

THE BATTLE WITHIN.

**SPIDERMAN 3**  
**YOUTH GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE**

**BY DARREN WRIGHT**  
**YOUTH AND CHILDREN'S WORKER**  
**RIVERINA PRESBYTERY OF THE UCA**

MARVEL

THIS FILM IS NOT YET RATED  
FOR PARENTS AND GO TO [FILMINGUS.COM](http://FILMINGUS.COM)

[sony.com/Spider-Man](http://sony.com/Spider-Man)

© 2007 Sony Pictures Entertainment Inc.  
All Rights Reserved.

# SPIDERMAN 3

## Writing credits

- Sam Raimi
- Ivan Raimi
- Alvin Sargent
- Stan Lee and Steve Ditko (Marvel comic book)

## Cast (in credits order)

- Tobey Maguire - Spider-Man/Peter Parker
- Kirsten Dunst - Mary Jane Watson
- James Franco - New Goblin/Harry Osborn
- Thomas Haden Church - Sandman/Flint Marko
- Topher Grace - Venom/Eddie Brock
- Bryce Dallas Howard - Gwen Stacy
- Rosemary Harris - May Parker

## Links:

- IMDB Website <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0413300/>
- Official Website <http://spiderman3.sonypictures.com/>
- Hollywood Jesus Reviews  
<http://www.hollywoodjesus.com/movieDetail.cfm/i/01ED9B6C-9C48-52C2-7E1096D7CA281F5B/a/1>
- Discussion Resource by Craig Detweiler  
<http://www.thesource4ym.com/spiderman3guide.pdf>
- Review by Jonathan McKee  
<http://www.thesource4ym.com/moviereviews/moviereview.asp?ID=197>

# REVIEW / SYNOPSIS (WARNING SPOILERS)

*"ONE PERSON CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE"*



I've written in previous discussion papers how much I enjoy superhero movies, they're always full of good meaty topics like our origins, good vs evil, friendship, secrets, revenge, violence, sacrifice, faith, justice, righteousness, gifts, character, virtue... And, the fact that I'm a bit of a fanboy helps a little. From Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles to Superman, Wonder Woman to Xena, Superman to Thor these stories of extra ordinary people call our own lives into focus urging us onwards, asking us about our own gifts, motives, integrity and mission in life.

Spiderman 3 is the third in the line of the Spiderman stories, with another one planned for 2009 I can't call it a trilogy, but it ties up a number of the storylines that have been building since Spiderman 1 graced our screens back in 2002. Harry Osborn will seek his revenge, Peter Parker will face his need for revenge on the man who killed his uncle, Spiderman will become a new type of hero after facing his demons and surviving.

Spiderman 3 ups the ante in regards to the super-villain element introducing the audience to Venom-Spiderman, Venom-Brock, the Sandman and the Goblin in one huge monolith of a movie. Unfortunately at 2 hours and 20 minutes one might argue that they've crammed a lot into the epic and that it doesn't quite match up to it's original or number 2, but I say to those people lighten up, it's a comic book movie!

The movie begins with Peter Parker being on top of life, his girlfriend and him are looking like they'll marry, Spiderman is a hero and loved by the entire city and the love of his life is the star in a stage show. Although all of this is so he's still living in a beat down apartment, riding a motor scooter, working on consignment and his best friend Harry is planning his revenge.

As many of us find when things are going well for us we loose sight of things, his spidey sense seems to be offline in this movie as his success as Spiderman seems to make him blind to the cries for an ear of his girlfriend who is fired from her acting role, blind to the new journalist on the job trying out for his job, blind to the alien creature who attaches itself to his spidey costume and he even misses the surprise attack of Harry Osborn in the streets of New York.

The fight between Harry and Peter seems to be healed after a failed attack on Spiderman leaves Harry with amnesia, forgetting that Peter is Spiderman and that

he'd been involved in the death of his father. Peter's finally able to enjoy the friendship with his best friend that he's missed for ages, however how long can Harry's memory block out the memory of Spiderman leaving his father's dead body in the house?

Meanwhile Peter's followed home by a symbiote from a meteorite that attaches itself to his Spiderman suite and begins to change Peter, increasing his emotions, particularly his anger, violent tendencies and need for revenge. The new black suited Spiderman is much stronger, but also less nice, more violent and less concerned about killing the villains he fights. Meanwhile the new Peter becomes angry, darker, hurts those who he loves, flirts with women (including Miss Brant), shows no mercy to Harry Osborn when they fight the second time, dresses different and combs his hair on an angle. Although this is a darker Peter the way they deal with this change is rather comical, lightening the mood a little than it could have been.

