



Transforming Movies

Monday, July 24, 2005



Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will. -Romans 12:2

What scenes stood out to you? Why?

- The shock displayed by Dr. Floyd's wife when he tells her the news that he will be going on a mission. It gives a glimpse of the difficulties that the families of astronauts face when their loved ones are put in danger. It also shows how consumed Dr. Floyd is with the failure and apparent death of those involved in the Discovery mission in 2001. Dr. Floyd desires to personally make right any mistakes he may have made in the past.
- The arrival of the Russian craft Leonov into Io's orbit after swinging around Jupiter. This was a very climatic part of the movie - the move to slingshot around Jupiter was dangerous and left everyone tense. However, upon completion the crew are in an almost surreal location - next to Jupiter and Io, and right beside the Discovery abandoned 7 years ago due to a catastrophe.
- News of Russian/US tensions rising to the point of total war. This news reached the co-national crew when they were in orbit around Io. Conflict was created on the Leonov when they desperately needed each others help to collectively survive.
- The sight of the monolith in outer space and also later within the atmosphere of Jupiter. This object is shown to be mysterious, dangerous, and unpredictable.
- Contact from David Bowman, no longer his former self but an entity of the universe. This is in my opinion the weirdest part of the movie. It really makes you wonder what he truly is and what happened to him in 2001.

From a secular viewpoint, what main themes (ideals, beliefs, attitudes, etc) is this film trying to portray?

- Transcendence of ideals and the teamwork of the multinational crew over the grim political situation at hand.
- Broad sense of wonder of the vast unknown of outer space. Could there possibly be life elsewhere? Could there be a higher form of being guiding life as we know it?
- The crew's struggle to trust HAL9000 and allow their lives to be put in "his" hands. This ultimately means telling the truth to HAL and believing he will act unselfishly. HAL9000 malfunctioned earlier due to conflicting instructions. He was told to lie - ultimately he became paranoid acting for self preservation.

Theme #1: Trust

In the movie, trust was a major issue that the characters had to deal with. Can you think of situations in the movie which highlight this theme?

- **Movie Instance #1:** The trust all the astronauts had to have in each other to work as a team to correctly maneuver and plot their trajectories. This was apparent in the slingshot maneuver used to situate the Leonov in orbit around Io.
- **Movie Instance #2:** The trust that needed to be rebuilt between Dr. Chandra and HAL in giving HAL directions to use (and sacrifice) the Discovery to bring those in the Leonov back to earth safely.

Read

- Matthew 14:25-33: Jesus Walks on the Water
Peter needed to put his trust in Jesus instead of doubting.

Trust in men vs. trust in God

The astronauts needed to work together and trust each other in order to get back home safely. At times we find ourselves in situations where we need to place our trust in other people and their work. For example: we trust the pilot of a jet airliner that he won't crash during your plane flight, we trust in our parents and close friends that they will support us in time of need, we place trust in our professors that they will desire to see us succeed. Contrast this trust to the trust we have in God.

We may find absolute trust only in God. If we hold each other up to the same standards as God we will find that we will eventually fail - our sinful nature assures that.

Read

- 2 Samuel 22:31-32
God's ways are perfect; the word of the Lord is flawless. He is a shield for all who trust him.
- Psalm 33:16-22
We should trust in God's unfailing love
- Psalm 62:5-12
The ways of men are frail and misguided compared to the ways of God which are mighty and trustworthy.
- Psalm 146:3-9
The Lord remains faithful forever; we can always trust in Him

Theme #2: Pushing ourselves

Sometimes we find ourselves in positions or situations in which we feel God pushing us to do something just beyond our normal comfort zone. Examples of this may be witnessing opportunities, leadership roles, service activities, and opening ourselves up to new friendships. It is important to remember that with His help, all things are possible.

Can you think of an example in the movie that forced a character to go outside his comfort zone but was encouraged by others in confidence that the task could be done?

- **Movie Instance:** Walter Curnow at several times made excuses saying "I am an engineer, not an astronaut" when confronted with the task of space walking from the Leonov to the Discovery.

Moses provides a good Biblical example of someone who exhibits characteristics of this second theme. He was initially a person of a humble mind who attempted to be excused of his responsibilities of leadership before his people bestowed upon him by the Lord.

Read:

- Exodus 3:11-12 - Moses questioned the reception he believed he would get from Pharaoh. Notice God's response of encouragement in v.12. Moses several more times in verses 3:13 and 4:1 questioned the Lord for aid.
- Exodus 4:10-17 - Moses questioned his own abilities as the chosen leader and deliverer of the Israelites. First, doubt is placed upon himself as an eloquent and gifted speaker. Second, Moses pleaded with the Lord to send someone else to complete the task.

Theme #3: Unity

Unity of the astronauts was critical in the completion of their mission and safe return back to Earth. We know that unity is also important within the Church; both during the time of Paul and today. In fact, the importance of this unity is stressed throughout several of the Pauline epistles.

Read:

- Ephesians 4:1-6
Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit.
- Romans 15:5-6
We should glorify God with one heart and mouth in unity.

Theme #4: Lying

Secret agendas and conflicting instructions led to HAL9000's route to paranoia and the tragedy of the death of several astronauts in the 2001 mission to Jupiter. Lying commonly leads to a bad situation just getting worse. It is a part of our sinful nature that God despises.

Read:

- Proverbs 6:16-19
Lying is one of the seven things the Lord finds detestable in our sinful nature.
- Colossians 3:9-10
Don't lie to each other since we are called to renounce our evil ways and live in accordance with the rules of Christ's kingdom.

Interesting Quotes:

"The only thing left for us is to pray. Pray for the safety of our families..for our countries, for our planet. May God forgive us and protect us."

Dave Bowman: You see, something's going to happen. You must leave.

Heywood Floyd: What? What's going to happen?

Dave Bowman: Something wonderful.

Heywood Floyd: What?

Dave Bowman: I understand how you feel. You see, it's all very clear to me now. The whole thing. It's wonderful.

2 Cor 4:18

Characters:

From the 2001 voyage

David Bowman: the strange messenger in this movie; was presumed dead at the conclusion of the first Jupiter mission

HAL9000: the paranoid computer

3 Americans in space

Dr. Chandra: the father of HAL9000

Dr. Heywood Floyd: the main character

Dr. Walter Curnow: Chief engineer of Discovery; "not an astronaut"

Notable Russians

Tanya Kirbuk: leader in charge

Maxim Brajlovsky: spacewalked with Walter Curnow

Dimitri Moisevitch: persuaded Floyd to cooperate with the Russians

Others

Caroline Floyd: main character's wife

Betty: David Bowman's (former) wife

Jessie: David Bowman's dying mother