

Why Are We Here On Earth?
(Rev. Dr. John Bartol)

One of my favorite comic characters is Charlie Brown. Let us listen to a conversation between Charlie and Lucy:

Lucy: "Why do you think we're here on earth, Charlie Brown?"

Charlie: "To make others happy."

Lucy: "I don't think I am making anyone very happy."

Then after a reflective pause she adds, "Of course, nobody is making me very happy either." And then she screams her conclusion: "Somebody's not doing their job!"

We can all learn much from this conversation. First, let us ponder Lucy's question: "Why do you think we're here on earth? This is a good question which every one of us needs to ask. Have you asked it? It is a serious question because it concerns the purpose and meaning of life. Former atheist, Ravi Zacharias affirms the bankruptcy of living as if there is no God. The pointlessness of existence in a random universe without hope or purpose.

Charlie Brown says our purpose is, "to make others happy." This is a good answer because it takes the focus away from ourselves to others. We do not find happiness in things or pleasures or even success. Why do we search there in vain? Because there is no easy formula for happiness. It comes as a by-product, an overflow from a life that is seeking to make others happy.

The self-centered person is never satisfied. In fact, the quickest way to make yourself miserable is to constantly think about whether or not you are happy. We are not really living unless we are giving, giving ourselves. We try and try to benefit from a self-centered lifestyle, but it just does not happen.

Even Lucy is not pleased with herself in regard to making others happy and is willing to say so: "I don't think I am making anyone very happy." Can you and I be honest enough to face that same kind of self examination? But then Lucy uses that common excuse we all give at times. She focuses her attention on the failure of others: "Of course no one is making me very happy either."

So we conclude that Lucy's problem is two-fold. She is not making others happy and no one is making her happy. And, I believe I see a connection between these two observations. It is summed up in her conclusion: "Somebody's not doing their job!"

Let's you and I be honest. Is it not true that in so many cases, our failure to be happy is closely related to our lack of concern for the happiness of others. I, for one, need to ask: Are there any unhappy people around me with basic needs unmet? If so, it could mean that someone is not doing their job. Could that

someone be me or perhaps you? Can we “fill the gap” to meet a need that has been neglected by the world?

“It is possible to give without loving, but it is impossible to love without giving.”

Richard Braunstein