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**Despicable Me 3 (2017) | FOCUS ON THE MISSION | BIBLE STUDY**

*Facilitator Note: We encourage facilitators to take this Bible study and expound on it throughout the week, allowing it to be a springboard for deeper conversation and personal meditation.*

**PRESS START**

Life throws many pitches. Some of them are blessings made for us to hit out of the park, while others are unexpected curveballs that seem to want to strike us out. These unexpected situations are unfortunate circumstances that we would rather not find ourselves in—much like Gru and his family experience in *Despicable Me 3*.

During his mission, Gru fails to catch Balthazar Bratt, but still manages to retrieve the stolen diamond. Though Gru doesn't catch the bad guy, the results of his mission still make it a success—or so he thinks. Unfortunately, the Anti-Villain League's new management deems Gru a failure for not capturing Balthazar Bratt, and both Gru and Lucy are fired as a result. The couple aren't sure what to tell the children when they arrive home, jobless. Worse still, Gru loses focus and falls back on his old, immoral lifestyle of crime and villainy.

Throughout this study, we will be equipping ourselves with some Scriptures to help us stay focused on our mission.

**Ask: What kind of unexpected circumstances have you had to face in the past? How did you react to them?**

**EQUIP**

The moment that Gru's brother, Dru, chooses to reveal himself could not be more untimely. Before Gru even has a chance to decide where his life is headed next, he is dragged into the temptations of his old life. Gru does try to resist at first, even after he learns about his family's true heritage. However, it does not take long before he gives in.

We are the most vulnerable when we are at our weakest--a time in which the enemy likes to be the serpent and tempt us just as he did with Eve. In this case, Gru is motivated by his own desires, rather than being influenced solely by his brother.

**James 1:14 (NLT)** *"Temptation comes from our own desires, which entice us and drag us away."*

It is very possible to be influenced by our own personal goals and desires, rather than another person, with our very own sin nature being our greatest enemy. Rather than completely going back to his old ways, Gru tries to compromise by using the opportunity to try and redeem himself. Much like Gru, our self-driven actions do not produce the results we expect. The NLT translation of **Romans 8:6** lays it out best:

**Romans 8:6 (NLT)** *"So letting your sinful nature control your mind leads to death. But letting the Spirit control your mind leads to life and peace."*

**Ask: What are some ways we can better equip ourselves to stay focused on the ways of the Spirit, rather than our own personal goals and desires?**

## LEVEL UP

To better help us focus on our mission, there are a few things we need to keep in constant reminder. The first is that we are not to be priority number one. Sometimes, we lean on our own understanding and forget that our actions have an area of effect. Gru does realize this until it is almost too late.

The second is that the Lord should be consulted in everything we do through prayer. As Christians, the reason we have so much faith and believe in God is because He gave Christ's life for ours, and we trust Him wholeheartedly.

**Ask: How often do you spend time in prayer or studying scripture? Has that time affected you in any way?**

**Proverbs 3:5-6 (NIV)** <sup>5</sup> *Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding;* <sup>6</sup> *in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.*

From what we read in **Proverbs 3:5-6**, the Lord will put us on the right path when we truly begin to seek out His plans instead of ours. Studying His Word and spending time in prayer helps us stay in tune with the Holy Spirit; this can

have a positive effect on our daily routines, even though we may not notice it. The Bible is the ultimate “dossier”—something we can always refer to when we are out on our spiritual mission.

## MOD

We have already addressed what happens when we try to do things on our own, but the Christian life is no solo mission. Sometimes, we think we're doing our friends and loved ones a favor by telling ourselves "I got this" or "I'll handle this myself" because they don't have to get involved with the risks.

Gru and Dru keep their mission completely top-secret. Though Lucy would likely not have approved of Gru's actions, earlier in the film, we witness what kind of lengths she is willing to go in support of Gru, and how she strives to be a mother to his children, as well. Had Gru entrusted Lucy with his secret mission, perhaps things would have ultimately turned out differently—for the better.

**Ecclesiastes 4:9-10 (NIV)** *"Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor: If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up."*

It is important that our friends and loved ones support us in our endeavors, but it is even more important that they are there to let us know when we are on the verge of stumbling. On our end, we must be able to understand when our friends and loved ones are honestly calling us out on our actions. We will already be wiser for being able to handle any advice or criticism in a level-headed manner.

**Proverbs 19:20 (NIV)** *"Listen to advice and accept discipline, and at the end you will be counted among the wise."*

**Ask: We may have many friends and acquaintances, but true friends in a biblical sense are likely fewer. Do you have a friendship like the one we discussed? Have these friends been instrumental in your spiritual growth?**

## PRAY

**Ask: Is there anything you would like to ask God to help you refocus on?**

Let us also pray that God will help the group not only refocus on these things, but also on Him. Let us pray that He will put us on the proper path intended for us.

## THE NEXT LEVEL

Throughout the study, we spoke of "the mission"; that mission is the Great Commission. This "mission briefing" took place hundreds of years ago in **Matthew 18:16-20**. Like the one in *Despicable Me 3*, we are very much an "Anti-Villain League." With Christ as our handler, this is a mission we must never lose focus on.

**Proverbs 19:21 (NIV)** <sup>21</sup> *Many are the plans in a person's heart, but it is the Lord's purpose that prevails."*

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