



**LOOKING
FOR
THE
DAWN**

**A Bible Study
in five sessions
based on the film**

DARKEST HOUR

Session I – Ready to Lead?

Gathering Prayer: *pray together the Course prayer.*

Teach us, good Lord,
to serve thee as thou deservest;
to give and not to count the cost;
to fight and not to heed the wounds;
to toil, and not to seek for rest;
to labour, and to ask for no reward,
save that of knowing that we do thy will;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Ignatius Loyola

To Read:¹

So who was this man about to lead Britain into one of the greatest conflicts in her history?

Trying to ‘nutshell’ Winston Leonard Spencer-Churchill is a task so elusive, we have seen more ink expended on him than on any other figure in history. Books on him dwarf in number those about Washington, Caesar or Napoleon, and render insipid the collective attempts to describe his great enemy Adolf Hitler. This is for the simple reason that seldom in history has a figure done so much, both good and bad, and made such a difference in the course of a long and packed lifetime, let alone the sixty-five years before this story begins in the House of Commons on those tense May days in 1940.

Titanic orator. Drunk. Wit. Patriot. Imperialist. Visionary.
Tank designer. Blunderer. Swashbuckler. Aristocrat. Prisoner.
War hero. War criminal. Conqueror. Laughing stock.
Bricklayer. Racehorse owner. Soldier. Painter. Politician.

¹ Quotes from the book “Darkest Hour; How Churchill brought us back from the brink” are copyright © Anthony McCarten 2017

Journalist. Nobel Prize winning author. The list goes on and on, but each label, when taken alone, fails to do him justice; when taken together, they offer a challenge on a par with tossing twenty jigsaw puzzles together and expecting a single unified picture.

So where can we begin if we are to see him whole, view him cleanly, free of myth, from a modern perspective and employing today's familiar psychological language?

Imagine the following: Winston sitting in a chair before a modern psychiatrist. What category of person would he be deemed? Would he, after speaking of his mood swings, emerge with a diagnosis of being bi-polar, of manic depression, and find himself gulping lithium? Or would he, after confessing all his oddities, his eccentric non-conformism, his impulsiveness and risk-taking and love of red or green velvet one-piece romper suits, be told he's repressing childhood trauma and abandonment issues? What shrink would be brave enough to tell Winston Churchill that he had a serious yet manageable narcissistic personality with a histrionic accentuation? A simple list of what the man *drank* each day would most likely see him written up as a self-medicating alcoholic under today's definitions.

So let us begin on the outside, and work our way inwards: looking first at the forces that shaped him, during those early years that hint at the man he most certainly became - one as capable of fear as confidence, of self-doubt as much as conviction, of self-shame as much as self-esteem, of bulldog pugnacity as much as harrowing indecision.

Winston was foremost a Victorian. He spent the first twenty-seven years of his life under the Queen's reign, when the empire was at flood tide; his worldview was sculpted by the supposed dominance of British superiority across the globe.

He was also an aristocrat. Born at Blenheim Palace, Oxfordshire, on 30 November 1874, he was the first child of Lord Randolph Churchill, son of the 7th Duke of Marlborough, and his wife, Lady Randolph Churchill (née Jennie Jerome) - supposedly two months premature but most likely conceived out of wedlock.

[MacCarten 2017:23]

To Watch:

At home and in the Commons; can Winston do the job?

Watch from 7min 50sec to 18min 40sec

and from 32min 00sec to 36min 36sec

Words about Pictures:

As a large group discuss the movie clips you watched.

What did you notice? What has changed from 'then' to 'now'?

What touched your emotions or caused you to think differently?

From the Word: *choose one of the group to read this passage.*

In the year that King Uzziah died, I saw the Lord sitting on a throne, high and lofty; and the hem of his robe filled the temple. ² Seraphs were in attendance above him; each had six wings: with two they covered their faces, and with two they covered their feet, and with two they flew. ³ And one called to another and said:

‘Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts;
the whole earth is full of his glory.’

