Meaning | Satisfaction | Freedom | Self | Identity | Hope | Morality | Justice

MAKING SENSE OF GOD

Kevin Timmons | Scott Sears | 7:15 pm | Wednesdays | July 8 – August 5

Preface

Skepticism:

- Doubt, Uncertainty, Mistrust, Suspicion
- Inquiry Driven
- Evidence Based
- Scientific Method Focus
- Suspending judgements, questioning assumptions/givens
- Demands rigorous evidence, not accepting blindly.
- Structured Analytical Process aimed at discovering truth

Secular:

- Social/Political Structure
  - Separation of Church and State
  - No advocacy/privilege for faith by Government or cultural institutions
- Individual Descriptor
  - Does not have Knowledge of God or the supernatural, beyond the natural world
  - Emphasis on the material world and the scientific explanation of reality
- Age (Type of Cultural View)
  - Emphasis on the “Here & Now”, this present time
  - No real thought on the concepts of the eternal or transcendent

Everyone Lives by Faith

Jude 23

Have mercy on those who doubt

Isn’t religion based on faith and secularism on evidence?

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No! Moving from religion to secularism is really just a move from one set of faith beliefs to another.

Secular Belief: Exclusive Rationality

Science is the only arbiter of what is real or factual

Problems

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- Criteria for proof are widely contested
- View from nowhere
- Background Beliefs
- Doubt and faith are equivalent

Better Approach: Balance of Faith and Reason

- Not irrationality, not emotionalism
- Knowledge is both objective and subjective
- Both the Christian and the secular person use reason and faith together to get their beliefs

Everyone Lives by Faith

- Humility
- Confidence

Conversate

- Be Present, Curious, Respectful, Honest
- Listen and speak with confidence
- Practice an attitude of Humility
- Ask Next Level Questions
    - That topic is interesting, what more can you say about that?
    - What else might come to your mind?
    - How did you come to that conclusion?
    - Will you share an example?
    - What were any takeaways from that experience?
    - How did that experience shape your viewpoint?

Discussion

1. Skepticism always rests on other beliefs ("you can't doubt belief A without believing belief B"). Can you think of an example from your own life where a doubt was actually rooted in a deeper assumption you rarely questioned?

2. What assumptions do you think our culture encourages people to accept without much examination?

3. Both faith and reason are necessary for knowledge and neither Christians nor secular people rely on reason alone. How does this help us have more humble, yet confident conversations with people who disagree with us about God, morality, or truth?

Meaning

What Is Meaning?

- Purpose
- Significance

People will feel their lives are meaningful if they have a sense of purpose that makes a difference by serving some good beyond themselves.

Who struggles with Meaninglessness?

Secular People

Who struggles with Meaninglessness?

Secular People

Christians

Secularism’s struggle with Meaning

Secularism's struggle with Meaning

Modernism - Life is meaningless

Secularism's struggle with Meaning

Modernism - Life is meaningless

Postmodernism - You make your own meaning

Does that mean secular people have meaningless lives'?

- No…

Does that mean secular people have meaningless lives?

- No… but there is a difference between meaning that is **created**, and meaning that is **discovered**
    - **Discovered** meaning is inherent to life
    - **Created** meaning is made up

Discovered Meaning

- More Rational

Discovered Meaning

- More Rational
- More Communal

Discovered Meaning

- More Rational
- More Communal
- More Durable

OPINION
One of my recent guests was Bart
Ehrman, who's New Testament scholar,

Discussion

1. When have you experienced a strong sense of meaning or purpose in your life? What gave that experience significance?

2. How does suffering affect our sense of meaning? Have you seen hardship deepen someone's sense of purpose, or have you seen it undermine it? What made the difference?

3. If Christianity is true—that we were created to know God, glorify him, and enjoy him forever—how would that reshape the way we think about our work, family, success, suffering, and even death?

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PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

CANYON creek

MEN'S AFTER HOURS

FRIDAY, JULY 17 | 7 - 9 PM

HOST-CLAUDIO INNAMORATI

Men's Retreat

TAHOE | SEPTEMBER 18-20

Speaker | Alan Noble

Author of To Live Well, You Are Not Your Own, On Getting Out of Bed, and Disruptive Witness

Theme | Men of Virtue in a Chaotic World

Based on Noble's latest book, To Live Well

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Setup and Tear Down

Who can help setup before next week?

Who can stay to help tear down tonight?

The Heart Is Like a Compass

- What is the purpose of the Heart?
- How do we care for the heart?
- What happens the heart is not in tune with the true north?
- How do we re-calibrate our hearts?

Over the next week...

- Take an audit of your daily routines/practices. (List out activities, habits, inputs, influencers)
- What is influencing your heart & mind?
- What vision do you have for/of the good life?
- How are you being carried by/in the practices that you do toward that vision of the good life?