

Bruce Almighty

Rated PG-13

“Bruce Almighty” is a comedy starring Jim Carrey as news reporter Bruce Nolan. Bruce is unhappy with God for not granting him the coveted news anchor position. Despite a somewhat silly premise, the movie seeks to ask relevant questions that are a common spiritual stumbling block, namely, “Why doesn’t God answer my prayers? Does that mean He doesn’t care? Is God doing His job?” Bruce aptly plays out this scenario by praying for the anchor job and when he is not granted the position he acts out in a way only Jim Carrey can. The upshot is that Bruce is fired. Of course, this adds to Bruce’s mounting resentment against God and Bruce rails at God for not doing the job of being God.

In enters God, played by Morgan Freeman who portrays a caring wise God (in the best Hollywood fashion). God challenges Bruce and tells him, “If you think you can do a better job, then be God and see how well you can do.” God gives Bruce power over a few blocks of Buffalo, with the only restriction being not to tangle with free will.

In the beginning, Bruce gets quite carried away with the power of being God. He gets a Lamborghini, settles some old scores by getting revenge, and mainly acts superior to others. Throughout the course of the movie Bruce learns that being God isn’t all fun and games; he needs to help people instead of focusing on his own life. In one scene, we see Bruce learning that he does not have to have his “power” to help people and that through his own efforts he can help someone fix their car or give the homeless money. Soon, Bruce sees that he is still a person and just because he has taken over God’s job does not mean that he has special privileges.

Grace, Bruce’s girlfriend, is played by Jennifer Aniston. She cares deeply for Bruce, but realizing that his self-centeredness and self-absorption leave no room for their relationship she leaves him. While you might think that with his “power” he could win her back, Bruce is faced with a difficult task as he does not know how to place his needs behind hers.

The movie has a great deal to say about prayer and how we pray. It also emphasizes how we need to see the world beyond an, “It’s all about me,” attitude and that God’s only role is not to grant us every desire (including winning the lottery). Instead, “Bruce Almighty” underscores our ability to demonstrate that loving others can indeed be an answer to prayer, and even a miracle. In its most heart-wrenching scene we see Grace (an appropriate name) asking God to help her let go of the love she has for Bruce. We will not tell you how it ends, other than to say it radically changes Bruce’s priorities in life.

Although *“Bruce Almighty”* has many hilarious scenes, the spiritual topics are relevant to all of us and encourage us to talk about our prayer life and our expectations of God. This makes the movie worthwhile.

By Curt and Natalie Levang