⁴ The pivots on the thresholds shook at the voices of those who called, and the house filled with smoke. ⁵ And I said: ‘Woe is me! I am lost, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips; yet my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!’

6 Then one of the seraphs flew to me, holding a live coal that had been taken from the altar with a pair of tongs.
7 The seraph touched my mouth with it and said: 'Now that this has touched your lips, your guilt has departed and your sin is blotted out.' 8 Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, 'Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?'
And I said, 'Here am I; send me!'

(Isaiah 6v1-8)

Going Further: *You may also want to read John 2v1-11 before discussing the questions.*

To Discuss: *in groups of 3 or 4 discuss these questions.*

- How does the Bible passage relate to the movie clip?
- Have you ever felt unprepared for a task you were asked to do by God or your church fellowship? What happened?
- Have you ever got something wrong in church? If you can, talk about how you felt and how your church responded.
- What can you do when a fellow Christian gets it wrong?

To Share:

Small groups share, where appropriate, with the large group their answers about the questions they have been discussing.

To Pray:

Almighty God,
in Christ you make all things new:
transform the poverty of our nature
by the riches of your grace,
and in the renewal of our lives
make known your heavenly glory;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Session 2 – Learning Humility

Gathering Prayer: *pray together the Course prayer.*

Teach us, good Lord,
to serve thee as thou deservest;
to give and not to count the cost;
to fight and not to heed the wounds;
to toil, and not to seek for rest;
to labour, and to ask for no reward,
save that of knowing that we do thy will;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Ignatius Loyola

To Read:

As significant as taking a seat at the Cabinet table was, this would dim in cosmic significance compared to the seat [Churchill] was about to take at the dinner table of one Lady St Helier.

As 'lucky fourteenth' to avoid seating thirteen, Churchill turned to the young guest next to him and found the eyes of a pretty woman who would, in six short months, become the wife he would spend the rest of his life with. She was Clementine Hozier.

Clementine was twenty-three, the daughter of Lady Blanche Hozier, and her father was... well, either Henry Montague Hozier or Captain William 'Bay' Middleton, or Lady Blanche's sister's husband, Algernon Freeman-Mitford, or someone else entirely... for Lady Blanche was known for having taken and discarded several lovers. A graduate of the Sorbonne, Clementine was herself much pursued as a debutante, and was twice engaged to Sir Sidney Peel, engagements she broke off.

By a mere quirk of superstitious etiquette, then, Churchill was given the chance to make an impression on the woman who would help him wrestle not just with his own doubts but the doubts of others; who would believe in him but also rebuke him

for bad behaviour; who would remain fiercely loyal to him and be regarded as a formidable force in his life; who, though not a politician, possessed skills and charm to rival those of the finest members of the House of Commons; and who would nurse him through the infamous 'black dog' of depression while suffering from her own demons. But, above all, she would always put his interests - and thus the interests of her country - before her own.

Winston and Clementine were a devoted couple. He affectionately nicknamed her 'Kat'; she called him 'Pug' or 'Pig'. Frequent periods apart meant they corresponded a great deal throughout their lives, often signing their letters with little drawings of their respective animals. For Clementine, marriage required more than the usual adjustments; she had become the wife of an MP, and one very much in the public eye. Within a few months of the wedding she was pregnant with their first child. Her parents' various infidelities had led to their separation when she was just six years old, so she was determined to create a stable home environment for her own family, including Winston himself.

Clementine gave birth to a girl, whom they named Diana, on 11 July 1909. However strong her desire for an idyllic domestic life, she found childbirth and motherhood traumatic.

Winston, anxious about his wife's condition, supported her need for a break just a few weeks after Diana's birth, and Clemmie retreated to the countryside to stay with her sister, leaving the newborn baby at home with a wet-nurse. Recuperating alone eased her anxieties, and soon she felt confident enough to be reunited with her baby before eventually returning to London.

