

## **Evan Almighty** Discussion questions.

Evan Baxter, Steve Carroll, was Bruce's, Jim Carey, competitor for the coveted anchor job for the Buffalo News show in Bruce Almighty. In Evan Almighty Evan goes from being a news anchor (he regained the job after Bruce had his accident with the truck) to being a U.S. congressman with the slogan "Change the world". And "change the world" is what God, played by Morgan Freeman, wants to do so he shows Evan how to do just that by building an ark, an impossible task at best. But God provides all Evan needs including the hair and clothes to make a convincing Noah, though not your customary, suited, in-control congressman. Because of this Evan is abandoned by his family, questioned by his staff, rejected by his peers, scoffed at by the media and nearly arrested for not having the proper building permits for an ark. But God is on his side and Evan learns the way to change the world is by standing for what is right and doing good.

### Discussion:

In the early stages of the film Evan is prompted by his wife to pray. Evan obviously has not prayed often, if ever, so this is a big step for him. But he makes a great observation as he prays, "With great power comes great responsibility."

Question: Can you think of any scripture that would support this statement?  
(Luke 12:48b, Matthew 25:14-30, James 3:1)

God used several methods to try to get Evan's attention, He appeared to Evan in the car and on the street, animals in pairs followed Evan wherever he went and even the fish focused on him. But one thing that God used was a Bible verse notation, Gen. 6:14, Evan saw or heard it on at least 6 occasions.

Question: How did God try to get the attention of people in the Bible? Can you share a time when God has tried to get your attention? (Moses and the burning bush Ex. 3:2, Balaam's talking donkey Num. 22:28, Nathan convicting David 2 Sam. 12:1-13, etc.)

Evan used a particular phrase to motivate himself or regain his composure. He would reassure himself by saying, "I am successful, powerful, handsome and happy." Those characteristics were obviously very important to him and those are the types of things that other people consider important too.

Question: What characteristics does God consider important in us? (Compassion and dedication James 1:27, Humility Isaiah 66:2 & James 4:10, Love for God and others Matthew 22:37, Mark 12:30 & Luke 10:27)

Evan was a neat freak. He did not care for animals because he thought they were dirty and smelly, he also thought beards were dirty and he went so far as to trim his nose hairs. Also, Evan was not a handyman, he didn't see himself as a builder. So what did

God do? He surrounded Evan with animals, gave him a beard he could not get rid of, dressed him in a robe and told him to build an ark.

Question: The Bible shows us that God takes people out of their comfort zones, Moses in Exodus 4:1, 10, 13, Jeremiah in Jeremiah 7:27, Esther in Esther 4:15-16, Jonah in Jonah 1:1-3, and many others. Can you share a story about when God has asked you to step out of your comfort zone?

Evan was still trying to fulfill his function as a congressman even though God had changed his looks and dress. Since there was an important meeting of congress he had to attend Evan thought he could outsmart God by putting a suit on over the robe God had given him to wear and styling his hair and beard to appear fashionable.

Question: Can you give examples of people in the Bible who have thought they could outsmart God? (Jonah thought he could run from God, Jonah 1:1-12, Adam thought he could hide from God, Gen. 3:8, Cain thought he could lie to God, Gen. 4:9)

Because of Evan's strange behavior his wife takes the boys and leaves. When they stop in a diner to eat, she unknowingly encounters God and he says to her: "If someone prays for patience do you think God gives them patience? Or does He give them the opportunity to be patient? If they pray for courage, does God give them courage or does He give them the opportunity to be courageous? If someone prayed for their family to be closer, do you think God zaps them with warm fuzzy feelings? Or does He give them opportunities to love each other?"

Question: What do you think; does God give opportunities rather than patience, courage, etc.? Who in the Bible displayed patience? (Job, though he lost all and was afflicted stayed patiently in his faith. Job 1:2. Simon waited patiently for God to reveal the Christ. Luke 2:25-32). Courage? ( Moses in Exodus 3:10, Esther in Esther 4:14, Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego in Daniel 3:13-18, Jesus in multiple scriptures.)

When the Ark was finished and Evan was waiting for a flood that did not seem to be coming his wife, Joan, made this suggestion. "Honey, maybe God didn't mean a literal flood. Maybe He meant a flood of knowledge or emotion or awareness."

Question: When God speaks, does He speak figuratively or literally? Jesus often spoke in parables and many times people did not understand His point because they were not enabled by the Holy Spirit. But God wants to make His truth clear to us through His Word. There are examples in scripture about how God has given very clear instructions to His people. In Genesis 6:14-16 God gave Noah instructions for the ark and in Exodus chapters 25-30 God gave Moses specific instructions about how to build the temple and its appointments. What other examples of God's speaking to His people can you find and does this show that God's word is literal?

At the end of the movie we learn that God's intent for Evan was to teach him that the world can be changed by one Act of Random Kindness at a time. This is a challenge to

all of us to change the world where we live by looking for acts of kindness we can perform. So look around and see where God can use you to reach out to others.