

MOVIE: “To End All Wars”**Sub Topic Theme:**

Distinctions: Helpful Vs. Harmful Anger

Lesson Objective:

To highlight the value in living your life according to God’s plan, rather than allowing our emotions and worldly desires to dominate our actions. To bring awareness and recognition to the fact that everyone does have a choice in how they react to a situation; and, that there is always a better, more God-honoring solution than justifying our anger and seeking out personal (worldly) retribution. In an effort to lessen and eventually remove the influence of anger in our hearts and actions, we must develop resilience and seek resolution from God and his purpose for us. By developing our relationship with Jesus, seeking to trust him more and to understand the Lord’s guidance in our lives, we can begin to experience and understand the benefits of living a life free from harmful anger. This is done not only to give us a fulfilling and joyful life, but also so that we may be transformed in the love and perfect mercy of God, and, in turn, communicate his forgiveness and peace to those around us.

**Intro to the Movie:***To End All Wars*

According to Fandango.com:

David L. Cunningham follows up on his acclaimed *Beyond Paradise* with this *Bridge Over the River Kwai*-like POW drama. Following Japan's surprise invasion of Singapore during the waning days of 1941, a small British battalion headed by Lieutenant Colonel McLean (James Cosmo), Major Campbell (Robert Carlyle), Captain Gordon (Ciaran McMenamin), and Lieutenant Tom Ridgen (Kiefer Sutherland) are captured and imprisoned in a camp deep in the Burmese jungle. Soon after arriving, Major Campbell starts an uprising. Worn down by an exhausting march through the woods, brutal daily beatings, and a lack of food, the troops are in no condition for a coup and the scheme collapses. Captain Gordon copes with the camp's extreme conditions in a polar opposite manner -- by forgiving his captors and seeking spiritual salvation. Soon a split occurs within the camp between those who follow Campbell's tireless efforts for physical freedom and those who follow Gordon's more transcendent pursuits.

To view the trailer: www.imdb.com/title/tt0243609/?ref=sr_1

To see a featurette about this film's message visit: <http://www.wingclips.com/movie-clips/to-end-all-wars/featurette>

(The 3D lenses) Watch for how the characters act and respond to different things that happened to them, look for the moments when they make that choice. Consider how what the World says we are owed differs from what God says, and where you see examples of that in the movie.

Discussion Group Questions:

1. Which character did you relate to the most in this story?
2. What was one instance where a character chose to react in anger or choose another way that really surprised you?
3. What were some of the biggest differences of the disposition (internal makeup not necessarily actions) of characters between those who acted in anger or those who chose not to?

Group input:

Leader-solicited responses from the large group on reactions to some of the questions.

Gathering of ideas and themes recognized in the discussion groups with a focus on guiding the audience toward the main objective:

*To highlight the **value** in living your life according to God's plan, rather than allowing our emotions and worldly desires to dominate our actions. To bring **awareness** and recognition to the fact that **everyone does have a choice** in how they react to a situation; and, that there is always a better, more God-honoring solution than justifying our anger and seeking out personal (worldly) retribution. In an effort to lessen and eventually remove the influence of anger in our hearts and actions, **we must develop resilience and seek resolution from God** and his purpose for us. By developing our relationship with Jesus, seeking to trust him more and to understand the Lord's guidance in our lives, we can begin to experience and understand the benefits of living **a life free harmful anger**. This is done not only to give us a fulfilling and joyful life, but also so that we may be **transformed** in the love and perfect mercy of God, and, in turn, **communicate** his forgiveness and peace to those around us.*

Bullet Objective:

Put this summary section in your own words, but here are some ideas you can use:

Now, I know this was a heavy movie. I know there were a lot of things that were hard to swallow. I hope you saw more than that though. I hope you saw the power of

choosing to follow God and extend forgiveness to others. We were made to emulate God in every way; and extending forgiveness and acting in love toward even our enemies is part of that.

One of the reasons this story is so powerful is because it shows people in many different places when it came to deciding whether or not to act in anger. There are the characters that are always searching for a better, more God-honoring way of doing things, like Ernie Gordon. And we have the angry Major Campbell who is always seeking vindication and has trouble understanding any response not rooted in anger. There are people who fall in between those two, including the large group of “unnamed” prisoners. Did you notice them? They seem to go this way and that, sometimes helping, sometimes acting destructively. Perhaps that’s where you are. You waver between the two because you’re nice, but there’s a limit, right?

You know, my favorite characters are Takasha Nagasi and Sgt. Ito. They show the next step to the process of removing anger’s influence in our lives. It should be part of our motivation as we watch them watch the prisoners. They are completely dumbfounded by the way these men act. The extent these prisoners will go to help one another doesn’t make sense in comparison to their Bushido. And that’s what I mean when I say they show the next step.

