



GOD IN FILM

STUDY GUIDES



Producer



Director



Reviewer

GROUNDHOG DAY

Okay campers, rise and shine!

Then I considered all that my hands had done and the toil I had expended in doing it, and behold, all was vanity and a striving after wind, and there was nothing to be gained under the sun. -

Ecclesiastes 1:2

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

Groundhog Day begins as a comedy, briefly turns into an existential nightmare, and ends as a romance. It carries itself lightly throughout, and because of this, though it was reviewed positively when it was released in theaters in 1993—reviewers called it “breezy” and “lovable”—no one gave it serious thought. Groundhog Day was seen as a good Bill Murray vehicle and not much more. Casting Murray as the lead is certainly key to the film’s charm. Murray always seems to have one foot in the movie and one foot out. Moreover, he moves between these spaces effortlessly. Murray’s characters feel like they are participating in the events of the story and commenting on them at the same time. Groundhog Day allows Murray to do this within the story explicitly. Because Phil has lived through February 2 countless times before, he knows what’s going to happen in every moment and anticipates it, sometimes cynically, sometimes sentimentally, but always humorously. Murray makes this movie “breezy” and “lovable.” He never takes what’s happening too seriously, so the audience doesn’t either. This lightness allows Groundhog Day to offer a perspective on life without ever feeling preachy. Summary supplied by Elijah Davidson



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. Did you enjoy the film, and why or why not? Many fans can quote specific lines from this film, but do you have a favourite scene?
2. The whole concept of the 'redo' day has its appeal, but would this be a dream for you or a nightmare? Why?



Review

What do you do when you begin to think that your life is a Groundhog Day? A never-ending cycle of normality?

What has been is what will be, and what has been done is what will be done; there is nothing new under the sun. - Ecclesiastes 1:9

I said to myself, “Come now, I will make a test of pleasure; enjoy yourself.” But again, this also was vanity. I said of laughter, laughter, “It is mad,” and of pleasure, “What use is it?” - Ecclesiastes 2:1-2

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Clips

I am a god

Phil wakes up everyday to the same existence on 2 February. After wrestling through the realities of this situation, he comes up with a possibility. He is a god, but as he continues down this philosophical path, we realise he has more questions than answers.

How do you explain the 'supernatural' things that occur in your life?

New and improved Phil

As the days wear on, hopelessness turns to hopefulness in Phil's life. He sees how he can help others in the town, since he knows all of the things that will happen.

What would motivate you to change your life for the better? Does serving others play a role in your life?

How can the wise die just like fools? So I hated life, because what is done under the sun was grievous to me; for all is vanity and a chasing after wind. - Ecclesiastes 2:16-17

Close the Curtain

Life of the Party

Eventually, Phil finds peace and learns to enjoy the life he is living, whatever comes, including his love for Rita. Ecclesiastes counsels us similarly to find our enjoyment as we eat, drink, and love happily. Such a life is what we all would want. Have you found to be true in your own life? Is eating, drinking and merriment enough?

There is nothing better for mortals than to eat and drink, and find enjoyment in their toil. This also, I saw, is from the hand of God. - Ecclesiastes 2:24