

# Moon (2009)

Rated R. Our ratings: V-5 ; L-7 ; S/N-0 . Running time: 1 hour 37 min.

*Turn to me and be gracious to me,  
for I am lonely and afflicted.  
Relieve the troubles of my heart,  
and bring me out of my distress.  
Consider my affliction and my trouble,  
Psalm 25:16-18a*

At last, a science fiction film not filled with deep space battle scenes and black holes, evil aliens attacking noble humans, or a hurtling planet, asteroid or sun flare rushing to destroy Earth. Director Duncan Jones is aiming more for *2001: Space Odyssey* than *Battlestar Galactica*. Actor Sam Rockwell, his character also named Sam, is outstanding as the lone engineer tending a mining operation on the other side of the moon—his role similar to Tom Hanks' in *Castaway* in that we see the effects of years of isolation and loneliness upon a human psyche. Sam's job for Lunar Industries is to harvest helium-3, a substance that has become the chief source of Earth's energy, and send it to his home planet.

2009 Sion Pictures Classics

Actually Sam is not quite alone, as there is a mobile computer dubbed Gerty that tends to both his human needs and those of the base and mining operations. Sam is nearing completion of his three year term, eager to return to his wife and baby daughter. Even though there is a transmission problem and Sam cannot communicate live with home, he is able to send and receive tapes. He eagerly looks forward to the weekly news from his wife and little daughter. And then he makes a shocking discovery. There is an accident involving one of the moon rovers and a huge digging machine, and inside the damaged rover there is –a man! Where did he come from, and more puzzling, why does he look like Sam?

Quite a mystery, followed by some challenging questions about the power of a conglomerate (the film opens with a good “Infomercial” about the mining company that is much like those of chemical companies that promise us “Good living through chemistry” –or oil, or electricity) and the use of science by profit-making groups. A fine film for young adults or youth to watch and discuss. With all the current interest in the Moon due to this year being the 40th Anniversary of the Moon walk, this is an opportunity to discuss the future—not just of space travel, but of human society and the influence of commerce and technology upon it.

## **For Reflection/Discussion**

Definitely spoilers below!

1. What effects do you see that the three year period of isolation has upon Sam? Compare this to the situation of the Tom Hanks character in *Castaway*. How is this a bearing out of Genesis 2:18?

2. What do you think of the opening corporate video or infomercial? How does this compare to those put out by chemical and energy companies? What promises do they make? How

deceiving do you think that either the promise or the inference that the products of technology will bring us “the good life” ?

3. Though not a humanoid machine, what human qualities do we see in Gerty?

4. What about the ethics of the genetic engineering that we see in the film? Though clones, how do Sam 1 and Sam 2 show that they are fully human?

5. What do you think Sam 2 is doing at the conclusion of the film? Do you think he will be successful? Good subject for another film?