



Men's Golf Fellowship Speaker Discussion Questions

CONNIE MACK LEADERS GUIDE

Spiritual Topics: Death, Control, Meaning of Life, and Meaning of Love

About the Talk: Much of Connie Mack's talk centered around how the death of three people shaped his life. What unique perspective does the reality of death give us? How does the inevitability of death change us? Let's take some time to discuss these and other questions that arose from Connie Mack's talk.

Discussion Questions

- The theme of 'death' permeated Connie Mack's talk. He spoke of how the deaths of 3 people close to him, namely his brother (Mike), his friend (Joy) and senate lunchroom waiter (Butch), effected his life. Have you ever had someone die that was very close to you? How did it effect you? Did it make you stop and consider life in a different way? If so, how? Did that death change your life's trajectory or a perspective on something permanently, as it did Connie Mack? (*Leaders note: If the groups allows, ask if the death of Jesus Christ has changed anyone's life trajectory and how so.*)**Related Scripture: Hebrews 9:27 – The Finality of Death**
 - *Where we're going: Death of Christ.* The goal of this question is to help the group think through the effect death has on a person. That death causes us to reflect on things such as life's meaning and purpose, what we value and hold dear and what is truly important. The ultimate goal here is to lead them to consider how the death of Jesus Christ permanently effects one's perspective and trajectory in life.
 - *Going Deeper:* In Acts 26:1-23, Paul explains to King Agrippa how the death of Jesus Christ totally changed the arc of his life. Ask the group to enumerate how Paul's life changed (i.e. He went from persecuting Christians to dedicating the remainder of his life to spreading Christianity; He went from trying to earn salvation to realizing that the gift of salvation can never be earned, only received (Eph 2:8-9); His perspective of a life of ease and comfort as important to suffering for the Gospel (2 Cor 11:23-30); from boasting in his strength to boasting in his weakness (2 Cor 11:30)) . Read Rom 5:6-8 and then ask how the death of Jesus as described might affect them. If so, have a couple of men share how the sacrificial death of Jesus changed their life's arc? In what way(s) has Christ's sacrifice on their behalf changed how they relate to people, what you do with your time, what you do with the resources God has given you?
- Connie spoke at length about his rather amazing experience he had at the Senate prayer breakfast when 12 senators prayer for him and he felt what he described as "something rushing out of him." He later identified it as the beginning of his giving up the 'need for control.' In what way(s) do you have the 'need for control' in your life (e.g. time, money, relationships, career, your marriage, with your kids, etc.)? Many times our 'need for

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control' manifests itself as anger when you do not have control. If that is the case, take a moment to examine your anger. What do you get angry about and does it possibly have a connection to a lack of control in that area? How does the thought of giving up control of your life to God sit with you? **Related Scripture: Mark 14:36 – Surrendering control**

- *Where we're going: God's will for your life (control), not ours.* When one gives their life to Christ, a necessary part of that entails giving up control of your life. We want to lead the group to begin thinking about God's will or control for their lives. (Additional Scriptures: John 4:34, 6:38; Acts 16:6-8)
 - *Going Deeper: Connie Mack said in his conclusion that God's will is not the pursuit of the 'grand', but what we do with the moment at hand.* What do you think he meant by that? Read Matt 25:31-40 and discuss who the "least" are in each of their lives and ways in which they can be more attentive to the needs of others. Connie identified his increasing joy as a byproduct of his giving up control. What do you think of that? Do you think there is a relationship between loosening your grip (control) on this life and Joy? If so, how? Read Lk 9:23-24. In salvation, Jesus calls us to give up control of our lives. How does that sit with you? How comprehensive is Jesus' control? Should there be limits?
- Connie explained that the death of his brother Mike began his contemplation of the meaning of life. What do you think the purpose of life really is? Does this life have an overarching meaning or not? Later, Connie went to a Senate prayer breakfast and engaged in what he called an "intense discussion on the "meaning of love" which led to the beginning of his relationship with God. Take a moment and as a group come up with a definition of 'love.' What are some of the necessary marks of true love between people? Do you see any of those reflected in God's love toward us? **Related Scripture: 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a – The Meaning of Love**
 - *Where we're going: The Love of God.* The goal here is to begin to explore what true love really is and then to relate that to the love God showed in Christ.
 - *Going Deeper:* Take the descriptor of what Love is as found in 1 Cor 13:4-8 and ask the group to apply them to their wives or a close friend or family member. How do they fulfill them? In what way(s) do they fall short? Now ask, how does God show love toward us? Read 1 John 4:9-10 and explore with the group how God through Christ's death fulfills the true meaning of Love. (Additional verses Jn 3:16 & 15;13; 1 Jn 2:2; Rom 8:38-39; Gal 2:20)
 - His friend Joy's funeral had a deep impact on Connie and caused him to reflect deeply about his life and about being much more intentional in his faith. Is being intentional or purposeful in your relationship with God something you have ever thought about? Share with the group whether you think in your life you have been a) not very intentional spiritually; b) moderately intentional spiritually, or; c) very intentional spiritually. Connie actually wrote down ways in which he wanted to become more deliberate in his life with God. Do you, either formally or informally, have a list of spiritual priorities you pursue? If so, what are they? If not, what would be one or two that you would have on your list? **Related Scripture: 1 Corinthians 9:24-27 – Spiritual Intentionality**
 - *Where we're going: Spiritual intentionality.* In this section we want to begin to help men think about and develop intentionality in their spiritual life. Many of these men were very calculated in their careers and so we want to help them to see the same needs to be true of their spiritual walk as well.
 - *Going Deeper:* Read 2 Peter 1:5-9. Talk about what each of those spiritual attributes means in practical terms. How would one go about making an effort in

each of those areas? When the great pastor and theologian Jonathan Edwards was quite young, he made a list of spiritual resolutions which he reflected on once a week throughout his whole life. *See the following for a good categorization of them:* www.desiringgod.org/articles/the-resolutions-of-jonathan-edwards. Perhaps bring this list with you to the group and read and reflect on a few of them.