She found her husband deeply distracted, for almost as soon as Winston had secured the role of President of the Board of Trade, he lost the by-election for Manchester North West, suffering a humiliating defeat by the Conservatives. He was down but not out, and his relentless determination saw him immediately jump on a train to Scotland and stand for election in Dundee just over two weeks later - and win while he was at it. Relieved to have

secured what most considered a very safe seat, he could now focus on implementing his radical plans for social reform, and successfully pushed for the principle of a minimum wage for the low-paid and the right of workers to a break for meals and refreshment. Initiatives to create unemployment insurance and labour exchanges soon followed. Churchill's political reputation had never been healthier, and neither had his relationships with fellow party members.

[MacCarten 2017:38]

To Watch:

A War Cabinet is formed, a family reflects, and a political party regrets.
Watch from 18min 53sec to 26min 50sec

Words about Pictures:

As a large group discuss the movie clip you watched.
What did you notice? What has changed from 'then' to 'now'?
What touched your emotions or caused you to think differently?

From the Word: *choose one of the group to read this passage.*

Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, 'Go back each of you to your mother's house. May the Lord deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the dead and with me. ⁹ The Lord grant that you may find security, each of you in the house of your husband.' Then she kissed them, and they wept aloud. ¹⁰ They said to her, 'No, we will return with you to your people.' ¹¹ But Naomi said, 'Turn back, my daughters, why will you go with me? Do I still have sons in my womb that they may become your husbands? ¹² Turn back, my daughters, go your way, for I am too old to have a husband. Even if I thought there was hope for me, even if I should have a husband tonight and bear sons, ¹³ would you then wait until they were grown? Would you then refrain from marrying? No, my daughters, it has been far more bitter for me than for you, because the hand of the Lord has turned against me.' ¹⁴ Then they wept aloud again. Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clung to her. ¹⁵ So she said, 'See, your sister-in-law has

gone back to her people and to her gods; return after your sister-in-law.' ¹⁶ But Ruth said,

'Do not press me to leave you
or to turn back from following you!
Where you go, I will go; where you lodge, I will lodge;
your people shall be my people, and your God my God.
¹⁷ Where you die, I will die - there will I be buried.
May the Lord do thus and so to me, and more as well,
if even death parts me from you!'

(Ruth 1v8-17)

Going Further: *You may also want to read John 13v1-20 before discussing the questions.*

To Discuss: *in groups of 3 or 4 discuss these questions.*

- How does the Bible passage relate to the movie clip?
- Who has inspired you to do the best you can?
- Describe a time you have walked alongside someone in need?
- How do you support those in your church who need more help with life than others?

To Share:

Small groups share, where appropriate, with the large group their answers about the questions they have been discussing.

To Pray:

God of compassion,
whose Son Jesus Christ, the child of Mary,
shared the life of a home in Nazareth,
and on the cross drew the whole human family to himself:
strengthen us in our daily living
that in joy and in sorrow
we may know the power of your presence
to bind together and to heal;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Session 3 – Willing to Listen

Gathering Prayer: *pray together the Course prayer.*

Teach us, good Lord,
to serve thee as thou deservest;
to give and not to count the cost;
to fight and not to heed the wounds;
to toil, and not to seek for rest;
to labour, and to ask for no reward,
save that of knowing that we do thy will;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Ignatius Loyola

To Read:

Earlier that day, Churchill had requested a meeting of the twenty-five Cabinet ministers outside the War Cabinet to brief them in detail on the current situation faced by Britain. He had not had the chance to speak to them since becoming PM, and this was overdue, but by 6.15pm, at least, he had changed his mind about the purpose of this address.

Having ridden out the storm of Halifax's resignation threats, Churchill knew that whatever course he finally decided to take - towards peace if the British Expeditionary Force were smashed on the beaches of Dunkirk, or to fight it out if he retained a fighting force - he would need either the support of his Foreign Secretary or, in the event of his resignation, the support of the full Cabinet. It was the Cabinet's confidence he now wished to secure. This was his aim.

