

@THE MOVIES | The Black Panther | Week 2 | August 10/11

Matthew 13:44-46; 1 Peter 2:9

These study guides are designed for individual or group study but highly encouraged to be experienced in community with a small group or other friends on the journey with Jesus.

Opening: We each live a story. We bump into other people and their stories every day—that's life. Last week Dr. Art Bamford set up our series with a broad description of the "hero myth" that has been used as the basis of story from the Greek comedy and tragedy to today. Dr. Bamford suggested that our identification with the Hero Myth centers around personal transformation. The hero is overcome by circumstances, learns something about himself, and then persists in the battle in a new way as something from the outside influences the situation and the hero is victorious. God's story directs us to this plot-line. As our circumstances overcome us and we realize our dependence on and place in God's story through Jesus, we grow, we are transformed.

Setting: The fictional, flourishing land of Wakanda is the setting for Black Panther. Wakanda is thriving, prosperous, and independently wealthy with a self-sustaining source of technological power that derives from a precious metal called Vibranium. Wakanda has prospered behind a protective shield, keeping their power and prosperity to themselves and choosing not to use it for anything other than their own lives, families, and prosperity. The land, outside the protective shield, appears to all the world to be a third-world nation of farmers.

The unexpected event: The movie (Hero Myth) revolves around unexpected events that "penetrate" the protective shield, allowing a few persons in the outside world to learn of Vibranium and its power. This sets powerful evil in motion against Wakanda and creates a series of decisions challenging the ruler King.

Reflect: Read [Matthew 13:44-46](#). These parables are a rich teaching on the value of the Kingdom of Heaven.

- Journal or share what especially intrigues or surprises you about these two parables Jesus gives to us.
- Why did Jesus teach this lesson of value? What was his point?
- How would you link these two parables to Wakanda? What is similar? What is different?

Cultural Implication: As we proceed through this series, we need to think like artists.

- What is the movie maker saying about our culture?
- Pastor Chad Negley makes the statement, “Today, Western communities function like Wakanda while many other people groups across the globe struggle.”
- Journal or share how you respond to this comparison.

Applications: Reflect on Luke 12:48b, “From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked.”

- What is your initial emotional reaction this is verse?
- What is your initial thought reaction to this verse?
- How can it shape your life differently?

Reflect on [1 Peter 2:9-10](#). The imagery of priesthood, honor, loyalty and endurance was strongly portrayed in Black Panther. The distinction between life inside the protective shield and outside was radical.

- What was the motivation to give aid? What was the drive to help the oppressed?
- Do you live in a Kingdom? Do you live in Peace and absence of fear? Why or why not?
- How did Wakanda define their kingdom?
- What emotion motivated them to not go outside? What happened to change that?
- Journal or share the richness you have experienced in life this week. How much of the richness was “within your kingdom” and how much was outside the “protective shield”?

Practice of the Week: Reflection on Scripture.

- Go back through the bible passages in this study guide and spend some additional time prayerfully reflecting on them. Use the following questions as you do:
 - Restate the passage in your own words.
 - Currently is my life reflective of this passage or at odds? How? Be specific.
 - What makes me uncomfortable with this passage? Excited?
 - What does God want me to do and who does God hope I become as a result of these truths of the Living Word in my heart and mind?

We’d love to hear from you!

If you have thoughts, questions, comments, ideas on how to make these study guides more meaningful for you or your small group, please let us know.

We also enjoy hearing how God is using these study guides in your lives.

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