You see, our story and life on this planet isn’t just about knowing God and receiving his forgiveness and help; it goes further to the transformation God brings upon our hearts. When we grow in an area and God transforms our hearts, we need to look outward and understand that part of his purpose for us is to help others come to know Jesus Christ. It’s when we offer forgiveness and mercy, when we choose to follow the Lord’s instruction and have faith in his provision, that we show others what the prisoners showed their captors -- that there is another choice and that choice leads you to a life fulfilled through the peace, power, purpose, and perfect love that we receive from God through Christ Jesus.

Listen to what Jesus said about this in Luke 6:27-38:

“But I tell you who hear me: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, and pray for those who mistreat you. If anyone hits you on one cheek, let him hit the other one too; if someone takes your coat, let him have your shirt as well. Give to everyone who asks you for something, and when someone takes what is yours, do not ask for it back. Do for others just what you want them to do for you.

“If you love only the people who love you, why should you receive a blessing? Even sinners love those who love them! And if you do good only to those who do good to you, why should you receive a blessing? Even sinners do that! And if you lend only to those from whom you hope to get it back, why should you receive a blessing? Even sinners lend to sinners, to get back the same amount! No! Love your enemies and do good to them; lend and expect nothing back. You will then have a great reward, and you will be children of the Most High God. For he is good to the ungrateful and the wicked. Be merciful just as your Father is merciful.

“Do not judge others, and God will not judge you; do not condemn others, and God will not condemn you; forgive others, and God will forgive you. Give to others, and God will give to you. Indeed, you will receive a full measure, a generous helping, poured into your hands—all that you can hold. The measure you use for others is the one that God will use for you.”

Consider also the guidance Jesus gives in his Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5:3-12:

“Happy are those who know they are spiritually poor;
the Kingdom of heaven belongs to them!

“Happy are those who mourn;
God will comfort them!

“Happy are those who are humble;
they will receive what God has promised!

“Happy are those whose greatest desire is to do what God requires;
God will satisfy them fully!

“Happy are those who are merciful to others;
God will be merciful to them!

“Happy are the pure in heart;
they will see God!

“Happy are those who work for peace;
God will call them his children!

“Happy are those who are persecuted because they do what God requires;
the Kingdom of heaven belongs to them!

“Happy are you when people insult you and persecute you and tell all kinds of evil lies against you because you are my followers. Be happy and glad, for a great reward is kept for you in heaven. This is how the prophets who lived before you were persecuted.”

Finally, I want you to listen to this part from Colossians 1:3-14 where Paul writes to affirm the Christians in Colossae and encourage them to see the bigger purpose and pursue it with all devotion!

“We always give thanks to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you. For we have heard of your faith in Christ Jesus and of your love for all God's people. When the true message, the Good News, first came to you, you heard about the hope it offers. So your faith and love are based on what you hope for, which is kept safe for you in heaven. The gospel keeps bringing blessings and is spreading throughout the world, just as it has among you ever since the day you first heard about the grace of God and came to know it as it really is. You learned of God's grace from Epaphras, our dear fellow servant, who is Christ's faithful worker on our behalf. He has told us of the love that the Spirit has given you.

For this reason we have always prayed for you, ever since we heard about you. We ask God to fill you with the knowledge of his will, with all the wisdom and understanding that his Spirit gives. Then you will be able to live as the Lord wants and will always do what pleases him. Your lives will produce all kinds of good deeds, and you will grow in your knowledge of God. May you be made strong with all the strength which comes from his glorious power, so that you may be able to endure everything with patience. And with joy give thanks to the Father, who has made you fit to have your share of what God has reserved for his people in the kingdom of light. He rescued us from the power of darkness and brought us safe into the kingdom of his dear Son, by whom we are set free, that is, our sins are forgiven.”

Challenge:

You saw how the prisoners utilized certain things to maintain their mental and emotional health. They started an orchestra and began reading and teaching one another. Some painted and created things. This week, choose an activity similar to these and devote at least 30 minutes of each day toward it. Use your energy, emotions, and experiences to create rather than bringing destruction through anger. So get an accountability partner and do the challenge this week to take your first step in choosing God’s purpose over anger’s power in your life!

Pray for students to experience resilience and seek resolution from God by choosing to follow him and rejecting the influence anger has over their lives. Pray that they see the value in choosing to follow the Lord’s guidance and that they would know what it means to live a life fulfilled by God’s love and purpose. Remind them of the online personal journey at ReZilient Life for further involvement with this topic of Distinction: Helpful vs. Harmful Anger