The Cabinet ministers, as we know, were not among his most ardent admirers. His dicey CV and punchy style, his flip to the Liberal Party and flop back to the Conservatives, his botched military schemes with their massive loss of life had left him a figure more tolerated than valued, more feared than loved. But come

they did, filing into Winston's offices, afraid of what they might hear. What kind of tomorrow were they looking at? Was the Army truly lost? Was the invasion of Britain now unavoidable? Were they now powerless to avoid the destruction of their homes, their families, their way of life?

We have no record of how he made his way to his office at the House of Commons, where one of the most decisive moments of the war would take place, but being only a brisk walk of ten minutes, and with much mental work to do, one can suppose he walked it, strange as ever in his Edwardian clothes of black waistcoat and gold fob-chain, pulling on his Longfellow cigar, striking out with his cane, one of his innumerable hats on his smallish head, a head that was a cyclotron of thoughts and arguments and positions and possible outcomes.

A leader lives and dies by such moments. The power of their argument can just as easily condemn millions to sorrow and suffering as bring salvation. What to tell his peers, then? Should he listen to them or instruct them? And how much persuasion to apply when the price his listeners might pay, if persuaded, is their own blood?

It is not certain that he knew full well what he would tell them. But as he walked he began to form an idea. He must reveal that a peace deal with Hitler has its advocates and has indeed been under consideration. It was even possible that Hitler was behind the Italians' overtures, sending out a subtle signal of readiness to talk. Out of all this, he must discern the mood of his ministers, before publicly disclosing his own. If he sensed that these men - and behind them the British people - were up for a fight, then he would conclude his address one way; if he sensed fatigue and a desire to quit, then he could modify it and finish it another way

[MacCarten 2017:225]

To Watch:

Listening to King and Country, Cabinet and Commons

Watch from 1 hour 29min 00sec to 1 hour 47min 25sec

Words about Pictures:

As a large group discuss the movie clip you watched.

What did you notice? What has changed from 'then' to 'now'?

What touched your emotions or caused you to think differently?

From the Word: *choose one of the group to read this passage.*

Rehoboam went to Shechem, for all Israel had come to Shechem to make him king. ² When Jeroboam son of Nebat heard of it (for he was still in Egypt, where he had fled from King Solomon), then Jeroboam returned from Egypt. ³ And they sent and called him; and Jeroboam and all the assembly of Israel came and said to Rehoboam, ⁴ 'Your father made our yoke heavy. Now therefore lighten the hard service of your father and his heavy yoke that he placed on us, and we will serve you.' ⁵ He said to them, 'Go away for three days, then come again to me.' So the people went away.

⁶ Then King Rehoboam took counsel with the older men who had attended his father Solomon while he was still alive, saying, 'How do you advise me to answer this people?' ⁷ They answered him, 'If you will be a servant to this people today and serve them, and speak good words to them when you answer them, then they will be your servants for ever.' ⁸ But he disregarded the advice that the older men gave him, and consulted the young men who had grown up with him and now attended him. ⁹ He said to them, 'What do you advise that we answer this people who have said to me, "Lighten the yoke that your father put on us"?' ¹⁰ The young men who had grown up with him said to him, 'Thus you should say to this people who spoke to you, "Your father made our yoke heavy, but you must lighten it for us"; thus you should say to them, "My little finger is thicker than my father's loins. ¹¹ Now,

whereas my father laid on you a heavy yoke, I will add to your yoke. My father disciplined you with whips, but I will discipline you with scorpions.”

¹² So Jeroboam and all the people came to Rehoboam on the third day, as the king had said, ‘Come to me again on the third day.’

¹³ The king answered the people harshly. He disregarded the advice that the older men had given him ¹⁴ and spoke to them according to the advice of the young men, ‘My father made your yoke heavy, but I will add to your yoke; my father disciplined you with whips, but I will discipline you with scorpions.’ ¹⁵ So the king did not listen to the people, because it was a turn of affairs brought about by the Lord that he might fulfil his word, which the Lord had spoken by Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam son of Nebat. ¹⁶ When all Israel saw that the king would not listen to them, the people answered the king,

‘What share do we have in David?

