

“Pride & Prejudice” starring Keira Knightley, Matthew Macfayden, Brenda Blethyn, Donald Sutherland, 2005, PG, 129 minutes

Major themes:

- Love
- Reputation
- Courtship & Marriage
- Class distinctions
- Honor
- People pleasing
- Taking offense
- Manners

Major characters:

- Elizabeth Bennet (age 20)
- Mr. Fitzwilliam Darcy
- Mr. & Mrs. Bennet
- The Bennet sisters: Jane (age 23), Mary (age 18 or 19), Catherine (“Kitty”) (age 17), Lydia (age 15)
- Charles Bingley
- George Wickham
- William Collins
- Lady Catherine de Bourgh
- Aunt and Uncle Gardiner
- Georgiana Darcy
- Charlotte Lucas

Movie Nights for Thinkers and Seekers

Background info:

- *"Pride & Prejudice"* is based on the novel of the same name by Jane Austen, first published in 1813. To date, the book has sold some 20 million copies worldwide. It is set in 1797, at the beginning of the Napoleonic Wars (1797–1815) in Longbourn, in rural England. It was voted 2nd on the BBC's 2003 poll for the *"UK's Best-Loved Book"* (*"Lord of the Rings"* was voted 1st).
- The title is very likely taken from a passage in Fanny Burney's popular 1782 novel *"Cecilia,"* a novel Jane Austen is known to have admired: *"The whole of this unfortunate business,' said Dr. Lyster, 'has been the result of PRIDE and PREJUDICE. ... Yet this, however, remember: if to PRIDE and PREJUDICE you owe your miseries, so wonderfully is good and evil balanced, that to PRIDE and PREJUDICE you will also owe their termination . . .'"*
- At the beginning of the movie, Elizabeth is shown reading a novel titled *"First Impressions"* - this was Jane Austen's original title of her novel before she altered it to *"Pride and Prejudice."* Additionally the text of the visible pages is readable when paused; it is the last chapter of *"Pride & Prejudice,"* with names changed.
- The actress who played Georgiana Darcy did her own piano playing in the film.
- The actress who played Aunt Gardiner was also filming *"Doctor Who"* during the filming of this movie.
- The English country dances done in the film are: Young Widow, Wakefield Hunt, The Bishop, Dutch Dollars, Tythe Pig, Black Bess, Duke of Gloucester's March, and Moniek's Maggot.
- Jane Austen described this novel as *"light and bright, and sparkling."*

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Scriptures:

Ecclesiastes 8:1 (The Message) – *“There’s nothing better than being wise, knowing how to interpret the meaning of life. Wisdom puts light in the eyes, and gives gentleness to words and manners.”*

Proverbs 25:9 – 10 (NLT) – *“When arguing with your neighbor, don’t betray another person’s secret. Others may accuse you of gossip, and you will never regain your good reputation.”*

Psalms 112:1 – 9 (The Message) – *“Hallelujah! Blessed man, blessed woman, who fear God, who cherish and relish his commandments, their children robust on the earth, and the homes of the upright—how blessed! Their houses brim with wealth and a generosity that never runs dry. Sunrise breaks through the darkness for good people—God’s grace and mercy and justice! The good person is generous and lends lavishly; no shuffling or stumbling around for this one, but a sterling and solid and lasting reputation. Unfazed by rumor and gossip, heart ready, trusting in God, spirit firm, unperturbed, ever blessed, relaxed among enemies, they lavish gifts on the poor—a generosity that goes on, and on, and on. An honored life! A beautiful life!”*

Genesis 2:18, 23 – 24 (NLT) – *“Then the LORD God said, ‘It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper who is just right for him.’ . . . ‘At last!’ the man exclaimed. ‘This one is bone from my bone, and flesh from my flesh! She will be called “woman,” because she was taken from “man.”’” This explains why a man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one.”*

James 2:1 (NLT) – *“My dear brothers and sisters, how can you claim to have faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ if you favor some people over others?”*

Galatians 1:10 (NLT) – *“I’m not trying to win the approval of people, but of God. If pleasing people were my goal, I would not be Christ’s servant.”*

1 Peter 4:8 (NIV) – *“Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins.”*

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Discussion points:

1. How does this story demonstrate that love can conquer even deeply ingrained social barriers? In contrast, are there ways in which love can be exploited as a means to advancement of some kind?
2. Discuss examples of when it is more prudent to stay within social norms and when it is better to challenge them. How can we determine which course of action is best?
3. Mrs. Bennet exclaims, *"Oh my goodness! Everyone, behave naturally!"* when faced with a surprise visit by potential suitors for her daughters. Discuss the human tendency to want to present our *"best faces."*
4. Discuss Charlotte's comment that *"not all of us can afford to be a romantic."* To what extent is that true?
5. The prominent place given to manners in this story seems to result in negative things being expressed in a subtle yet often passive-aggressive manner. Contrast this with the propensity in the 21st century to just blurt things out (or post them online).
6. Discuss what it might look like to have marriage as a goal. What are the positive aspects of this? What are the dangers?
7. How did various characters take offense with one another? How could some of this have been avoided?