



GOD IN FILM

STUDY GUIDES



Producer



Director



Reviewer

BELFAST

Family. Home. Love. War.

'Love your neighbor as yourself.'

Mark 12: 31a

GOD IN FILM STUDY GUIDES



God in Film study guides combine your two favourite things, God and movies. Upskill yourself for group discussions that explores deep themes. Learn to be the Producer, Director and Reviewer of your own film discussion group.



PRODUCER

Prep for the discussion

How can you make the most use of your time?

- Watch the movie first alone to prepare to facilitate the discussion
- Read the guide for the movie you are watching, decide what your group needs
- Have a running sheet for the way the event will run, or use our template.
- Arrange your physical or online space for group dynamics
- Pray for the group before you meet.



DIRECTOR

Keep the discussion rolling...

How can you make sure the night runs smoothly?

- As the "director", you are not the expert but the person who makes sure the night runs smoothly, not the final authority on film or God.
- Ask an opening question, to get people thinking.
- Watch the movie together all the way through to allow people to develop their own ideas
- Prepare key clips to re-watch and discuss (provided in guides). These help with engagement



REVIEWER

Help your group members become reviewers

How can you encourage your group to engage with deeper questions?

- Establish a positive culture. Affirm people's comments and encourage respectful listening from the whole group through your example.
- Don't correct ideas but listen, mirror their response and then ask for the group's opinions to keep discussion flowing
- Encourage experiential comments and opinions. When people become more analytical, try and bring it back to the person's experience of the film by asking questions. Use your pre-prepared clips to refresh their initial reactions

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Film Synopsis

Kenneth Branagh has had a long and storied career as lead actor and director. He has brought William Shakespeare back into the norm for modern audiences with *Hamlet* and *Henry V*, made Agatha Christie cool and managed to work with some of Hollywood's greatest directors. Yet, he has stated that *Belfast* is his most personal production as a semi-autobiographical look at the turmoil experienced in Northern Ireland in the late 1960s. One of those peaceful places where everyone knew one another and looked out for each other. Buddy (Jude Hill) enjoys life in his neighbourhood where he can run safe and free until one day when the peace is irrevocably crushed. His street houses families who have watched out for him and he has known all of his days despite being a mix of Catholic and Protestant. Since his father (Jamie Dornan) has to work in England throughout the week, Buddy must do everything to make it through this confusing and dangerous time with his brother and mother (Caitríona Balfe).



Produce

Planning List

- 1) Watch the Film, what themes can you see? What will your group connect with?
- 2) Prepare some clips to highlight these themes (suggested clips (p. 3))
- 3) Prepare a runsheet or adapt the template
- 4) Pray and prepare your space (online or physical)



Direct

Discussion Questions

1. Does this film take you back to your own childhood experiences?
2. What were some of the most memorable elements of your family life? How did religion factor into the past?
3. Was there a 'turning point' moment in your youth that still effects you today?



Review

What to highlight in the discussion?

Belfast provides multiple points of discussion on family, change and religion. Do not get bogged down in the difference of faiths, but look at the value of faith within the community.

The interchange between Buddy and his family members provide multiple discussion points on these topics. In the post-film conversation, steer the discussion towards Biblical perspectives of each of these points.

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Clips

Quiet streets

Buddy lives a blissful life where everyone on his street enjoys a relatively harmonious existence, until The Troubles begin. One day the neighbourhood is quiet and friendly while the next day is ravaged by explosions and war.

We may not experience on our streets, but tensions can change life in your neighbourhood. What do you think causes these divisions within communities?

Leaving behind all you know

Between his father's work and the challenges occurring on the streets, the family has to consider leaving behind all they have known throughout their lives in Belfast. Where can you find solace during those inevitable ties of transition and change in life? Does God factor into your life during these times?

Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go." - Joshua 1:9



Close the Curtain

Don't look back

As the family rides off in the bus, Granny tells them not to look back. There is underlying message for the family to keep moving forward with no regrets. Do you think that we can do this in life? Can we move forward without looking back at our past?

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.
- 2 Corinthians 5:17