

“REEL FAITH”

The Gospel according to Hollywood

Film and Faith in Dialogue

The Truman Show - Overview

Directed by Peter Weir (1998)

Summary

He's the star of the show--but he doesn't know it. Truman's life is a nonstop TV show. He doesn't realize that his quaint hometown is a giant studio set run by a visionary producer/director/creator, that folks living and working there are Hollywood actors, that even his incessantly bubbly wife is a contract player. Gradually, Truman gets wise. And what he does about his discovery will have you laughing, crying and cheering.

Themes

Glory & dignity of human beings – Commercialism – The entertainment culture – Relationships – Hope – Purpose – God the Creator -- Reality



Connections with Scripture

The glory of man:

- **Psalm 8:3-5** – “When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is man that you are mindful of him, the son of man that you care for him? You made him a little lower than the heavenly beings and crowned him with glory and honor.”
- **Ecclesiastes 3:11** – “He has also set eternity in the hearts of men.”



God the Creator:

- **Psalm 139:13-16** – “For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.”
- **Genesis 2:7** – “The Lord God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.”

The search for significance:

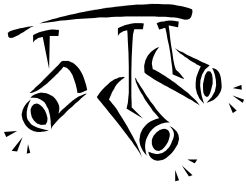
- **Isaiah 55:2-3** – “Why spend money on what is not bread, and your labor on what does not satisfy? Listen, listen to me, and eat what is good, and your soul will delight in the richest of fare. Give ear and come to me; hear me, that your soul may live.”
- **Matthew 6:33** – “But seek first [God's] kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.”



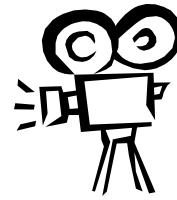
Memorable Lines

- Christof: “Cue the sun!”
- Truman: “Somebody help me, I'm being spontaneous!”
- Christof: “If his was more than just a vague ambition, if he was absolutely determined to discover the truth, there's no way we could prevent him.”
- Truman: “Who are you?” Christof: “I am The Creator - of a television show that gives hope and joy to millions.” Truman: “Then who am I?” Christof: “You're the star.”





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The Truman Show - Discussion Guide

We meet the “cast”

Opening “credits” – *Start 1/0:00:17, Stop 1/0:02:13*

Life in Seahaven

Truman walks to work – *Start 2/0:02:45, Stop 2/0:05:12*

Truman’s ache for something “real”

On the bridge with Marlon – *Start 5/0:09:44, Stop 5/0:11:29*

The roots of Truman’s pain

Truman loses his “Dad” – *Start 6/0:11:31, Stop 6/0:12:38*

Memories of Laura – *Start 7/0:18:49, Stop 7/0:20:32*

Laura tries to tell him the truth – *Start 7/0:25:25, Stop 7/0:29:25*

Truman’s suspicions grow

He knows something’s not right – *Start 8/0:29:28, Stop 8/0:34:07*

Christof, the Creator

Interview with Christof – *Start 16/1:01:08, Stop 16/1:09:52*

Truman seeks out

The escape – *Start 19/1:21:39, Stop 19/1:22:50*

The storm – *Start 20/1:23:18, Stop 20/1:27:06*

The discovery – *Start 21/1:28:35, Stop 21/1:31:41*

The end – *Start 22/1:31:45, Stop 22/1:34:44*

Questions

1. What is the view of life and the world that is presented in the story as it unfolds?
2. In what ways were the techniques of film-making (casting, direction, script, music, sets, action, cinematography, lighting, editing, etc.) used to get the film’s message across, or to make the message plausible or compelling?
3. How does God show up in *The Truman Show*?
4. What insights does the film give into the way people today see life and spend their time?
5. How could you use this film as a window of insight to connect with your friends and neighbors who do not share your deepest convictions and values?