Throw in the introduction of the Sandman, a criminal with a conscience who had been linked to his Uncle's death now terrorising the city, the growth of the symbiote's control over Peter Parker, a new photographer in town trying to take his job and relationship problems with MJ this movie throws in so much that you shouldn't get bored at all.

In the end everyone needs to face their demons, Spiderman needs to face his anger and violence, Peter needs to face his need for revenge and turn to forgiveness, Harry needs to let go of the memory of his father and learn to forgive Peter, the Sandman needs to come to terms with his being turned a monster and ask for forgiveness, Eddie Brock needs to face his need for revenge and power, MJ needs to forgive the love of her life and perhaps the audience will need to forgive Raimi for creating such a long epic.

I enjoyed the film, overall it was another great Spiderman adventure on par with the previous releases, and although I know others will disagree with me I'd encourage people to see it on the big screen, enjoy the epic in the way a good epic should be seen.



# DISCUSSION GUIDE

## Theme: Revenge

*"Uncle Ben wouldn't want us living with revenge in our hearts, it's like a poison. It can take you over and turn us into something ugly." – Aunty May*

–

*"Don't hit back; discover beauty in everyone. If you've got it in you, get along with everybody. Don't insist on getting even; that's not for you to do. "I'll do the judging," says God. "I'll take care of it."*

*Our Scriptures tell us that if you see your enemy hungry, go buy that person lunch, or if he's thirsty, get him a drink. Your generosity will surprise him with goodness. Don't let evil get the best of you; get the best of evil by doing good."*

*– Romans 12:17-21*

We've all been there, you, me, each and every one of us, we've all tasted the need for revenge. Whether we've been hurt by someone or seen another hurt, whether we've experienced the pain of being betrayed, of having someone or something taken away from us, whether you've been denied something that you deserved or if you're upset about how another person's been treated. Revenge is something that we all crave for, not all the time, but it's hard to escape it's clutches.



In Peter Parker's case it eats him from the inside out, his need for revenge saw him follow the man who he thought was responsible for his Uncle's death and fight him until he fell to his death. In a way Spiderman was created out of the need to escape his revenge, the hero was a way for him to live up to his Uncle's expectations of being a good man. And, in a way every Spiderman was created out of a need for revenge, every criminal he catches, every crime he stops is another Uncle saved, another uncle-killer in prison. The death of his Uncle's killer wasn't enough for Peter.

Revenge is a huge theme in the comic world, from Batman seeking revenge for the death of his parents to the Punisher seeking revenge for the death of his family many of the MARVEL heroes have a need for revenge and forgiveness that help create the character.

Now with the alien symbiote slowly affecting Peter's judgement the need for revenge bubbles to the surface until he's seeking it even from those who he loves, hurting Mary Jane in an attempt to hurt her for hurting him. Sometimes something triggers our emotions and we lose some control and allow the monster within to take over.

In Harry Osborn's case it's the need to seek revenge on his father's killer, his focus eats him up, has him transform himself physically, mentally, emotionally until the day that he can fight and kill Peter and avenge his father. The need for revenge overtakes him and brings him to a point where he too seeks to hurt everyone around him pitting Peter against MJ. Eventually the need for revenge and violence overtakes both Peter and Harry scarring one physically and another emotionally.

In Eric's case his cry for revenge on Peter Parker to God finds himself with a powerful "gift" that he assumes is from heaven but instead is from a far away place and brings with it darkness. His need for revenge sees him embrace the symbiote and allows it to take over turning him into a powerful monster.

### Questions:

1. Can you name times when you've wanted revenge against someone else?
  - a. Why?
  - b. How did it make you feel?
2. Did you follow it through?
  - a. Why? Why not?
3. Can you name a time when you've sought revenge against someone else?
  - a. How did it make you feel after?
  - b. How did it affect the person you sought revenge on?
4. Do you think revenge is healthy?
  - a. Why/Why not?
5. What does the bible say about seeking revenge? Do a bible search and find a number of stories and verses, share them as a group.
6. How hard is it to love everyone and to not hit back? How can we as a community help one another in this task?

## Theme: Forgiveness

*“If you want forgiveness, get religion”*

*“We've all done terrible things to each other, but we have to forgive each other. Or everything we ever were will mean nothing.”*

-

*In prayer there is a connection between what God does and what you do. You can't get forgiveness from God, for instance, without also forgiving others. If you refuse to do your part, you cut yourself off from God's part.*

- Matthew 6:14-15



Sometimes it's easy for me to forget that to forgive others is not an option, nor is it a suggestion, it's a commandment, it's a task at the heart of the Christian life, to follow Christ means to forgive others.

