



The Least of These: The Graham Staines Story discussion guide

Discussion for a movie night: Enjoy the film. Afterwards, here are some discussion questions that might help you to engage with others on the topics from the film.

Enjoy the time engaging with the film, your faith and friends.

Synopsis

For many, the story of Australian missionary Graham Staines (*Stephen Baldwin*) and his two young sons may be a distant memory, but with the current tensions in the subcontinent, the history of the Staines becomes more relevant. A man who helped to heal leprosy patients in India, Graham and his family had built a ministry of reaching out to the rejected souls of India with medicine, love and the message of Christ. Tensions toward foreign missionaries had increased in the country through the decades and rumours had been circulated that the Staines had forcibly converted or lured their patients into becoming Christians. Even though there was no evidence to prove these allegations, many people in the surrounding communities continued to spread these lies about these ministry workers.

While serving in the local community of Manoharpur village, Graham and his two sons Philip (aged 10) and Timothy (aged 6) were burned to death while they slept in their vehicle on 23 January 1999. A gang of Hindu Bajrang Dal fundamentalists were found guilty of murdering the three Australians. Even though many of the men were brought to justice for their crime, this justice could not take away the pain of the tragedy, but did manage to open the eyes of many Western news sources to the plight of Christian ministry workers in India.

Discussion points

1. Graham and Gladys Staines sacrificed so much for their work in India. Did this influence your thoughts on overseas missionaries?
2. Did Jesus have anything to say about overseas missionaries?

“Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.” Matthew 28:18- 20

3. Have you ever thought about doing work overseas? What would you do if you were asked to go to serve in a foreign land?
4. Did the Staines story scare you or inspire you? Why?



“I feel sad that I do not get to see my sons growing up. Christ has been my companion, but at times I miss the support of my husband. God gives me great support, and the prayers of people has been a source of great consolation...It is Jesus who is the source of every consolation and support.” Gladys Staines