



Men's Golf Fellowship

Speaker Discussion Questions

Randy Kington

LEADER'S GUIDE

Spiritual Topics: Commitment, Promises, Sacrifice, Kingdom of God

About the Talk

Randy Kington's life story revolves around the central theme of "standing up" for something you believe in. His life communicates how he stood up and sacrificed for his country, his family and his God and how each of these commitments affected his life. Let's explore together what a life looks like when we "stand up" for what we believe.

Discussion Questions

- Randy's talk centered around his Marine Corps military service and how he "stood up" and committed himself to his country in Vietnam. Have you known someone, or have you served in the military? What are some specific sacrifices that may be required for your country? Are there other ways not associated with the military that we can sacrifice for our country? Randy obviously made one of the ultimate sacrifices when he was shot and paralyzed serving his country, yet he does not seem bitter about it at all. Why do you think that is? (*Leader note: Where you want to lead the conversation is in the direction of when you love something, no sacrifice seems too great. If your group is mature enough, this might be a good time to mention Christ's tremendous love for us, which led Him to sacrifice his life on our behalf. See Romans 5:6-8*). Do you think you would be bitter? Why, or why not? **Related Scripture: Hebrews 13:16**
 - *Where we're going: The kingdom of God.* The purpose here is to begin to help men understand the correlation between how our love and commitment to our country is real and demands sacrifice, while a love and commitment to the kingdom of God is just as real and requires just as much, if not more, sacrifice.
 - *Going Deeper:* Jesus described the kingdom of God as "paradise" (Luke 23:43). What is paradise/heaven to you? (You might want to read Revelation 21:1-4, which describes a little of what heaven is like.) Take a few minutes and brainstorm with the group by asking: what are some of

the things that would need to be present for you to consider it paradise? If what Jesus said about heaven is true, that it is paradise, is it a place that you would want to go? If so, what would you be willing to sacrifice in order to be there (i.e. reputation, wealth, position of influence, ease of life, friendships, etc.)? Possibly read Luke 9:62, which describes in stark terms the comprehensive type of sacrifice God desires. Then ask the group: in what ways do you look back? What things of this world give you pause in your commitment to God (reflect on the list above)?

- Randy was very open about who his hero in life is...his wife. She has given her life to sacrificially love and care for him as a paraplegic. Love always displays itself in some type of sacrifice. In what way(s) have you witnessed families sacrificing for the man's career? (*Leader Note: possibly transition to how their families have sacrificed for their careers, i.e. things such as possible career opportunities, their deep friendships when they moved, distance from family, hobbies, time with their father/husband, good schools, etc.*) Now as a group, brainstorm a few ways that men could sacrifice for their families right now at this stage of life? What good could/would come out of those sacrifices? **Related Scripture: Matthew 16:25-26**

- *Where we're going:* **Love requires sacrifice.** The purpose of this discussion is to get men thinking of love expressing itself in and through sacrifice.
- *Going Deeper:* Read the following story to the men:
 - In the 1930's there was a man named John Griffith who was an operator of a railroad drawbridge across the Mississippi River. One day in the summer of 1937 he decided to take his eight-year-old son, Greg, with him to work. Around noon, John put the bridge up to allow a few ships to pass and sat on the observation deck with his son to eat lunch. The day was warm, the food good and time passed quickly. Suddenly, he was startled by the shrieking of a train whistle in the distance, he quickly looked at his watch and noticed it was 1:07...the Memphis Express, with four hundred passengers on board! He ran back to the control tower and just before throwing the lever to close the drawbridge he glanced down and caught sight of his son who had slipped from the observation deck and had fallen onto the massive gears that operate the bridge. Desperately the father's mind whirled to devise a rescue plan. Again, the train whistle shrieked in the air and he could hear the clicking of the locomotive wheels on the tracks. That was his son down there, yet there were four hundred passengers on the train. John buried his

head in his left arm and pushed the master switch forward. That great massive bridge lowered into place just as the Memphis Express began to cross the river. John lifted his head with his face smeared with tears and looked into the passing windows of the train. There were businessmen casually reading their afternoon papers, finely dressed ladies in the dining car sipping coffee, and children playing. No one looked at the control house, and no one looked at the great gearbox. No one knew the sacrifice that was made for them to live.

- Now read John 3:16 and reflect on how this story relates. Help the men to identify who John Griffin represents (i.e. God)? Who does the son represent (i.e. Jesus)? Who are the people on the train (i.e. you, me and the world)? If you were that father, would you flip the master switch? Why, or why not? In a similar way, God is the type of loving father that sacrificed his son for all people, many of whom do not even care.

- Randy concluded his talk by telling us that the reason he travels nationwide talking about his life and experiences is because when he was shot, he made a pledge to God that if He rescued him, he would devote his life to “standing up” for God. Foxhole prayers are promises said at times of desperation, but often result in little follow-through. Talk together as a group about some possible desperate life-situations (i.e. serious financial downturns, a serious illness of a loved one, difficult situations with children, relational issues with your wife, etc.) (*Leader Note: If the group is mature enough, possibly make this personal by asking someone to share a season in their life in which there was desperate need.*) What are some things that you would promise in order to bargain your way out? What sort of things would be off limits? Do you think that you would honestly follow through on your promise (foxhole prayer)? **Related Scripture: Ecclesiastes 5:4-5**
 - *Where we’re going: Standing in the shadows.* For many, making a stand for, speaking about and living for God are difficult things. The purpose of this discussion is to get men thinking about how they hide their belief in God in the shadows and to challenge them to stand up for God.
 - *Going Deeper:* ask the group if they have read the book, or seen the movie “Unbroken.” If not, it tells the story of Louis Zamperini, a B-24 bomber pilot who was shot down over the Pacific. He was adrift in a life raft for 47 days. Toward the end he cried out to God and promised that if He saved him he would devote his life to Him. Like Kington, Zamperini traveled the world telling people about God. Now read Matthew 5:13-16

and reflect: do you ever hide the fact that you believe in God, go to church or pray? What are some ways that we hide our commitment to God, i.e. silence, changing the subject, avoiding religious subjects, trying to fit in to the world's culture, etc.)?

Closing Prayer

Lord, I thank you that you are a God that is always there for me and You never leave me. You always stand up for me and are committed to me no matter what the circumstances. Please, Lord, give me the courage to stand up for you at all times. Give me the courage to do so even when it is uncomfortable.