

It is not the meaning of life but feeling meaningful!

Ask what matters. Is it being happy? Or is it being good? It is self-evident that it is being good. A person who is tormented by the devil for being good and who is good despite being totally unhappy is the ultimate good person. So the purpose of life is being good even if it feels like your life is worthless. The meaning of life is not about your feelings.

The fact that being good matters and happiness does not if there is a contest between the two and only one can win out, is a horrific doctrine. It is no answer to say there is no problem because there is no contest. But that does not get you away from the principle. You have to have the attitude that if there is a contest you have to choose good. And your sincerity and devotion to the principle can only be shown if you choose to help people in a way that demands terrible pain and sacrifice from you. Nobody likes the doctrine so I would be very sceptical about those people who claim to be servants of good and even more sceptical about those who purport to be servants of God. They are not as disinterested in their happiness as they say. It is easier though to be a servant of good and not care about your happiness than it is to be a servant of God and not care. Why? Because God is more demanding. Putting good first is not enough - he wants to be put first.

Good for the religious person is not about helping others but helping them as a way of showing love for one being: God. God alone matters according to religion. The religious person is to value God even if it means abandoning all happiness and health forever for the sake of doing the divine will. So if what matters is being good and not how you feel about life that is not as tough as saying that what matters is being holy (holy is when you dedicated your good to God alone). God is the biggest imaginable opponent of any attempt to try to base religion on how you feel your life has meaning.

Wow I wrote elsewhere that we need to feel our lives have meaning. Am I contradicting myself? No - I am saying that abandoning belief in God makes me my own God and gives my life meaning. We make our own good by letting ourselves feel our lives have meaning. We have to be good without God for God threatens that good. If this good is sin then so be it! There is no freedom unless there is truth. One needs the other. Therefore thinking you have meaning in life from a religion is not enough. You must be right that the system provides meaning. Thinking you have meaning is not the same as having meaning and will only hinder true meaning.

A doctrine of meaning for life has to respect and fill as far as possible our need and right to reason and for evidence. It is incomplete and is going to form a crutch that is too fragile if that is lacking.

Religion tells you that if you do not believe its teaching on meaning then you have to invent your own sense of meaning. Should you create false beliefs that make you feel your life has meaning? If you do that then you are trying to create the sense that your life is important and meaningful. You do not need to create false beliefs to adapt to the good and bad things that happen to you or that may happen. False ideas and beliefs are of no real use.

Some say that creating the meaning for your life is the same thing as discovering it. To do one is to do the other. In this view, you must be careful to choose the beliefs that are actually true. That keeps you firm and safe. Lies and errors do not.

We must remember that some people swear they get meaning by having loads of money in the bank and by power. Perhaps it was the goal of Jack the Ripper's life to kill.

When people seek a life purpose by getting involved in spirituality or religion they really mean they want to feel their lives are important in time and eternity.

Knowing they are important does not mean you will feel it. It is the feelings you want. You would rather lose the knowledge than the feeling.

If you see your suffering as part of a divine plan for others, it gives you a head meaning not a heart meaning. It never gives you a heart meaning because the feeling that your life is important is a side-effect and may come or go.

Is the meaning of life about being good or feeling your life has meaning? What would you say to a person who does loads of good but who feels her life is useless? Would you not say that if there is a choice between her feeling her life has value and doing good then the doing good is what matters? Yes. Religion would say no! Clearly the believers are hungering for the sense of control that comes from having others believe absurdities and lies.

Search for meaning in life is really about refusing to do good for its own sake. The religious person wants certain feelings or to have them reasonably often before he will care about others. If it is about feelings then surely is better to see life as luck rather than as a gift from God for then you will feel amazingly lucky? It is luck if God decided to make you so why

should it matter if he has not?

God or no God - happiness is possible because it is not what life is about. You cannot be happy if you feel obligated by God to be happy. If you are obligated by good to be happy that is a necessary evil. But you are making things worse by inventing new obligations in the name of God.

