

ENTER THE WARDROBE

Study Guide

FOR THE LEADER

Thank you for agreeing to facilitate this video series, *Enter the Wardrobe*. Whether you are sharing leadership in this study, or it is the responsibility of one person, you are participating in something important and meaningful. Thankfully, the discussion belongs to the whole group, and does not rest solely upon your shoulders. Your job is simply to initiate conversation, inviting others fully into the discussion. Keep in mind that people participate in groups in different ways. Some may be more quiet, while others like to speak up. Help facilitate as you see best, welcoming each person to the group, and their contributions. You may need to keep in mind time considerations, helping to keep the group focused and on-track.

You will be in charge of making sure there are all the appropriate materials that the group will need for that session, including photocopies of the study guide sheets. Occasionally, a chalkboard, whiteboard or large easel might be helpful in recording the group's responses, but a piece of paper and a person to record will do.

Before each session, make sure you watch the video. You might want to give some attention to the place where you will be meeting, setting up the DVD/monitor ahead of time, along with arranging chairs and any tables.

Begin and end each session with prayer. This helps center and focus the group. After watching the DVD, there may be questions or issues that your group wants to discuss that evolve naturally. Go with these if they seem appropriate! Otherwise, follow-up questions are provided to help facilitate discussion.

OTHER RESOURCES

- For individual study there is an audio CD available from Luther Productions entitled *Can Fantasy Carry the Gospel?* (42 minutes) for \$14.95 from www.lutherproductions.com.

What you need

- TV or video projector
- DVD player
- Photocopies of the appropriate sessions for participants
- Paper and pencil/pen for jotting notes

Photocopying

Feel free to photocopy pages 2 and 3 of this Study Guide to use as handouts.

ENTER THE WARDROBE: STUDY GUIDE

PART I: NARNIA, FANTASY, AND THE GOSPEL (20:00)

The Lion, The Witch, and the Wardrobe is a fantasy story, which tells the Christian story by retelling it in a make-believe world called Narnia. Have you read the book or seen the movie? When and how many times? What led you to this story the first time and any other times? Do you think that fantasy stories can help us hear the real gospel of Jesus Christ? What are the risks and dangers of fantasy stories? How can these stories help us to live in the real world?

The story is about four children—Peter, Susan, Edmund, and Lucy—who meet fantastical characters in Narnia. With which character in the story did you identify the most? Which character did you like or dislike the most? Why?

In the world of Narnia, the children meet both good and evil in much more “real” forms than they do in their own world—they meet a witch who is evil and a lion who is good. How do evil and good exist in our world? Do evil and good exist in us?

Aslan helps the children defeat evil. How does this story help you to face evil and suffering in real life? How does the gospel of Jesus Christ equip you to face evil?

Edmund falls into evil because he falls into temptation. Edmund rationalizes to himself that he can do good once the witch makes him king. How are we tempted? How are our temptations different or similar to Edmund's?

In all stories, we get to see the beginning, middle, and end, but in our own lives, the “end” is only a promise. How does the promise of the Christian message help you live in “the middle of the story”?

PART II: THE CHARACTER AND MISSION OF ASLAN (10:00)

Aslan, the lion, is the Christ figure in the story. He dies and is raised for another person's sins. From the story of Aslan, what do you learn about Jesus? Aslan is not a tame or a safe lion, but he is good. How does this help you understand Jesus differently than you might otherwise?

In Narnia, who rules the world is in dispute. The witch claims to be the queen of Narnia but Aslan is the real king of Narnia. In our world, who are those people and forces that contest Christ's rulership of the world?

In *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*, the witch makes promises and Aslan makes promises. What are the witch's promises like? What are the differences between God's promises to us and the empty promises of the world?

What is the best thing you learn from Aslan? Is Aslan a good illustration of Jesus Christ?

One of the things that Aslan does is gives gifts to the children (although Edmund does not get a gift). What are the most important gifts that God has given you? What are those gifts for?

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PART III: CHILDREN AND FANTASY (8:00)

C. S. Lewis wrote *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* as a story for children and as a parable about Jesus Christ. Lewis also said in a different place that the Bible is adult literature. Are there elements of the story that bother you or scare you? How do adults hear this story in a child-like way?

If you know children who watch the movie or have read the story, what parts of the story do the children like? What can you learn from what the children like?

Some people think that we need to shelter children from the sharp edges of real life. How might a story like *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* equip children to live with the realities of life? Do you have any wisdom about how to help children learn from this story?

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