

“Iron Man” Discussion Sheet



1. Tony Stark starts off justifying the need for weapons to keep the peace in the world. Is there truth to what he's saying? Would America have been better off if it had never developed the atomic bomb? Are weapons ever justified, and if so, to what extent?

2. *Iron Man* never politicizes its story, but it does open up a moral discussion about America's present role as world superpower. When is the United States justified to take action in world affairs, and when must the country remain neutral? Does it all come down to saving lives, or is it more complicated?

3. We see Stark experience a change of heart, literally and figuratively. Why do you believe he changes his business philosophy and overall worldview? Is it because he faced his own mortality? Because he witnesses injustice firsthand? Something more? In what ways have experiences shaken your own personal convictions more than words?

4. As Iron Man, is Stark merely using violence to fight violence—"an eye for an eye"? Is he a vigilante enforcing justice by taking matters into his own hands, or is he justified in seeking redemption and righting his past wrongs?

5. Would you say Stark becomes a totally changed man after his experience? How has he changed for the better? If he's still a work in progress, in what ways does he still show a need for growth and responsibility?

Throughout *Iron Man*, Tony Stark struggles with what his fellow captive tells him, that he is a man who has everything and yet nothing. Confronting the truth of his life in captivity was challenging. The fact that his legacy was not an incredible life but rather his creations and how they were used was part of his transformation. He realizes that while his life looked successful and fun, it was unfulfilling, empty and destructive. In Matthew 16:25-27 Jesus talks about this problem saying: "For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it. What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul? For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what he has done." All of us must decide what really matters in life and those decisions have consequences, both for who we are right now, what our legacy will be and what our eternity will be like as well. How do you decide what is ultimately valuable in life? How do you choose to spend your time and energy? Jesus gave us a good rule of thumb when he told us that all the law and the prophets are summed up in loving God and loving others. I try and ask myself if I am growing in love for God and for people every day. I think that all of us, including Tony Stark, could use time to reflect on who we are and who we are becoming through our choices. Perhaps the words of Jesus will help us remember what has eternal value in life.

ABOUT CINEMA & SPIRIT: Damascus Road uses movies as a connection point to discuss spiritually meaningful topics. We enjoy watching movies and processing them together, discovering how God's truth may be revealed through their themes or characters. Since movies are a part of our popular culture, they can be a helpful common ground when discussing spiritual topics. We try to show high-quality, appealing movies about once a month.