A theory or fact concerning why your life is valuable is nothing. What you need is the feeling. Feelings give a sense of meaning. If you can't get the feeling then people telling you what to believe in order to get it will only serve to make it worse and pile up guilt on you. Belief in God cannot give it to you - it is your emotional response to the belief that does that. Who cares if the feeling is wrong as long as it helps? The atheist could be wrong to feel his life is valuable. But that does not mean it is okay to feel that on religious grounds. The best person is able to feel it without belief in God. His anchor is there and it's a strong one. The anchor you need is the one you should stick with. Don't choose a wooden anchor instead of a proper one!

Meaning then is about us and not God even if some of us use belief in God to trigger it. Every person has a brain. And that brain does not want to be imprisoned by fear so it may shut out the harsh realities of existence. This is what is mistaken for religious faith. It is not religious faith though it is like it in its emotional optimism. It is not moral for it can be dangerous if misused. Bullies feed their self-illusion of power and invincibility through it. If the shutting out is impaired despair and depression may result. It is important to try and not tamper with it but to keep it healthy which means don't be a bully and don't pretend that it is a sense of God protecting you. See it as the result of you perceiving life. It is faith in life.

You need to feel that you alone has established your life which necessarily must exclude God. Feelings are not completely rational. If life has no meaning, you may feel it does or you may not. You cannot theorise that there is a God who loves you in order to feel it. Feelings just happen. Yet I can make myself feel happier by thinking some nice thoughts. But you knew the nice thoughts would trigger the happiness. You did not make your feelings appear - you only manipulated an automatic response. You do not make your dog come to you when you call him for his dinner. Just because he does it when you call does not mean he does it because you call.

The feeling that life has no meaning is just a feeling. It can be changed. Religion does irreparable harm by making it to be such a big thing that it isn't even seen as much of a feeling any more.

The sense of meaning is just a feeling. You just have to be lucky. People tell you to take steps to feel a certain way. The steps will not work unless your coping and emotional system is set up to let them work. For example, positive thinking is said to make many of us feel better but it will make many feel worse too. It is really the programming that gives the good feelings not the steps. It is the programmed response to the steps not the steps themselves.

If you feel life is better if you think God has a plan for it the reason is that you have been conditioned.

The Church deliberately lies that you need God and religion to have a sense that your life has meaning and purpose for it knows that it has feelings of life having a purpose even when it is not thinking about God or indifferent to him.

People who are enjoying life do not care about the ultimate meaning of life or God's supposed part in it. Only people who fear suffering or face suffering or endure suffering worry about it. They look for religious answers. The terrible thing in this is that they are vulnerable and taking a risk. The religionist who helps them is using them. The less convincing a religion is the worse the religionist is.

Most of us get the sense of life being valuable without caring much about God or religion. Also, if there is no God, we cannot say we should feel our lives are useless and have no meaning! No truly good person would tell you to feel that way if there is no God or his existence can be disproven. Feelings are good at lying to us and if our lives are useless that does not mean we have to feel they are useless. One thing is for sure, those who say God and meaning in life are inseparable are not good people and are implying we should despair if he does not exist.

If you are looking for opportunities and willing to take risks where necessary you will not be looking for or seeking the meaning of life. If your life is blissful at times and peaceful the other times you will not be asking what your purpose in life is. You should not need religion as a crutch to get a sense of purpose. A sense of purpose is more a fancy name for feeling your life matters ultimately. Using the crutch does not take away the pain underneath the crutch but only benefits the religious do-gooders who are wasting your energy. You have no right to enable or create a culture where people are made to worry about the meaning of life and torment themselves unnecessarily.

Do you really need to know how to get meaning in life? Most of us feel our lives have meaning without being able to be sure exactly what makes us feel that way. Many of us don't need to think about having meaning in life - we just have a sense that our lives are valuable anyway. When you are too busy to think about or to work on having meaning that is when

you may find that forgetting about the problem enables you to feel your life is valuable and meaningful. It is like how a problem is awful when you think about it but if you get busy you will find that you have forgotten about the problem and now feel great.

