

The Mission

Thoughts/Discussion Questions

"If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing.

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres....

When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put childish ways behind me." 1 Corinthians 13:1-11

- 1) Discuss the significance of music throughout the film. What does this tell us about the role of the arts in God's kingdom?
- 2) Discuss Mendosa's penance and conversion:
 - a) Gabriel says: "God gave us the burden of freedom. You chose your crime. Do you have the courage to choose your penance?" What do you think about Mendosa's penance? Is it appropriate/effective?
 - b) Mendosa reads 1 Corinthians 13 (above). What is the significance of this chapter to him, and in the larger themes of the film?
- 3) This film is based on historical events that occurred in South America around 1750. Briefly discuss the various opinions within the church at that time towards the role of Christians in the world and the role of the church in politics.
(The Jesuit oath: "To serve with no reward save the doing of Your will." The political view: "We must work in the world; the world is thus.")
Does the church continue to struggle with similar issues today?

- 4) The moment of greatest tension in the film arises from the decision that the Jesuit priests must make over how to respond to the decision to drive the Guarani from the mission. (Father Gabriel: "You promised your life to God, and God is love!") Discuss Mendosa's decision to fight, vs. Gabriel's decision to meet the attackers peacefully. Is one decision right? What reflects the Biblical approach to such a situation? Is it even possible to choose one approach over the other?

"The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it." John 1:5

- 5) The above verse is flashed on the screen before the closing credits. Why?

Thanks to Faith Gong for putting this content together!!!