Beyond The Gates of Splendor

Summary

For the Waodani; a tribe in Ecuador, spearing was a way of life. If someone offended you, he'd answer to your spear. Every child and adult had witnessed brutal massacre of his or her family members. Six out of ten of every deaths in the tribe were homicides.

When five missionary men found out about the Waodani, they decided to make contact with them with the hope of creating peace among the tribesmen by spreading the word of God. They were received well by three of the tribe members but then one of the tribesmen lied against the missionaries in order to save his life and his forbidden relationship with a female tribe member. This then led to the killing of the five missionary men.

Despite the killing of their husbands, two of the wives of the missionaries decided to live with the Waodani and bring the word of God to them. The Waodani then began to interact peacefully with their fellow tribesmen and members of neighboring tribes and the homicide rate reduced by ninety percent.

Response - Beyond the gates of splendor is a profoundly moving documentary that shows an example of Christ like love as demonstrated by the wives of the missionary men who lived with the same men that killed their husbands. They viewed the situation in a positive way; saying that the Waodani didn’t kill their husbands but that their husbands died for the Waodani. The Waodani lived violently because they were uninformed and were forced to believe the wrong things; just as it is in the world today where suicide bombers are made to believe they’ll have virgins and crowns waiting for them in heaven when they die.
After watching *Beyond the Gates* I realized this was a movie could be beneficial to anyone who watches it, no matter what their religious beliefs are. Now I am not just saying that to get a few extra credit points, I really do believe this. At first I wasn't sure about the movie but afterwards it made me look at the things in a different way.

In my religion I was always taught that forgiveness was a very important key in life. Yet when I see people murdered young kids on the news, I could not see how anybody could forgive somebody for that. After watching the show the thing that got my attention was the way the missionaries were able to forgive so easily. By being able to forgive the women were able to help the Waodani tribe and save many tribesmen and women. This movie also showed the importance of following the commandment Thou shall not kill. In our world today this commandment is often overlooked. This movie proved that if you just look at something in a different way then maybe you will be able to see that killing is not the only way.

Therefore I found this movie to be very beneficial. It's not a world winner but it carries a message I feel we all should hear.
Beyond the Gates of Splendor

After watching the documentary, Beyond the Gates of Splendor, and reading some reviews online, it becomes strikingly obvious to me that how one views this story depends primarily on one's faith. This may be an obvious point but it is an important one, specifically noticeable to me since I am not particularly religious. I see great merit in what these families did and the sacrifices they made. Being without religion does not make me without morals but I was a little taken aback by some of the responses I read online, for example: "My non-Christian friends did not realize that is was a Transforming Power, not an educational process that changed the Waodani's lives." As well as being somewhat condescending, as I've noticed many Christians are wont to be, this statement goes against even the Waodani's view of the incident. They do describe it as a teaching of god's ways, I did not see any divine miracle, I saw very dedicated people devout in spreading the teachings of their lord. I don't know, however, whether the lord had much to do with it all. Christians are not the only people in this world that view homicide as wrong and would be capable of mentoring others in this belief. This story is a very moving portrayal of the human condition, people acting as their society has taught them to act and to witness the strength of character required to remain dedicated to the teaching of these people after the murder of the five men was moving. Unfortunately, if as one viewer said, "it is obvious that this film is made for the secular audience in an attempt to reach the unchurched." then it has failed utterly. As one of the accused "unchurched" it brought me no closer to this supposed god, it did however give great insight into the world of the Waodani and show the great things that Christian missionaries have done. Though I am not inclined to agree with the idea of forcing one's beliefs on others, certain moral teachings can help to bring some level of peace and compassion to those who have not learned to function as most do in what we consider civilized society.

The only further comment I would like to make does not attack religion at all. I am sure this is a welcome respite. I thoroughly enjoyed listening to the tribesman who first was brought to visit America describe the things that he experienced here. Specifically his account of grocery stores and drive through windows were very amusing.

Stephanie - thanks for your honesty. It helped me see the story thru non-religious eyes.
Kwang Chi  
Math 116

This movie's genre is documentary about the missionary. I knew about missionary because, when I was Korea, around 4 years volunteering work at the missionary office. Also, my parents-in-law are missionary in Africa for long time.

The movie shows what happen at the Ecuador Indian who was surrounded by many different families of Indian. One day, one of the Indian was escaped from attacked by other Indians. The reason of the attack was angry and pushed by oil company people. They killed five generation. During the escaped they met the white people who were missionary. One day, some of missionary were killed during the war which was some tribe's attack.

One of the missionary, he took one couple of the Indian to graduation of college for his grandson because, his son who is Jess want to see them. He was shows new world to the Indian. The Indian didn't understand how the developed society works because, they never seen before. They teach many other things to the Indian which are maintain, operate, and refuel the air plain.

Now days, they do by themselves which was those missionary wants to them.
Beyond The Gates of Splendor

I rented and watched Beyond the Gates of Splendor and I found it to be interesting. I was really surprised on how much the people had changed by the wives of those five missionaries that were killed. This documentary was really graphic and it showed why the Waodani people were called the most violent. They changed a lot by the encounter they had with the missionaries. I found it very weird how the wives and Steve got so close to the people that had killed those five men.

One thing that really was interesting was how much the Waodani people fought each other. They thought that the point in life was to be the most powerful so they kept killing each other. They went so far, that they almost wiped out their own tribe. Most of this killing was a result of not having anyway of resolving conflict. Going from a violent person like this to a nonviolent person like they are now is very hard to believe but I think they were really inspired by the words of missionaries’ wives. They told the people of God and that really affected the Waodani people’s culture.

The missionaries were really brave by trying to contact the Waodani people. They knew how violent the Waodani people were but the still attempted to contact them. They wanted to help the people out by stopping the killing and I don’t think that they deserved to be killed for trying to help them. The rest of the family was really forgiving since they tried to help the people. Instead of heading back home, they made a new home with the Waodani people. I don’t really think this documentary is here to change people’s beliefs but rather to just educate people. It is interesting to me to learn about other people because I think that is the only way to understand them.