

VIEWERS STUDY GUIDE

Invictus (2009), The Film

Based on the book *Playing the Enemy: Nelson Mandela and the Game That Changed a Nation* by John Carlin

Directed by Clint Eastwood
With Morgan Freeman & Matt Damon

Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela; born 18 July 1918, served as President of South Africa from 1994 to 1999, and was the first South African president to be elected in a fully representative democratic election. Before his presidency, Mandela was an anti-apartheid activist, and the leader of Umkhonto we Sizwe, the armed wing of the African National Congress (ANC). In 1962 he was arrested and convicted of sabotage and other charges, and sentenced to life in prison. Mandela served 27 years, spending many of these years on Robben Island. Following his release on 11 February 1990, Mandela led his party in the negotiations that led to multi-racial democracy in 1994. As president from 1994 to 1999, he frequently gave priority to reconciliation. Mandela has received more than 250 awards over four decades, including the 1993 Nobel Peace Prize.



Questions to guide you:

1. It has been said that “while imprisoned on Robben Island, Nelson Mandela learned Afrikaans – crossing the barrier which lesser men could never surmount.”
 - a) If you don’t know the language, culture or values of your opponents, how could you learn these things?
 - b) How important is it?
2. Mandela told his Security teams to work alongside their opponents, urging them to smile while pushing people away. Mandela overcame challenges posed by his own party, the ANC.
 - a) How do you feel about his message?
 - b) What was he trying to achieve?
 - c) To behave in a similar way, what would one need to overcome?
3. We know that anti-apartheid demonstrations were routinely used to disrupt Rugby games. The irony is that Mandela used the same game to unite the nation of So. Africa.
 - a) Do you ever observe similar actions in your school, community, workplace,, home or congregation and what have you done about it?
 - b) Why or why hasn’t it worked?
 - c) After seeing the film, what other tactics might you try?
4. The majority of members of the ANC party wanted to do away with the Springboks name and colors, a symbol of apartheid. Mandela said, “this is petty revenge”.
 - a) Name or identify some leadership behaviors Mandela showed.
 - b) What are some of your leadership behaviors?
 - c) Which ones do you want to develop and how will you go about doing that?
5. How did Mandela motivate and inspire in the face of adversity?
6. What actions and behaviors did Mandela use to win the courage and dedication to his cause and heal the wounds of racial divide?
7. If or when one can’t use the universal language of a sport, what can one use to overcome ongoing adversity?
8. Nelson Mandela overcame adversity, persecution and mistreatment over and over and yet had the capacity to forgive.
 - a) What are the hardest or most difficult things about forgiving?
 - b) Who did Mandela forgive and why did he forgive?
 - c) How did he show his forgiveness?
 - d) What difference did it make?
9. Life changes a person’s views of certain situations. Would you like to share any examples where this is true for you? How have things changed for you and others?
10. “Invictus” in Latin means unconquered and undefeated. Mandela stayed grounded by repeating to himself, “I am the master of my fate. I am the captain of my soul.”
 - a) What do you use for your personal inspiration?
 - b) What are some ways to unify your community, family, workplace, or congregation?
11. When did you feel most inspired as you watched “Invictus”?
12. If you could have lunch with Nelson Mandela, what would you want to ask him and what would you want to talk about?

*Invictus is the film selection for
Conflict Resolution
Month 2010*

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