

view point of life

by Pastor Rony Tan

Have you ever asked yourself, "What really is life? Is there any meaning to my human existence?" It's only natural for every thinking person to search for answers to these questions.

There was an ancient king by the name of Solomon who took upon himself to investigate life, with the aim to discover if it is at all meaningful. So he began looking at life from different angles and view points, hoping to catch a glimpse of meaning and purpose. From every conceivable angle, he perceived a dismal and depressing picture.

A view point is a positional point from which you look at an object. Different positions reveal different facets of that particular object. For instance, a large elephant can look very different from different angles.

Since Solomon was extremely powerful and wealthy, he had all the time and means to delve into the study of life and living. It was not only an expensive and extensive study but also an experiential one. The famous king spared nothing to get personally involved.

So he began viewing and "tasting" life from every possible perspective and facet. I shall endeavour to summarize all the many experiences he had into three main view points.

1st View Point

~ **From a pleasure -
seeker's perspective**

From a pleasure-seeker's perspective King Solomon's first stop was to immerse himself completely in an entertainment galore. It was unrestrained self-indulgence. He wouldn't withhold himself from anything sensual, pleasurable and thrilling.

The luxury and enjoyment that he pampered himself with defy exaggeration. But strangely, they still left him dissatisfied. "It's vanity of vanities!" he concluded.

2nd View Point

~ **From an achiever's
perspective**

Next, Solomon desired to do something of a nobler nature. He began building grand palaces, planting vineyards, gardens and orchards, and constructing fountains and lakes, hoping to find fulfillment through such great achievements. Relentlessly, he threw himself into monumental projects, one after another.

After all the projects were completed, he was left unfulfilled inside. Again, he concluded, "It's vanity of vanities!"

3rd View Point

~ **From a philosopher's
perspective**

Getting a little religious, the bewildered king took mind trips into the wild imaginations and teachings of man such as fatalism and humanism. The increase of humbuggery knowledge in his head only increased the pain in his heart.

He came to a point whereby nothing made sense no matter which way he turned. So confused was he that he was left stranded and empty. His conclusion about life remained the same, "It's vanity of vanities, all is vanity!"

As this ancient king viewed life from a purely human, horizontal plane and from the under-the-sun perspective, he came to three other vexing conclusions.

1st Vexing Conclusion

~ **There is nothing new under the sun**

What has been done before is being done now and will be done in the future. Everything is going in circles from the movement of the sun to the circling of the wind and the cycle of the water.

If you live long enough, you will realise that nothing is really new. The so-called New Morality is only the old immorality of Sodom and Gomorrah in disguise. Some of the latest fashion clothes are but copies of ancient designs. Sooner or later, one will somehow come to the conclusion that life is a process of tedious repetitions. It's an endless wearisome cycle, going nowhere. And you are always coming back to the same point again. It's the trite sameness of life that is simply unbearable.

2nd Vexing Conclusion

~ **Everything is a strife**

Enough is never enough. A man never earns enough. A woman is never beautiful enough. Relationships are never romantic enough. Clothes are never fashionable enough. Gadgets are never modern enough. Food is never tasty enough. Homes are never furnished enough. Entertainment is never pleasurable enough. Pursuits are never thrilling enough.

This is the irony of life. Pursuits and pleasures that should satisfy you somehow only increase your thirst for them for a season.

However, one thing is certain: If you've been striving after earthly pursuits long enough, you will, one day, stop at your tracks and ask, "Hey, wait a minute. What on earth am I doing, going round and round in circles, and striving after the wind?" Solomon's expression "striving after the wind" actually means trying to grasp the wind. It's a hopelessly futile exercise!

3rd Vexing Conclusion

~ **Everybody must die someday**

The final and shocking conclusion is that it's pointless to live because someday we will all die. Life is vain. It's vanity of vanities. The word "vain" is defined as useless, futile, void, empty, purposeless, pointless, meaningless, unproductive and false. To sum it all up, life is zero.

The wise and foolish will die. Likewise, man and beasts - all share the same ending. Each must die someday. Nobody escapes death.

