

Older Children

Bella

Parent/Teen Movie Night

Best Use

As a movie night and discussion for parents with teens

Nutritional Value

Triggers dialogue on the healing power of relationships

Advance Preparation

- Buy/rent *Bella* (Rated PG-13 for mature themes and disturbing images)
- Pop some popcorn and have the discussion guide on the reverse side ready.

Serve It Up

Be up front with your teen, explaining that you want to watch the film to discuss its themes from a Christian perspective. Don't use this as an occasion to teach, but to enter into good dialogue. You probably won't agree on everything, which is fine. Just discussing the themes can strengthen your relationship and stretch critical thinking skills.

Film Synopsis

Jose is a man with a heartbreaking secret in his past. Nina is a woman with no hope for her future. They become friends and help one another discover the healing power of family relationships and sacrificial love.

Discuss

Alternate asking one another the following questions.

1. Throughout the film Nina seems a distant personality with a hard edge, as if trying to protect herself from close relationship with others. Yet she quickly warms to Jose and his family. Why does spending time with a loving family help us overcome isolation and pain? (See "a" below)
2. Throughout the story we wonder what caused Jose to live with such a heavy burden of regret. He seems to punish himself until he can find a way to make things right. In what ways do you think his attempts to help Nina are part of his healing? (See "b" below)
3. The opening statement of the movie is "If you want to make God laugh, tell Him your plans." How does this statement play out in the story told? (See "c" below)
4. Did you find it surprising that Jose rather than Nina raised her child? Why is this significant? (See "d" below)

Think About It

- a) *The scriptures describe a loving home as a mysterious picture of God Himself. (See Ephesians 5:31-32) Even those in a troubled home are drawn to the reflection of God's love found in other nurturing families.*
- b) *It is impossible to make full restitution for all of our failures (See Ephesians 2:8-9), but we can become agents of God's grace in the lives of others which in turn brings meaning and healing in our own lives. (See Matthew 5:16, Ephesians 2:10, Titus 3:8-14, Hebrews 10:24)*
- c) *This story reflects how God can use even our most painful experiences to accomplish something good. (See Romans 2:28-29)*
- d) *As Jose sits on the beach he looks a bit like our image of Jesus. This is fitting since he plays the part of Christ-like sacrifice by loving Nina, rescuing the child, and giving up his own plans in order to "lay his life down" for another. (See John 15:13, I John 3:16)*

For more ideas: MovieNightChat.com