We have no inheritance in the son of Jesse.

To your tents, O Israel!

Look now to your own house, O David.’

(1 Kings 12v1-16)

Going Further: *You may also want to read John 6v60-71 before discussing the questions.*

To Discuss: *in groups of 3 or 4 discuss these questions.*

- How does the Bible passage relate to the movie clip?
- We have two ears and one mouth so we should listen twice as much as we speak. What can you do to make this true?
- How do you recognise if any advice you hear is godly?
- Not all advice we hear is welcome. What do you do if you do not agree with the teachings and advice of the church?

To Share:

Small groups share, where appropriate, with the large group their answers about the questions they have been discussing.

To Pray:

Almighty Lord and everlasting God,
we ask you to direct, sanctify and govern
both our hearts and bodies
in the ways of your laws
and the works of your commandments;
that through your most mighty protection,
both here and ever,
we may be preserved in body and soul;
through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen.

Session 4 – Daring to Act

Gathering Prayer: *pray together the Course prayer.*

Teach us, good Lord,
to serve thee as thou deservest;
to give and not to count the cost;
to fight and not to heed the wounds;
to toil, and not to seek for rest;
to labour, and to ask for no reward,
save that of knowing that we do thy will;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Ignatius Loyola

To Read:

Roosevelt once said of Churchill, 'He has a hundred ideas a day. Four are good, the other 96 downright dangerous.': Six days earlier one of these four ideas had been - in the parlance of the day - a belter. And it bore all the hallmarks of a great Winston idea: surprising, grand, feasible if risky potentially, vastly costly to human life, and more than a little eccentric at first glance.

At the morning War Cabinet meeting of 20 May, the situation of the Army, en route to Dunkirk, had again been discussed. Three hundred thousand men were about to arrive at a harbour blocked by burning British Ships. The Royal Navy could not get close enough to the shore to effect a rescue, not without coming under blistering air attack from the Luftwaffe. The best prediction offered by Ironside [commander of Imperial General Staff] was that they'd be lucky to get 10 per cent of their men out alive.

The minutes of the meeting record the following response: 'The Prime Minister thought that as a precautionary measure the Admiralty should assemble a large number of small [civilian] vessels in readiness to proceed to ports and inlets on the French coast.'

Small vessels? Winston's brainwave - for which he has never, to my knowledge, been credited (amazingly not in any biography or news report) - was to ask members of the public, or at least those who could get their hands on a boat of useful size, to sail in a grand if ragtag civilian armada across the channel to save the stranded British Army...

Within hours of Winston's brainwave, Vice-Admiral Bertram Ramsay, the Flag Officer in command of Dover and an old comrade who had come out of retirement at Churchill's request, was instructed to assemble a fleet of civilian ships that could sail to the Channel ports and evacuate the BEF to England.

So it was that six days later - as Halifax, with the bit between his peace-making teeth, drafted words of supplication to an unhinged dictator - Winston made haste to the Admiralty. Desperate to find alternatives to the Halifax plan, he was described in those hours by Captain Claude Berkley, a member of the War Cabinet Secretariat, as 'hurling himself about, getting his staff into hopeless tangles by dashing across to Downing St without a word of warning, shouting that we would never give in'. By this time, Ramsay, from deep within the naval headquarters below Dover Castle, had managed to put out the public call for boats over the BBC and had so far gathered more than 800 so-called little ships to take part in one of the most daring efforts of the war.

Thus, at 6.57 p.m., on 26 May 1940, Churchill gave the order: 'Operation Dynamo is to commence.' It was a huge gamble with civilian lives, but Winston felt - with justification - that if he had an army to either fight or bargain with, then Britain could yet be saved from the wreck. At the same time as Dynamo was commencing, Churchill sent another telegram to Brigadier Nicholson's garrison at Calais, officially informing them that there would be no evacuation and they must 'fight it out until the bitter end'.

