

The Search for Happiness. (Part 2)
Meaninglessness does not come from being weary of pain but from being weary of pleasure.

Let us consider another false formula for happiness:

$$H=P- MR$$

HAPPINESS = PLEASURE MINUS MORAL RESTRAINT

Look out for number one. Get all you can out of life before it gets you. That formula sounds great in the advertising, but have you checked with the old customers? They'll tell you it produces an aching hangover, and an empty, aimless life. False for sure!

Ralph Barton, the famous cartoonist, wrote in his suicide note: "I have had few difficulties, many friends, great successes. I have gone from wife to wife, from pleasure to pleasure. But, I am fed up with inventing new devices to fill up 24 hours of the day."

Dr. Cyril Joad, of London University, while speaking about the French Riviera wrote, "The idle rich gather like spoiled children to be amused and like all spoiled children nothing amuses them for long. Before an hour is over, they are bored and turn to something new. They spent an hour at sun bathing, an hour at motoring, an hour at water-polo, an hour at cocktails, an hour at gambling. When they are bored with gambling, they eat; when they are bored at eating, they dance; when they're bored at dancing, they make love and when they are too bored for anything else, they get drunk and have to be put to bed." Dr. Joad adds, "For my part, I do not find it surprising that the suicide rate among the idle rich is the highest among any class in the community."

We can also learn a lesson from the world's number one pleasure- seeker, King Solomon. We observe him as ruler, builder, teacher, billionaire and playboy all rolled into one. He literally denied himself nothing this world had to offer – sex, building projects, education, power. You name it, nothing stood between him and any entertainment money could buy. His harem of 700+ lovely ladies would make Hugh Hefner's mansion look paltry by comparison. Yet he still came up empty. Nothing satisfied! He concluded, "Everything is meaningless, a chasing after the wind, nothing is gained under the sun. All is vanity and vexation of spirit" (Ecclesiastes 1:1 –2; 2:1 – 11).

It is believed that Solomon wrote Ecclesiastes later in life, as he looked back and realized that life is meaningless apart from God. All these things – knowledge, riches, pleasure- have a value, but only in their proper place and as viewed in the light of eternity!

With money: You can buy sex, but not love; you can buy a house but not a home;
you can buy publicity, but not respectability; you can buy medicine, but not health;
you can buy church and religion, but not salvation and heaven.

Yes, the great values of life are not for sale. (To be continued)