

'For Greater Glory' Shadows Modern Tyranny

For Greater Glory is a memorable, important movie. It vividly and dramatically demonstrates that people have to fight for their freedom.

The movie takes place in 1920s Mexico. Power-hungry President Calles is trying to shut down all the churches. Calles was president at a time when Mexico went through a series of socialist dictatorial leaders, as did Argentina and several other Latin-American countries.

Right at the beginning of the movie, President Calles refutes the Pope and calls for draconian restrictions on the church. For example, he bans vestments in public, foreign priests, cassocks and so forth. He tells his cronies that he will enforce this with an iron fist. He proceeds to send the Federales to shoot innocent people in churches, to hang and execute priests.

All over Mexico, a resistance starts. It's called the Cristeros. They are noted for their commitment to Christ. A few of them are priests. Using Ecclesiastes 3:8, they argue with their fellow priests there's a time for war and a time for peace, and that they must stand up for the Church of Jesus Christ. Eventually, enough of them gather together that they can hire a former general named Enrique, who's not a strong believer.

The movie focuses on this general, whose wife is a very committed Christian. Even though Enrique is not a strong Christian, he fights for the Cristeros because he believes in religious freedom, and he loves his wife. Another central figure in the movie is Jose, a young boy who starts as a thief but ends as a terrific martyr for the faith.

The Cristeros lose and win some significant battles. Eventually, they win more battles against the Federales than they lose. This casts fear in the government.

When Calles realizes the Federales are being defeated, he negotiates a settlement with the Vatican through a very manipulative American ambassador, who only wants to sustain the oil rights. The previous ambassador, it should be noted, condemned Calles for being a communist and didn't apologize.

For Greater Glory has some wonderful scenes and great characters. Andy Garcia does a terrific job as Enrique. Some scenes are so haunting they embed themselves in your memory.

That said, the movie has too many scenes, too many subplots and too many heroic characters who die off too quickly. The surplus of characters makes the movie a little too episodic and slows down the plot.

Even so, *For Greater Glory* is a very important, captivating movie that needs to reach a broad audience. It's an argument for fighting for freedom in the face of tyranny. And, it's an argument for Christian faith in the face of blasphemy.

Many countries, including the United States, are facing the same problems today. The movie is quite clear that we have to stand, when necessary, for both faith and freedom. Not everyone will agree with this, but at least it raises the question in a poignant, dramatic, intelligent matter. Everyone involved should be commended.