



MOVIE MOMENTS

Nick and Carol Pollard from EthosMedia.org share thought-provoking reflections on the latest films.

Power in weakness

With the strapline “The icon you know. The man you don’t”, *Churchill* offers an unusual perspective to consider the mind of this great wartime leader (brilliantly played by Brian Cox who gives what film critics have described as ‘a master-class in acting’). And like all good art, this iconoclastic movie causes the viewer to think again about our assumptions and preconceptions. Here, we don’t just see the strong stable person that we assume Churchill to be because of his inspirational speeches and place in history. Rather we experience a thought-provoking viewpoint on some of the personal struggles behind his public rhetoric and robust decisions.

The film powerfully depicts Churchill’s inner turmoil as he wrestles with regrets about the past (the vast loss of life at Gallipoli in 1915) and fears about the future (that this carnage will be repeated on the Normandy beaches), highlighted against the backdrop of his own battle with the ‘black dog’ of depression.

Some have criticised the film for historical inaccuracies such as the fact that, although Churchill did oppose any hasty return to France in 1942, by 1944 he was committed to Operation Overlord. But that



is to misunderstand the nature of art, as the film theatrically condenses this journey into one week before D-Day. And, more important, that also misses a key message in this film, which is particularly relevant today as we become increasingly aware of the mental health challenges that many of us face – including those in positions of leadership.

All of us, whatever our position and responsibilities, can wrestle with doubts and struggle with depression. But we can keep going. And we can take heart from the biblical message: ‘My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness.’



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EthosMedia.org provides free resources to help people explore spiritual, moral, social and cultural issues through the latest feature films.

