



BIBLE STUDY GUIDE

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INTRODUCTION

THEME: RESISTING TEMPTATION

“Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”—Romans 12:21

Having turned to crime-fighting to avenge his Uncle Ben’s death, Peter Parker faces unparalleled temptation in *Spider-Man 3*. Should Spider-Man avenge his uncle by taking out Ben’s murderer, Flint Marko? Peter also finds a rival photographer in the Daily Bugle newsroom, Eddie Brock. Eddie’s deception brings out the worst in Peter. Spider-Man must also contend with the blame directed at him by Harry Osborn. Was Spider-Man responsible for the death of Harry’s father, Norman Osborn, the Green Goblin? Harry thinks so. How can Peter reconcile with his best friend?

These multiple villains test Peter, revealing a darker side to Spider-Man. Ultimately, Spider-Man’s rising fame may distract Peter Parker from the woman he loves, Mary Jane Watson. Peter will need an abundance of grace and forgiveness to dig out of these action-packed crises in *Spider-Man 3*.

Questions:

1. What temptations do you face?
2. Who brings out the worst in you?
3. How do you overcome evil?

PETER PARKER/SPIDER-MAN

THEME: WE ALL NEED HELP

“A man’s pride brings him low, but a man of lowly spirit gains honor.”—Proverbs 29:23

Peter Parker is enjoying Spider-Man’s fame and celebrity. His girlfriend, M.J. (Mary Jane), is struggling to make her way as an actress and entertainer. Nevertheless, she can see Spider-Man’s

self-confidence growing into an over-confidence. Mary Jane warns Peter about the dangers of independence, “We all need help sometimes, Peter. Even Spider-Man. This pride of his—maybe even he’s not perfect.”



Peter has been tainted by a mysterious black goo—a shadow crossing over him. It has attached to Peter, clinging to him like a dark, new Spider-Man suit. It causes jealousy, rage, and retribution to grow.

Dr. Curt Connors identifies this black goo as a symbiote, calling it, “A parasite that amplifies characteristics of its host, especially aggression.”

Peter’s aggression comes out in how he treats his friends and co-workers. As a black suited Spider-Man, Peter attacks Harry with ugly truths about his father, Norman. Peter also argues with Brock, his competition at the Daily Bugle. He even hurts the one he loves, M.J.

Questions:

1. When has pride brought you low?
2. Have you hurt friends and family with things you’ve said or done?
3. Has darkness overtaken you at times?

FLINT MARKO/SANDMAN

THEME: TRYING TO DO GOOD

“For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing.”--Romans 7:18-19

Flint Marko breaks out of jail, eager to straighten out his life. Marko is desperate to help his ailing daughter. Yet, his estranged wife, Emma Marko, tells him, “You’re guilty, guilty as sin.” Flint protests, “I am not bad. I had bad luck. That’s different. I want to do good.” Marko has one simple request, “Pray for me! Your daddy’s gonna make you healthy one day.” Marko wants money for research to heal his daughter, Penny. An accident soon transforms him into the monstrous Sandman.

As Flint Marko, actor Thomas Haden Church told the Los Angeles Times, “Villains with a conscience have this sad realization of who they are, and the monster they’ve become—there’s a sense of regret.” Will the Sandman gain control of his emotions before it is too late?



Questions:

1. Have you found yourself unable to do the right thing, despite your hope or aspirations?
2. Have you felt double-minded, at war within yourself?
3. How do you embrace and carry out your best intentions?

EDDIE BROCK/VENOM

THEME: REVENGE IN OUR HEART

“So I find this new law at work: When I want to do good, evil is right there with me.” Romans 7:21

Peter is tempted to carry out vengeance. But his gracious Aunt May tells Peter, “I don’t think there’s any reason to feel jubilation about somebody’s death. Your uncle wouldn’t want you living one second of your life with revenge in your heart. It’s like a poison. It can take us over. Before you know it, turns us into something ugly.” Peter needs to wash away the darkness overtaking him. In a church, Peter finds the solution to his problem.

Yet, even as Peter experiences a fresh start, the same ugliness overtakes Eddie Brock. Inside a church, Eddie offers a prayer of rage, “I’m a decent person. I come to you today, humbled, humiliated. To ask of you but one thing—I want you to kill Peter Parker.” As Venom, Eddie revels in his new-found abilities, which make him every bit as powerful as Spider-Man. Eddie admits, “I was handed power I



never dreamed of. It just poured down on me as if from heaven itself.” Yet, what Eddie sees as heaven sent may actually be a dark gift from somewhere far away.

Questions:

1. When have you wanted revenge? In what situation?
2. Where do you turn to resist or overcome such temptation?

HARRY OSBORN/GREEN GOBLIN

THEME: MADNESS OVERTAKING US

“The light shines in darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.” John 1:5



Harry Osborn is quite conflicted in *Spider-Man 3*. He still blames Spider-Man for his father’s death. He also continues to harbor secret affections for Peter’s girlfriend, M.J. Harry is tempted to act out on his hidden feelings, bringing harm to himself or his friends. Yet, when Harry wakes up in a hospital with amnesia and sees Peter Parker and Mary Jane, he thinks, “My best friends—I’d give my life for them.” His best impulses have surfaced, his anger washed away.

Harry must let go of plenty of understandable anger. If not, it threatens to destroy him. Bernard the Butler tells Harry: “I’ve watched a darkness come over you father, a madness that cost him his life.” Will Harry succumb to the same madness as the New Green Goblin?

Questions:

1. What old grudges have you held onto?
2. What kinds of madness might you need to overcome?
3. Would you be willing to give you life for your friends or family?

FORGIVENESS: THE REAL SUPERPOWER

THEME: THE HIGHEST WHICH WE CAN ASPIRE TO...

“Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.” Ephesians 4:32

All of the villains in *Spider-Man 3* want to start over. They’re searching for some kind of forgiveness. For Flint Marko, he’s willing to commit more crimes to save his daughter, Penny’s life. Can the Sandman



learn to harness his anger for good? Peter Parker rises above the circumstances, declaring, “I think there’s been enough punishment.” He wants to forge a new path.

Peter offers similar encouragement to Eddie, “Don’t give in to the anger, Eddie. It just wants you to hate.” Eddie Brock can either resist complications or opt for a different way of being.

While Sandman and Venom struggle to embrace hope, Harry Osborn demonstrates a surprising maturity. Peter learns a valuable lesson from Harry. Peter declares, “Those things we know about often get forgotten along the way. That all we have in this world is the love of our friends and our family and that they are worthy of the highest which we can aspire to...forgiveness.”

What a surprising, faith-affirming realization! *Spider-Man 3* offers a graphic demonstration of the darkness that grips all of us. Yet, Peter Parker shows us that, through forgiveness, we can wash away that which covers us and start anew. *Spider-Man 3* experiences firsthand, the necessity and power of forgiveness.

Questions:

1. To what degree, do you desire to forge a new path?
2. Have you experienced forgiveness?
3. Have you extended grace to others, even those who have wronged you?

Take a moment to identify the sources of anger in your life. What thoughts, feelings and actions need to be forgiven? Who can you offer forgiveness to today? Close in prayer, grateful for the grace that God offers. Walk in this biblical promise: “If we confess our sin, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sin and cleanse us from righteousness.”—1 John 1:9

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YOUR STUDY NOTES:

