactly that perspective. He is an older, wiser sage who has tried everything imaginable—knowledge, pleasure, vineyards, architecture, possessions, entertainment, concubines, and more—to find lasting satisfaction in life without God and has failed! That’s what “under the sun” means.

This inspired-by-the-Holy-Spirit author is writing to the next generation to say something like the following:

Try to squeeze the good out of life without prioritizing a vital relationship with your Maker, i.e., “life under the sun”—and you will wind

up disillusioned, cynical, and deeply dissatisfied with your brief life.

On the other hand, he would say, “Prioritize a relationship of affection and adoration with one’s Maker and find meaning, joy, and lasting satisfaction in all the good gifts he intended you to enjoy.”

Unfortunately, many have misinterpreted the author of this profoundly wise book, claiming that life lacks meaning. The argument implicitly goes like this: “Since our ultimate goal is to arrive in heaven, any attempt to enjoy earthly pleasures is a waste of time.”

This fallacy of equivocation conflates “our ultimate goal” with “our only goal.” This mindset drives a wedge between spiritual and physical realities, both of which represent “the good things” that come down to us from the Father above.

As C. S. Lewis aptly said, “Aim at Heaven, and you will get earth thrown in; aim at Earth, and you will get neither.” Lewis stresses the importance of subordinating our earthly passions to our chief passion of knowing and walking with Christ Jesus! Love Jesus, love his good world!

Prayer: Father, teach us to quench our thirst for satisfaction in you and then enjoy relative satisfaction in your good gifts.

READING: Ecclesiastes 2:24-26; 5:10-20; 6:1-12

1. How much does your play, good or bad, carry over from the course to your home, relationships, etc.?

2. After spending time in Ecclesiastes, consider how satisfied you are. Is there primarily contentment in your soul, or are you running on empty?

3. Application: Explore methods to consistently achieve greater satisfaction in life!
