



Men's Golf Fellowship

Speaker Discussion Questions

Jonathon Reckford

Leader's Guide

Spiritual Topics: Change, Façades, Injustice and Living a Useful life

About the Talk

Jonathan Reckford has led a very interesting and diverse business life from which he has learned many lessons. Some of the questions he has asked himself along the way have been: what does a useful life look like? What are the dangers of living with façades? How does God change us? Let's take advantage of our time together today and ask ourselves some of these questions and see what fruit they bear in our lives.

Discussion Questions

- Jonathan took some time detailing his career path, the different jobs he held, what he learned from them and how they shaped him. Now consider your career path. Pick one job you have held and describe how it stretched, challenged or shaped you. Were you ever stretched and challenged in a way that you didn't like or expect? (*Leader Note: try asking if the job demanded that they do something they didn't want to, or asked them to give up something they wanted to hold onto?*) How did that job change you? What is the balance in your life between changing the environment to fit you and you changing to fit your environment? In other words, how "moldable" should a person be? ***Related Scripture: Isaiah 64:8 – Being molded***

- *Where we're going: God shaping us.* Something is going to shape who you are. It just depends on what that "thing" is. The main purpose of this question is to draw people into an understanding of that truth and that God should be the "thing" that shapes you.
- *Going Deeper:* read Jeremiah 18:1-7. Are you more the potter, or are you more like the clay? Do you think you resist being molded/changed, or are you a person that accepts it? If you resist, why do you resist it? Think together as a group of various ways that God asks a person to change (i.e. become more humble, sacrificial, generous, loving, joyful, patient,

serving rather than being served, etc.). Choose one and apply it to your life by filling in the blank and asking the following question: “what would your life look like if you were more _____?”

- Jonathan briefly discussed dinners at his grandmother Millicent Fenwick’s house, where she would ask him, “what are you going to do to be useful in your life?”. As a group, work together to describe what a “useful” life would look like. First, answer that question looking back on your life. How was your life useful? Now looking forward, how could your life be more useful in the years ahead? Perhaps target one way that your life could be more useful. **Related Scripture: Micah 6:8 – A life well lived**

- *Where we’re going: Glorifying God.* A useful life, according to Scripture, is a life lived out with God’s glory (i.e. God’s reputation, God’s honor and what God thinks of you and your life) in mind. The purpose of this question is to lead the men to consider whose glory they have been living for and ways to start living a useful life for God’s glory.
- *Going Deeper:* Jonathan mentioned that Micah 6:8 was helpful in thinking through what a useful life looks like. Perhaps read that verse together and then ask the group to consider the following: what does it mean for someone to “act justly”? What does it mean for someone to “love mercy”? What does it mean for someone to “walk humbly”? Now, pick one and apply it to your life in the future. What specifically could you do to live your life more justly, more mercifully, or more humbly?

- In the conclusion of Jonathan’s talk, he mentioned the fact that men are often good at managing their façade (how other people think of us). What façades do men wear? What are some of the ways men act that are meant to impress others, or meant to manipulate the way people think of them? Such as, their portfolio is not as robust as people think, their job was not as important, their contribution not as key and their family not as perfect as people think. **Related Scripture: Revelation 3:1-2 – Façades**

- *Where we’re going: The masks we wear.* The purpose of this question is to get men to begin to open up about how they posture in front of others, with the ultimate goal of moving them to live a more honest, open and transparent life.
- *Going Deeper:* Read Galatians 5:22-23. These are the qualities that should be present in a believer’s life in varying degrees. Which ones do people fake? Another way to get at this is to ask which ones do they put forth at the country club but are not present at home? Now ask which one fruit do they think is authentically part of their life.

- While telling of the impetus for his moving from the business world to the Christian non-profit world, he talked about a mission trip he took to the underbelly of India, where the world's poorest barely survive. Have you ever been to a place like that in your travels? He came back and felt what he describes as a "Holy Discontent." He went on to define the difference between discontent and holy discontent as the difference between being outraged and saying "someone should do something about that", or saying "I'm going to do something about that". Do you think you have ever experienced "holy discontent"? Have you ever been moved beyond personal outrage over an injustice to doing something about it? If so, what was it and what did you do? As a group, develop a list of some of the injustices in this world that could cause "holy discontent" (i.e. human trafficking, extreme poverty, homelessness, addiction, civil rights, etc.). What do you think would have to happen in your life to move you from discontent to holy discontent? **Related Scripture: James 2:14-18 – Holy discontent**

- *Where we're going: Men of action.* The purpose of this question is to challenge men to go beyond merely talking of the injustices of the world, to actually allowing God to call them to do something about those injustices.
- *Going Deeper:* Read Jude 1:14-15. "Holy discontent", or action that brings justice into the world, is part of God's heart, part of who He is. One of the things that Jesus is going to accomplish when he comes again is to set all the wrongs right again. How does that make you feel? How does that bring you hope? In what way(s) is your heart like God's (i.e. moved to action)? Now consider in what way your heart is not like God's (i.e. seeing something unjust and not being moved to action). There are so many injustices in the world, how could we pick one to get involved with? If the group is ready for such a challenge, perhaps ask them if they would consider or pray about getting involved in helping with one of the injustices discussed here today. Brainstorm what actions they could take.

Closing Prayer Lord, I willingly put myself in your hands. Mold me into the person that you want me to be, not who I want me to be. Begin replacing my heart with yours and challenge me to be the kind of person who acts on behalf of others. (Prayer based on James 1:2-4)