**Monsters University** - 2013, G, Run time 104 min.

**Film Description** (spoiler alert): A prequel to Minsters Inc. Monsters University takes us back to Mike’s youth. Because he is smaller than the other monsters, Mike has to try harder. A class field trip leads Mike into a chance encounter with a star scarer at Monsters Inc. and Mike’s path is set. He is determined to go to Monsters University to major in scaring. The only problem is Mike’s not that scary. Through grit and perseverance Mike lands a place at MU. He meets his shy roommate and runs into “Sully”, who believes he can trade on his family name to get ahead. Mike continues to work hard, but he and Sully are kicked out of the program by Dean Hardscrabble, who tells them they have no future as scarers. Undeterred, Mike decides to enter the Scare Games. He makes a bet with the Dean that should he win, he be readmitted to the program. The problem is teams require six monsters and he has only his five rather pitiful brothers from Oozma Kappa. Make allows Sully to join the team and they begin training together. But can they find a way to beat the powerful Roar Omega Roar fraternity?

**Discussion Focus**: Finding our place, accepting who God made us to be and defining true success.

**Content Advisory**: Mildly scary moments.

**Leader’s Hints**: The Film Description is for you, not to be read to the group because it will spoil the movie. The Discussion Focus should be presented to the group prior to watching the movie so they can know some of what to focus on. Allow the group immediately after the film to give their own casual assessment (“that was great” or “I didn't think it would end that way”). When the personal assessments have died out begin with the discussion questions. The biggest mistake most discussion leaders make is that they do not allow enough silence. Give people time to think it through. Give encouraging words after someone shares but avoid comments that designate their statements as “right” or “wrong”. Encourage multiple answers to the same questions. Statements like “That is really insightful, what does someone else think?” encourage others to expand on the answer. Be sure to read through the questions ahead of time and when personal examples are asked for think of one for yourself in case no one responds. When you are willing to share it really encourages others to open up. Be very careful to avoid sending the message to the group that you hold all the answers. The benefit of group discussion comes from the individual struggle to find truth for themselves not in the group landing on consensus. In other words you may end up agreeing to disagree and that is fine. Keep the environment open and non-judgmental, we all come to truth in faith at our own speed. Allow some struggles to remain in the hands of the Holy Spirit. Please always end in a prayer.
Discussion Questions

1. In the first task of the Scare Games, Mike does something that nearly costs them the tournament. What does he do wrong and why does he do it? He wants personal recognition and he forgets that they are supposed to work as a team.

2. God is happy when we work as a team. In 1 Corinthians 12:12-20 he tells a story about how he wants us to work together as just one body.

   Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. Even so the body is not made up of one part but of many. Now if the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. If they were all one part, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, but one body.

   What do those verses teach us about how to work as a team and how God wants us to value each other? Don’t think that one particular gift is everything or that some people are not needed.

3. Sully ends up confessing something important to Mike after Dean Hardscrabble says that Sully has been riding on his family name. What does he confess? It is all a front. He only acts scary but deep down inside he is terrified that he is no good.

4. God says that it is really important to have a real view of who we are.

   Romans 12:3  For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you.

   Why is it important not to think too highly of ourselves or to think too badly ourselves? If we think we can do no wrong then we might think that we don’t need God and if we think we are junk we are insulting God because He made us in His image.

5. In the end, Mike and Sully do not end up winning the way they wanted to. Do you think that you would call them successful?

6. Jesus tells his disciples a story about how when you end up with less (like ending up in the mailroom) you might really be getting something.

   When he noticed how the guests picked the places of honor at the table, he told them this parable: “When someone invites you to a wedding feast, do not take the place of honor, for a person more distinguished than you may have been invited. If so, the host who invited both of you will come and say to you, ‘Give this person your seat.’ Then, humiliated, you will
have to take the least important place. But when you are invited, take the lowest place, so that when your host comes, he will say to you, ‘Friend, move up to a better place.’ Then you will be honored in the presence of all the other guests. For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.” Luke 14:7-11

In what ways are Mike and Sully really better off?

**Closing Prayer Example** (or just pray from your heart): Dear Lord, Please help us to work well together. Help us not to think ourselves to be too great or too crummy but to try to see ourselves the way you see us Lord. Please teach us that some things are more important than being the first or the best. Show us what success in life looks like through your eyes God. Amen.