Nicholson and his garrison obeyed. They refused to surrender and continued their resistance until the very last [and] the swastika was raised above the bell-tower of the Hotel de Ville...

In his memoirs, Anthony Eden described the decision not to evacuate the Calais garrison as 'one of the most painful of the war'. Churchill, more than most, felt this pain keenly, having given the order to sacrifice over 2,000 men in the hope of saving several hundred thousand. When he returned to Admiralty House with Eden, Ismay and Ironside, Ismay recalled how he was 'unusually silent during dinner that evening, and he ate and drank with evident distaste'.

What was on his mind? Calais, surely. Halifax, definitely. Hitler, always. Dynamo, with its little civilian navy just then chopping through the waves towards Dunkirk, assuredly. His own leadership abilities, possibly. Self-doubt, guilt, remorse, exhaustion must all have played their part.

As the men rose from the table, a deep sadness came across Churchill's face as he told them, 'I feel physically sick.' Sickness from the guilt of condemning brave men to a terrible fate, sickness from the worry of losing an entire army, sickness from the fear of there being no way out but through the strangling terms of enemies. It was his lowest ebb...

[MacCarten 2017:194]

To Watch:

Dunkirk decisions

Watch from 58min 45sec to 1hr 14min 40sec

Words about Pictures:

As a large group discuss the movie clip you watched.

What did you notice? What has changed from 'then' to 'now'?

What touched your emotions or caused you to think differently?

From the Word: *choose one of the group to read this passage.*

What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but do not have works? Can faith save you? ¹⁵ If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, ¹⁶ and one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill’, and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that? ¹⁷ So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead.

¹⁸ But someone will say, ‘You have faith and I have works.’ Show me your faith without works, and I by my works will show you my faith. ¹⁹ You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe - and shudder. ²⁰ Do you want to be shown, you senseless person, that faith without works is barren? ²¹ Was not our ancestor Abraham justified by works when he offered his son Isaac on the altar? ²² You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was brought to completion by the works. ²³ Thus the scripture was fulfilled that says, ‘Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness’, and he was called the friend of God. ²⁴ You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone. ²⁵ Likewise, was not Rahab the prostitute also justified by works when she welcomed the messengers and sent them out by another road? ²⁶ For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is also dead.

(James 2v14-26)

Going Further: *You may also want to read Matthew 16v21-28 before discussing the questions.*

To Discuss: *in groups of 3 or 4 discuss these questions.*

- How does the Bible passage relate to the movie clip?
- Describe a time when you have had to put your life where your faith is?
- What did it ‘cost’ for you to do this?
- What advice would you give to someone facing a big decision about their future?

To Share:

Small groups share, where appropriate, with the large group their answers about the questions they have been discussing.

To Pray:

Almighty God,
you have broken the tyranny of sin
and have sent the Spirit of your Son into our hearts
whereby we call you Father:
give us grace to dedicate
our freedom to your service,
that we and all creation may be brought
to the glorious liberty of the children of God;
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,
who is alive and reigns with you,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
one God, now and for ever.

Amen.

Session 5 – Choosing Righteousness

Gathering Prayer: *pray together the Course prayer.*

Teach us, good Lord,
to serve thee as thou deservest;
to give and not to count the cost;
to fight and not to heed the wounds;
to toil, and not to seek for rest;
to labour, and to ask for no reward,
save that of knowing that we do thy will;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Ignatius Loyola

To Read:

What Winston Churchill did, what he said, and what he eventually decided in the terrifying days of May 1940 changed the fate of Britain and of Europe, as well as his own place in world history. But how he made the right decision - after a period of fiery argument, of doubt and soul searching, of fear, despair and vacillation - and how he soon after found the perfect words to explain his thinking and beliefs and feelings to the nation, has never, to my mind, been satisfactorily told. In setting out to tell this story, my aim was to show a bigger, more precarious, more psychologically tenable, and altogether more human story than has previously been allowed.

