

Combined book/film study: ***The Martian***

May 28, 2017, at 9:30 in Room 201

During a mission to Mars, a fierce storm arises that causes astronaut Mark Watney's crew to presume him dead and leave him behind. What they don't know is that Watney has survived and finds himself stranded and alone on the hostile planet. With only meager supplies, he must draw upon his ingenuity, wit, and spirit to subsist and find a way to signal to Earth that he is alive. Millions of miles away, NASA and a team of international scientists work tirelessly to bring "the Martian" home, while his crewmates concurrently plot a daring, if not impossible, rescue mission. As these stories unfold, the world comes together to root for Watney's safe return.

Transcending its sci-fi genre to become a story of resilience, perseverance, and hope, *The Martian* demonstrates what is possible when people work together across obstacles and borders to solve problems, and how a connection to something bigger than ourselves can influence our mindset and the decisions we make.

Visit your preferred video rental source and watch the movie within a week of our study (and/or read/re-read the book!), and come prepared to share your thoughts. Here are some questions to consider that will help guide your viewing and our study.

To train yourself to watch a film closely, try using this "opening shots" exercise for the initial scenes (ending with the lander launching into space):

- What did you see?
- What did you hear?
- When and where is this film set? How do you know? What do you know about this period or place?
- Who are the main characters? How do you know?
- What is this film going to be about? How do you know?
- What do the titles and music contribute to our understanding of the text (i.e., the film)?

Film is also text. How do these film arts represent values or tell the story?

- Music/sound
- Dialogue
- Editing
- Set design/locations
- Cinematography/color palette
- Wardrobe

How are the following spiritual dimensions evident in the film?

- Hope
 - Attention
 - Imagination
 - Transformation
 - Community
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- How are *genders, races, and social and economic classes* portrayed?
 - What are the relationships of power or dependency? Is this a problem, or something taken for granted?
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- How do we experience life? What is the world like? What has value?
 - According to the film, what is the purpose of life? How are we to live our lives?
 - How do the filmmakers convey their vision of right and wrong? What is the source of the moral code in the world of the film?
 - Who are the redemptive characters? Who (or what) is God? Are there Biblical themes?

The Martian is rated PG-13 for some strong language, injury images, and brief nudity. The book also contains strong language.