



DAILY DEVOTIONAL FRIDAY BIBLE STUDY FOR MARCH 1, 2013

THE EVIDENCE FOR GOD

The fool says in his heart, “There is no God.” (Psalm 14:1, NIV)

I KNOW THE DISCUSSION HAS NOW ‘OFFICIALLY’ CLOSED, but I also want you to know that I have my opinions about anchored putting. I’ll try to keep them to myself, but let me allow you in on a principal observation I made this week as the arguments crescendoed at the end of the USGA’s 90-day review period.

Here it is: Data was not as important as feeling. It didn’t matter to those who want to do away with anchored putting that the statistics point to no winning advantage on the PGA Tour and no putts-made-from-within-five-feet advantage either. It didn’t matter that while as many as 15-20 percent of Tour players use anchored putting methods, only one of the current top 15 players in the world (Adam Scott) uses a proposed unacceptable anchored method.

What mattered instead were anecdotes. A visibly “jumpy” player had won a major. A buddy at the club who never beat me when he used a standard putter is beating me now that he uses an anchored putter.

And what mattered instead was the idea that anchored putting is “unfair.” Never mind, I guess, that it’s long been legal and anyone could make the switch if they chose. (Could it be that those putting with anchored putters aren’t less athletic but more so, because they’ve successfully incorporated the “advantage” tried but abandoned by so many others?)

All this strikes me as especially interesting in a culture where science is supposed to be king, where data and empiricism rule over experience and personal observation (both of which are regularly deemed to be “biased”). That is, what really comes clear in these arguments is that they aren’t possibly being made by atheists. Yes, that’s sarcasm, but atheists don’t fancy stories over hard evidence; they don’t permit loaded words such as “unfair”—unless, of course, it’s the God of the Bible who is “unfair” when judging those who don’t heed him.

The fool of the psalms still lives. Seeking to justify his personal moral choices (the Hebrew word for *fool* gives us this understanding), he uses whatever argumentation suits him to remove God from the scene. In fact, perhaps this is meaningful evidence *for* God—that those who would dismiss him must work so hard at doing so.

Opening questions: Science and ‘stories’

What are your thoughts about the blend between science and the accounts of Scripture? Do you see them as compatible or contradictory?

The atheistic argument

Read Psalm 14:1-6. How does this psalm describe the atheistic stance as a moral one? Do you think it is accurate to say that “seeking to justify his personal moral choices, [the atheist] uses whatever argumentation suits him to remove God from the scene”?

The remedy for sin

Read Romans 7:7-8:4. If sin is the problem for all people—whether or not they call themselves “atheists”—what is the solution for that problem?

Read Mark 2:1-12 and Acts 2:22-24. How do these passages confirm Jesus as the one capable of undoing our sin and the eternal consequences of it?

Further reading: Mark 9:14-24, Romans 6:1-14, Galatians 2:15-20, 2 John 7-9