My own research, conducted while preparing the film *Darkest Hour*, and for this book, has convinced me that Winston Churchill seriously entertained the prospect of a peace deal with Hitler in May 1940, as utterly repugnant as that idea might now seem.

I am aware that this is an unpopular view, and one that puts me at odds with almost all the historians, commentators and academics far more immersed in this period of history than I can claim to be.

But in concluding this book I would like to lay out the bare facts of the case as I see them, and also to put the rival argument of those who tell us that Churchill never seriously considered the path of negotiated peace.

First, the generally accepted argument. It essentially holds that Churchill didn't mean it when he said, on record, that he'd be 'thankful' to receive a peace offer, or when he agreed to 'consider' one. He was only stalling for time, playing a sophisticated game, wasn't serious, never wavered or wobbled. If he seemed to his War Cabinet colleagues to be serious - so this prevailing wisdom runs - it was only to cleverly dupe Halifax, keep him onside at a crucial moment when Halifax's resignation would probably have brought down the Government. It was also a gambit that had to be convincingly played to persuade such shrewd and wily men as Halifax and Chamberlain.

But there are several weaknesses to this reading. The first is that there is no evidence for it, other than scholarly surmise. As Christopher Hitchens observed, what can be asserted without evidence can also be dismissed without evidence.

Winston never disclosed that he was playing a grand game of deception. He neither did so then, nor after the war, when there was ample time to do so, with much to be gained in reputation. The idea that Winston modestly hid from history so crucial an event as a brilliant outmanoeuvring of his rival Halifax strains our understanding of his personality, which, by any definition, rates rather high on the narcissistic spectrum. Rather than damage his mythic image by revealing such a story, it would enhance it. And if we doubt his desire to curate his legacy, remember, as he once quipped: 'It will be found much better by all Parties to leave the past to history, especially as I propose to write that history.'

[MacCarten 2017:259]

To Watch:

Fighting the Good Fight

Watch from 1hr 49min to 1hr 55min 13sec

Words about Pictures:

As a large group discuss the movie clip you watched.

What did you notice? What has changed from 'then' to 'now'?

What touched your emotions or caused you to think differently?

From the Word: *choose one of the group to read this passage.*

Finally, my brothers and sisters, rejoice in the Lord.

To write the same things to you is not troublesome to me, and for you it is a safeguard.

² Beware of the dogs, beware of the evil workers, beware of those who mutilate the flesh! ³ For it is we who are the circumcision, who worship in the Spirit of God and boast in Christ Jesus and have no confidence in the flesh, ⁴ even though I, too, have reason for confidence in the flesh.

If anyone else has reason to be confident in the flesh, I have more: ⁵ circumcised on the eighth day, a member of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; ⁶ as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless.

⁷ Yet whatever gains I had, these I have come to regard as loss because of Christ. ⁸ More than that, I regard everything as loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and I regard them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ ⁹ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but one that comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God based on faith. ¹⁰ I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death, ¹¹ if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

¹² Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. ¹³ Beloved, I do not consider that I have

made it my own; but this one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, ¹⁴ I press on towards the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus. ¹⁵ Let those of us then who are mature be of the same mind; and if you think differently about anything, this too God will reveal to you. ¹⁶ Only let us hold fast to what we have attained.
(Philippians 3v1-15)

Going Further: *You may also want to read 1 Timothy 6v11-16 before discussing the questions.*

To Discuss: *in groups of 3 or 4 discuss these questions.*

- How does the Bible passage relate to the movie clip?
- Not all 'fights' are on beaches. What spiritual battles have you had to fight in your journey of faith?
- If you 'won' how did you react?
- If you 'lost' how did you find healing?

To Share:

Small groups share, where appropriate, with the large group their answers about the questions they have been discussing.

To Pray:

Almighty Father,
whose will is to restore all things
in your beloved Son, the King of all:
govern the hearts and minds of those in authority,
and bring the families of the nations,
divided and torn apart by the ravages of sin,
to be subject to his just and gentle rule;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.



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