Many don't know why they feel their lives are of ultimate significance and will say it is faith in God that helps them to feel that way. They may not realise that they are only saying that out of force of habit or because they are expected to. If you imagine that the reason you value life is because of your religious faith you could easily be wrong. People think something is helping them when it is something else that is actually helping. Thinking your faith helps does not prove that it does.

Somebody telling you that Jesus will give you meaning in life is just arrogance for they cannot know if it is the right belief for you. They cannot promise that the feelings will come but they will promise anyway! And if faith gives meaning who says it has to specifically be Christian faith?

Low self-esteem is not good for anybody. It is nice to have enough self-esteem to look after yourself and others. It motivates and the more you do good the more you want to do it. Healthy self-esteem gives you a sense of purpose in life. It is said that low self-esteem is a sin against God and the dignity he gave you and the plan he made you part of. In other words its a crime. That sort of talk is totally unhealthy and the person needs encouraging and to be allowed to grow in her or his own time and pace. The person does not that kind of judgement or pressure and it is only going to backfire. It will worsen their self esteem and keep it low for longer. Very bad self-esteem is parasitic on low self-esteem. If believers in God are happy they can be happier without him and are happy because they only imagine they believe. And to believe that God has a plan and only you can do whatever needs to be done is sheer arrogance and self-aggrandizement. Believing you are indispensable is not healthy unless you have proof that you are. It is narcissistic. Where is the evidence you have that nobody else can do what you do? In reality, you see none and if you think about it your sense of being indispensable is an illusion. Encouraging people to think they are indispensable is going to backfire. Everybody feels like a failure at times. Encouraging them to think they are indispensable is only going to worsen their pain and their rage at themselves. They will turn anger inwards for if you are indispensable you are not supposed to fail or feel you have.

Recognise that happiness can come and go. You cannot be happy and at peace all the time nor forever. Accept that. Wanting happiness when you cannot guarantee you will get it only leads to hurt. It leads to fear.

A significant level of our happiness, perhaps half of it, can be brought about. The rest is outside our control.

Feeling our life is full of meaning and purpose and value does not necessary mean you will feel happy. One difference is that a sense of meaning can stay with you better than happiness can. Meaning is not as transient as happiness. You will feel happy on holiday but you will feel meaning the more you help and serve others while on holiday.

Relationships that are mature and of good quality will help you be happier.

Happiness helps you pave the way for your own success. Happiness is a strength and helps you to put your good side into action instead of you cursing yourself for your failures.

The feeling that you find meaning in God and Jesus is saying that this feeling somehow is given to you as a sign. That is dangerous. And many believers contain the danger by ignoring it if they feel that God wants them to kill. And that is in spite of their doctrine that human life is sacred for only God has the right to ask that it be taken.

Religion says that those who have not detected that their lives have meaning or sufficient meaning have sometimes committed suicide. That squarely blames the victims. Its disgraceful to use suicide to make a religious point.

The sense that your suffering has a purpose is really a misperception. We are confusing this-too-shall-pass with a purpose. We try to heal the memory of the terrible suffering and how inexcusable it was by telling ourselves that we are so important that we had to be tragically hurt in order to bring about some wonderful good. We want to feel we are bigger than the suffering. Feeling that is okay if we are indeed bigger but there is a chance we might not be. And what right to I have to condone the suffering of those who suffer with me like that? What right do I have to turn my or anybody's suffering as evidence of my indispensability?

Think of meaning as feeling. That way you protect yourself against fraudsters and manipulators who tell you, "The only way to get meaning in life is to serve God in my Church or to turn to Jesus for salvation."

Is it the journey or the goal? Or both? No it is not the journey or the goal but how you feel about the journey and the goal. You have to choose a goal that triggers good feelings. Feeling good about the journey is more important than feeling good about the goal. That is because you have the journey now but the goal is ahead of you.

What if God gives your life a big purpose or a sole purpose and part of achieving it involves you feeling there is no purpose? If God's plans can be very painful for us then why not? The talk about purpose is not about how we feel. Yet

religion tries to draw you in by stirring up your feelings! It is the feeling of purpose not having a purpose that matters to you if you are honest.

We must remember that life has meanings not meaning. Thus God does not need to be important.