

## Reflection questions for V for Vendetta

1. V for Vendetta is a pretty intense film. What are your initial reactions?
2. Have you ever heard of Guy Fawkes or Guy Fawkes day? What do you know about his story?
3. Throughout history there have been many instances when people opposed oppressive governments. What examples can you think of that are noteworthy?
4. Some of these resistance movements were non-violent and others involved violence. V said that violence can be used for good in the context of justice. Do you agree?
5. There is a famous quote by Edmund Burke about standing against injustice. He says, "All that is required for evil to prevail is for good men to do nothing." Do you agree with this statement?

### Wrap-Up

In America injustice seems far away from my daily life. I understand that there is often injustice happening all around me but it is easy to ignore or remain ignorant of it. My roommate in college had a quote on our door from the Reverend Martin Niemoller about the holocaust. *"In Germany, the Nazis first came for the Communists, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Communist. Then they came for the Jews, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a Jew. Then they came for the trade unionists, and I didn't speak up because I wasn't a trade unionist. Then they came for the Catholics, but I didn't speak up because I was a Protestant. Then they came for me...By that time there was no one to speak up for anyone."* When I read this quote and consider the holocaust or when I watch a movie like V for Vendetta I become convinced that I need to be someone who speaks up and acts against injustice. My problem is I rarely know how to go about doing that.

Historically there are a lot of examples of fighting injustice. V advocated fighting injustice through violence. This concept makes me a bit uncomfortable but when I consider the American Revolution, the Civil War and World War II it seems to make more sense. The only way to stop the Nazi regime and genocide of the holocaust was with force. Martin Luther King Jr. and Mahatma Gandhi both advocated a non-violent resistance which was effective in changing their culture. While this approach is very different from V's, it is rooted in a desire to see injustice and evil opposed. This unusual type of resistance was inspired by the life and teachings of Jesus. But the Bible also has instances where war is endorsed as well. I'm not sure what the best way to fight injustice is but I'm convinced that we need to do it.

At the beginning of V for Vendetta Evie says that people are told to remember Guy Fawkes Day on the 5<sup>th</sup> of November and what his fight against injustice meant. She says, "We're told to remember the idea and not the man because a man can fail. He can be caught, he can be killed and forgotten but 400 years later ideas can still change the world." While the ideas were significant in V for Vendetta it was the man who advocated the idea that changed Evie's life. Ideas do change the world and Jesus' teaching has influenced many people, like King and Gandhi, to change theirs. Throughout his life he stood against the religious leaders of the day and advocated social change. Much like V for Vendetta helped us understand the man V, the biographies of Jesus life found in the Bible can help you understand not only his teaching but who he was. The ideas that Jesus communicated were significant but the person behind the ideas can be life changing. I encourage you to move beyond the typical stereotype of Jesus and what you may have heard about his teaching. Find out who he was and come to your own conclusions about why his life and words have influenced people to fight injustice for 2000 years.

*We think that V for Vendetta brings up a lot of interesting issues that will prompt conversation. At Cinema and Spirit events we want to show films that get at deeper issues, sometimes even ugly issues and that means that many of the films have R ratings for good reason, but we believe that they are worth talking about. Thanks for joining the conversation.*