

## Taking It Home:

- Take some time and identify ten movies that you would like to watch between now and the end of the summer with your friends or family. Read up on them ahead of time so you can have a decent idea of what to expect and whether they would be appropriate for those with whom you watch them. Be willing to stretch yourself so that you include the primary cinematic genres of drama, comedy, musical, thriller, action, romance, etc.
  
- For each one ask this important set of questions: *1) what was movie portraying?* and *2) what was the real story behind what was being portrayed?* For instance, the movie *Gladiator* portrays the story of a general who became a slave who became a gladiator who ultimately defied an emperor. The real story, however, was nobility and integrity triumphing over incredible evil. Discover what the “real story” is in the movies you watch, and then talk about those things with your friends or family.
  
- For each movie discuss with your friends or family whatever meaningful lessons can be learned. Be sure to learn something from the unseemly or negative features of the movies, every bit as much as you might from the positive features.
  
- Don't forget to have fun! Stories are powerful, and offer tremendous opportunities to help us develop discernment, keep our hearts tender and empathetic, laugh or cry, and imagine and dream . . . .

## Additional Resources:

- [www.movienightchat.com](http://www.movienightchat.com)
- [www.pluggedin.com](http://www.pluggedin.com)

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## Movies & the Power of the Story

Notes:

# Growth Group Homework

For the week of April 28, 2013

Ecclesiastes 12:9-11

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**Quick Review:** Bethel Church is committed to helping families thrive. Throughout the year we set aside seasons of time to highlight particular resources that are uniquely helpful. This season we are highlighting the power of stories for communicating life-lessons; especially those stories communicated through movies. God's Word sets this up well, full of powerful parables and word pictures used by the ancients to unpack timeless truths for real life situations.

## My Story:

- Movies are powerful tools for communicating timeless lessons. Take a few moments and think about the three most influential movies in your life. Take some time in your Growth Group and share what they were and why it is they struck such a deep chord within you. What were memorable scenes? What were some of the lessons that linger with you today?
- What is your threshold for movies? Particularly, what are you willing to tolerate in movies, and what would make you get up and walk out of the theater? Why?
- If there were one movie you would want those you love to really experience, what would it be and why?

## Growing Deeper:

- Pastor Matthew brought us to the Old Testament book of Ecclesiastes, at which place we considered the power of words and stories for communicating timeless values (see Ecclesiastes 12:9-11). Process either by yourself or with your friends the importance and care that should be given to unpack truth with thoughtful words and ideas. Why can this be powerful?
- One of the more intense stories in the whole Bible is the story of David and Bathsheba found in 2 Samuel 11-12. With his heart hard, and his ears closed to any direct council from those around him, David's friend Nathan confronted David and his wickedness by painting a verbal picture (see 2 Sam. 12:1-13). Why was Nathan's approach helpful? In what ways did Nathan's word picture grab David? What was the result for David's heart?
- In Acts 17 the Apostle Paul leverages cultural images and ideas for the purpose of directing people to Jesus Christ. Read the chapter very carefully. How did Paul tap into the cultural images and ideas of the Athenian people? How did this help his cause?
- Jesus was the master story-teller. His simple stories captured the hearts and minds of the masses, and have proven memorable for millennia. They were vivid, and were always geared to demonstrate some important point, whether that point was deep and painful conviction or the fanning into flame of abiding hope. Read these stories (or parables) and consider the ways they capture the heart and shape how you live your life: Matthew 13:1-23, 18:21-35; Mark 12:1-12; Luke 6:46-49, 10:25-37, 15:11-32, and 16:19-31.
- What are the lessons from the stories that stand out to you as most helpful, instructive and life changing?