

Bible and the Movies

By John Malham • Study download 8

SESSION 1 — PROLOGUE & INTRODUCTION

Prologue & Introduction

The Thread Between Worlds / The Right God or the Wrong God

Theme: Worship is older than religion. The films know what they are reaching for, even when the filmmakers don't.

READ FIRST — Open your Bible to these passages before continuing.

Ecclesiastes 3:11

"He hath made every thing beautiful in his time: also he hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end."

God set eternity in the human heart. This is why certain films hit somewhere the audience cannot explain. The receiver was installed at creation. Certain stories transmit on that frequency — and when they do, people lean in without knowing why.

Romans 1:19-20

"Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse."

God is not hidden. He is visible in everything He made — including in the stories that cultures keep telling, in the moral reality that every film assumes without being able to defend it.

Acts 17:26-27

"And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us."

Paul said this to Greek philosophers in Athens. God placed every person in exactly the time and place where they would be most likely to reach for Him. The man who loves films is not spiritually empty — he is reaching. He just does not yet know what he is reaching for.

THE TEACHING

Ecclesiastes 3:11 says God set eternity — *olam* in Hebrew — in the human heart. Not a vague spiritual awareness. Eternity itself. This is why the films that hit people hardest are the ones that reach past entertainment and land somewhere deeper — they are tapping wells that are genuinely ancient and genuinely true. The audience sitting in the dark theater does not know why a particular moment makes them ache. The filmmaker often does not know why they wrote it. But God set the receiver in every human heart, and certain stories transmit on that frequency.

Worship did not get invented. Adam worshiped God in the garden before any temple was built and any law was given. Abel offered sacrifice before any religion was organized. Noah came out of the ark and the first thing he did on the new earth was build an altar — no priest told him to, no law required it, the impulse was simply there (Genesis 8:20). Melchizedek appears in Genesis 14 as the priest of El Elyon — the Most High God — before Abraham was renamed Abraham, before any of the covenants we know, before the Law. God has always had a witness on the earth. The question from Eden forward has never been whether man would worship. It has always been who.

Hollywood takes moral reality for granted. Transformers assumes it. Prometheus assumes it. The Matrix is built on it. The hero fights something. The light is opposed by darkness. The man who lays down his life is doing something noble. The man who betrays his brothers is doing something vile. The screenwriters do not stop the story to defend these premises. They assume them — the way every human audience in every culture assumes them — because God drew the line between light and dark and wrote it into the conscience of every person ever born. The question this raises is the one that opens the door: if there is no God who set that line, who drew it? And if no one drew it, why does everyone recognize it when they see it crossed?

The people who would never walk into a church will watch the same film four times. They are not spiritually indifferent. They are spiritually starving. They are reaching for something the film almost touches and then cannot deliver, because the film is an echo and they need the Source. This book is a bridge. It starts where people already are — with stories they already know — and follows the Thread to the Person who originated them.

- God set eternity (*olam*) in the human heart — not a vague longing, but eternity itself. This is why certain films hit somewhere the audience cannot explain.
- Worship is older than any religion. It was not invented — it was always there, because the Creator was always there and man was made to know Him.
- Hollywood assumes moral reality without being able to defend it. That assumption — the hero, the villain, the sacrifice, the betrayal — requires an explanation that only God can provide.
- The people who won't walk into a church will watch the same film four times. They are not indifferent — they are starving, reaching for an echo that is pointing toward the Source.

"For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen... so that they are without excuse." — Romans 1:20

1. What film has hit you somewhere you were not expecting — a scene, a moment, a line that landed deeper than entertainment? Why do you think it landed where it did?
2. Think about the people in your life who wouldn't walk into a church but will watch the same film four times. Who comes to mind? What are they actually reaching for?
3. Hollywood assumes moral reality — heroes, villains, sacrifice, betrayal — without any philosophical basis to defend it. What does that assumption tell you about the conscience God wrote into every person?
4. What does it mean for your approach to the people around you that they are already reaching toward the truth — they just don't know what they are reaching for?

PERSONAL REFLECTION

Name two or three people in your life who are spiritually searching but would not describe themselves that way. What films or experiences have resonated with them? How could those be a doorway into a real conversation?

Prayer and next step

What will you put into practice before your next meeting? Who will you pray for?
