

**@THE MOVIES | Wonder | Week 4 | August 24/25**

2 Cor 5:16-20; Psalm 139; John 1:1-14; Col 3:12-17

*These study guides are designed for individual or group study but you are highly encouraged to experience them 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. Sometimes other people are different. As believers, how we respond to that difference can be very important. We are called to a different perspective and dare I say it, a different responsibility. Let’s pursue this idea of “ambassadors” of a different point of view.

**Setting:** The movie “Wonder” illustrates the plight of the “different”. It shows the impact of physical appearance but then portrays in other characters the elements of personality, nurture, insecurity and need for control that we all live with every day. It is a classic playbook illustrating the need for empathy and understanding of others because we are all “making up for something”.

**An Unlikely Teacher:** Auggie, our lead character who was born with severe facial deformation, says this about his experience:

“It’s like people you see sometimes, and you can’t imagine what it would be like to be that person, whether it’s somebody in a wheelchair or somebody who can’t talk. Only, I know that I’m that person to other people, maybe to every single person in that whole auditorium.”

- Have you ever felt that “outsidedness”, that exceptional difference? Likely for most of us it was a temporary embarrassment. How did you feel? What triggered the event?
- What redeemed the moment? Talk about it.

**Our World of Relationships:** It is sad to note that the movie begins with the reality of our world: pride, manipulation, self-seeking favor from others and bullying. The message of the power of the individual human spirit to survive is also an underlying opening theme—we are a culture of individual identity.

- What attitude or quality distinguishes the outcome of this movie?
- Have you ever experienced it? Journal or tell the story to the group.

**God calls us “Ambassadors”:** Read 2 Cor 5:16-20. Pastor Dave Bianchin leads us through this passage in three steps.

### 1) We Regard No One from a Human Point of View (vs 16)

- What criteria do you use to decide what you think about others?
- How do you regard differences: what measures do you use? How do you respond when there are differences in those measures?
- What judgments do you make as a result?

(These are hard and searching questions. We live in a world of first impressions and we make judgements. Explore that honestly within yourself.)

Pastor Dave entreats us with Psalm 139—God’s point of view:

*For it was you who formed my inward parts; you knit me together in my mother’s womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; that I know very well.*

### 2) We Represent Christ to People (vs 20)

Pastor Dave describes this point with a quote “You may be the only Bible that people ever read”. He adds what we say and what we do (how we act) are integral to that Bible statement.

- How do you respond to this “commission”? We have to understand this is not a choice, it is a command. We do speak and we do act—and it communicates to those around us. How would you like to change the way you “Bible” your everyday?
- This week, where did you show the face of Christ to another? How did it go? How could it have gone better?

### 3) We are Given the Ministry of Reconciliation (vs 18-19)

- With God: a relationship with God through Christ: salvation
- With others: to be at peace, and kind, living in harmony
- With wholeness (Shalom) for ourselves and others
- Journal or share your sense of Shalom. Are you at peace with God and others in your life? Why or why not? What would you pray for to increase your Shalom?

**Practice of the Week: God’s Workmanship—Examen.** Read Col 3:12-17 at the end of your day. Look back over your day and ask “Where did I have the opportunity to be a person of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience?” How did I do? Ask “Where did I have the opportunity to ‘bear with’ and ‘forgive’”? Was it the word of Christ dwelling within you that came out in your attitudes or actions? Finally, pray that Loving Father God will, through His Spirit, bring His word, attitudes and actions to “dwell in you richly”! Amen

#### 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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