Heroes like General Douglas MacArthur must die. Emperors like Julius Caesar must die. Talents like Elvis Presley must die. Clowns like Charlie Chaplin must die. Beasts like Adolf Hitler must die. Saints like Father Augustine must die. Demons like Al Capone must die. And geniuses like Albert Einstein must die. In fact all of these people are now dead and gone.

Therefore, from the earthly perspective, life is a wisp of vapour, a puff of smoke, a brush of wind and a hollow, empty ring. It's a pointless, empty existence. In a nutshell, life is zero!

Life is like eating cotton candy. It appears to have substance, but when you take a big bite at it, there is nothing much there. Life holds out hope, but when you reach out for it, there is nothing tangible.

Worst of all, when it is all said and done, when you turn the light out at the end of life, when you finally close the doors, when you walk away from a fresh grave of someone you love and when it's curtains, the final advantage is zero! When the final transaction is

completed, there is nothing left.

Futile days stretch into empty weeks and months and years and decades. This hopeless life is full of nasty surprises. Happiness can turn into sadness. Sweetness can turn sour. Hope can lead to a dead-end street. That's the colour of life. It's mostly black.

So Solomon concluded that life is vain, monotonous, unfair, haphazard, hopeless, meaningless and empty. It's moving from one futility to another. That's all true if life is viewed from a purely human, horizontal plane and from the under-the-sun perspective.

Now, here's the key to life's meaning and happiness. If there is nothing meaningful under the sun, our hope must be above the sun. If we are willing to go that far up, it is there that hope shines eternal.

If everything that's dissatisfying and unfulfilling is in the visible, then that which brings lasting satisfaction and fulfillment must be in the invisible.

God's Spirit is invisible, so is your human spirit inside your physical body. Your spirit-being, which is the real you, never dies. And in this invisible dimension which is as real as the physical realm, your human spirit can know God's Spirit in an intimate manner. By inviting God's Spirit to come into your heart and life will give you the above-the-sun perspective and view. That's what Solomon did.

Let's hear the conclusion of the whole matter at the end of Solomon's long and tedious search. You can learn and benefit at his expense, pre-paid.

Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter

Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man.
Ecclesiastes 12:13

Here is the whole point of Solomon's journal. Even if you could change time and space, and your name and face, the basic problem will always remain the same. If you look at life from a purely human perspective, you will end up in total despair. The view point from the horizontal plane under the sun is just too narrow and restricted, and often distorted. You will naturally come to the devastating conclusion that life is pointless and empty.

Rise up in your spirit and get the above-the-sun perspective. Look at things from the vantage view point of God and you will see a very different picture. It's a perspective of eternal life, hope and purpose.

In order for your horizontal life to make sense, your vertical life must be in place. Therefore, secure a vital relationship with God and invest more in the vertical dimension of life. You'll find true contentment in your heart, clarity in your mind, forgiveness in your relationships, enjoyment in your work and fulfillment in your life.

If your outlook of life is negative, full of gloom and doom, you must change your thinking. But before you can change your thought pattern, you have to change the position from which you look at things, circumstances and people. Begin looking at life from God's view point.

From God's highest view point, you have been created with a void or vacuum in your heart which only His Spirit can fill to bring you meaning and fulfillment. Apart from God, you will always be restless and groping around, searching and never finding, empty and never filled.

Two thousand years ago, Jesus Christ took your guilty place and died for your sins

because from His highest point of view, He already saw you reading this precious booklet and receiving His love and forgiveness.

So lift up your eyes and raise your sight above the sun and look at life from God's view point. Respond to Him by praying the following prayer so that your life will be wonderfully changed.

"Dear Father God, I approach You in Jesus' name. Thank You for giving me Your above-the-sun perspective. I know now that You are willing to accept and love me just as I am. Therefore, I come with all my heavy load and ask You for total forgiveness. I repent of all my sins. Cleanse me with the Blood of Christ. Come and change my heart and life. Thank You for saving me. In Jesus' name."

Contact Us

If you need further spiritual assistance, we have experienced pastors to counsel and guide you. Please feel free to call any of the following pastors:

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by telephone at (65) **6788 1323** during office hours. They will be delighted to hear from you.

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