

The Search for God and Guinness Discussion Questions

Pre-amble Questions

1. Overall impressions of the book (rate 1-10)?
2. What were some of the things you most appreciated? Feel free to share a quote.
3. What was something you struggled or disagreed with? Feel free to share a quote.
4. Before you read (or before you did read the book) What are your preconceived ideas about alcohol and Christianity? Where did they come from?

Intro

5. Though he shortly after states the story was not true Mansfield says that "Guinness beer became God's answer for the moral blight of that time and all because Arthur Guinness was willing to listen and obey." This statement may evoke different emotions or responses based on the tradition you come from, what are your reactions?

Chapter 1

6. What part of this history of beer and its intertwining with both society and religion stood out most for you as you read this chapter?

Chapter 2

7. Arther Guinness' life was defined by many deep character traits (learning, hard work, generosity, creativity, business acumen), which of them were you most inspired by and why?
8. How do you think Arthur navigated the religious landscape of his lifetime with such grace?

Chapter 3

9. Family businesses always seem to have their ups and downs and yet the Guinness family seemed somewhat insulated from such patterns. How did you perceive that they passed positive traits and responsibilities along from one generation to the next.
10. Kindness seemed to be a key component for the Guinness organization, do you think that remains in the wider corporate world today? Why or why not?
11. What do you think cultivated the generosity exemplified through the generations of Guinnesses? How can such generosity be cultivated in our day?

Chapter 4

12. I was fascinated with the intertwining of businesses with their employees personal lives. Why do you think such connections are not prevalent today? What are the downsides for such interconnected ways of life?
13. Ending the chapter while speaking of Lumsden, Mansfield writes, "He needed a culture of generosity and social concern from which to work. He needed wise men to stand with him and to take risks on his innovative ideas. And he needed an arena in which he was trusted, where he could work out the procedures and techniques that would save human lives." How do we create a church culture with similar structure?

Chapter 5

14. In full agreement with Mansfield and the reformers that every vocation is for the glory of God, how do you see your work as worship?
15. Do you think the desperation and resilience for passing along the faith modelled in the Guinness family is seen in the church today? If not why? How can we regain some of that?
16. What do you think the keys to passing along a vibrant faith generation to generation might have been for the Guinness family?

Chapter 6

17. What do you think about below the statement below from page 221, "Prohibition stands as a testimony to the damage that can be done through ignorance of the benefits of beer. Rather than emphasize beer as an antidote to drunken-ness, as a healthy alternative to harder drinks that, in excess, ruined men's lives, Prohibitionists treated all alcohol as the same. This not only meant that consumption of hard liquor rose during Prohibition, but that the idling of breweries removed the societal benefits of beer in the post-Prohibition years."?
18. What do you think fostered a culture of ingenuity so consistent in the Guinness company throughout the generations?

Epilogue

19. Gleaning from the epilogue, how do we cultivate a Christian culture of discovering Gods will for us and helping people flourish vocationally?
20. How do we think with a long term mindset in a minute by minute culture?
21. Do you think we live in a world of diversification or specialization?

Conclusion

22. Following the book, how have your perspectives of beer/alcohol been affected by the reading of this book?