In the movie the need for forgiveness is overwhelming, Harry needs to forgive Peter and MJ needs to forgive Peter and Harry while the Sandman seeks forgiveness from his family and from Peter. Peter needs to forgive the Sandman, MJ, Harry, Himself and Eric while Eric needs to forgive Peter and himself.

One could say that all of the violence in the movie is a direct response to all the characters not forgiving one another, and of all the characters seeking forgiveness. The enemy of forgiveness is revenge, and for most of the movie it rules unchallenged, questioned only by Auntie May and MJ.

And when Peter and Harry seek forgiveness from one another suddenly together they can challenge the violence around them, when Peter Parker can forgive the Sandman the monster just fades away, when Peter can ask MJ for forgiveness there's a dance waiting for them.

The strength that is shown in all the fight scenes is unmatched to the strength that we find in Harry Osborn who gives his life for the person he forgives and in the strength that Peter shows us in forgiving the man who killed the man he loved more than anything else.

And that's the real message of the movie, that strength is found in not seeking revenge, but in forgiveness.

### Questions:

1. What do you think is harder to do, seek forgiveness or grant it?
  - a. Why?

2. Have you ever sought forgiveness from someone?
  - a. How hard was it to ask for?
  - b. Was it granted?
  - c. Was it denied?
  - d. How did it make you feel?
  
3. Have you ever granted someone forgiveness?
  - a. Did they need to ask for it first?
  - b. Did you forgive them without them asking?
  - c. How did you feel?
  
4. How does the sentence "to forgive is not an option for Christians, it's a commandment, an imperative" make you feel?
  
5. Do you think people need to seek forgiveness (repent) before you/we grant it?
  - a. Is that how Jesus worked?

### Theme: Repentance

*While Jesus was living in the Galilean hills, John, called "the Baptizer," was preaching in the desert country of Judea. His message was simple and austere, like his desert surroundings: "Change your life. God's kingdom is here."  
- Matthew 3:2*

During the movie there are at least 3 images of repentance, the first of which we see Flint (Sandman) creeping into his family's house, asking forgiveness from his daughter and his wife. The forgiveness is not granted by the wife, but is by the daughter. Unfortunately this image isn't really an image of repentance as Flint realises what he is, a criminal and continues on his path of crime, even after becoming a new person.

The second image is of Peter Parker confronting the symbiote's affect on him as he physically rips it from his flesh, the struggle that Peter has with the symbiote is long and painful as the symbiote does not want to unbind itself from him. Sometimes out wanting to repent is difficult, walking a different path can be hard and, like giving up smoking giving up one path and repenting can be so hard. Interestingly enough this scene is in a church, even Spiderman comes to the church to confront the monster within and repent...

The third is probably one of the strongest in the entire movie, Harry Osborn shows great strength to deal with the hatred and need for avenging his





father's death to not only forgive Peter Parker but also to give his life for him. Peter learns from the sacrifice of Harry, a man who was his friend and who proved it through his forgiveness and death.

### Questions:

1. What do you think repentance means?
2. Do you think repentance should come before forgiveness?
3. Have you ever repented from a path that was bad for you?
  - a. How hard was it to turn around?
4. Has there been anyone who has inspired you because of the way they have turned their life around and repented?
  - a. Who was it?
  - b. How did they repent/turn around?

### Theme: Friendship

*"Friends come and friends go,  
but a true friend sticks by you like family. "*  
– Proverbs 18:24

–

*"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 owe can aspire to...forgiveness."*  
– Peter Parker

We all have friends, well, I hope that we all have friends that we can count on, people we know that will be with us forever and back us up when things are tough. Even Jesus had a group of friends who surrounded him for much of his ministry, but even the disciples weren't perfect friends all of the time, they constantly fell asleep when he needed them, never understood his stories, betrayed him and denied knowing him, even though that was the case Jesus still continued to call them friends.

The Peter Parker/Harry Osborn storyline's been there since day one, there's been conflict because of their love for MJ, their attention from Harry's father and, inevitably because of Spiderman's involvement in Harry's father's death.

Harry's need for revenge, Peter's hopes for reconciliation and in the end Harry's love for his friend winning out in the end.

## Questions:

1. What makes for a good friend?
2. How did you meet your best friend?
3. Why do you call your best friend “best”?
4. Have you ever had a fallout with a friend?
  - a. How did it feel?
  - b. Did you manage to work out the fallout and how?
5. Have you ever had a fallout with a friend that never worked out?
  - a. How did it make you feel?

## Theme: Choice

*“Whatever battles rages inside us, we always have a choice... it’s the choices that make us who we are, and we can always choose to do right.” – Spiderman*

*“I guess one person can make a difference” – Stan Lee*

You always have a choice says Peter, even if you’re overtaken by a symbiote alien slime creature, there’s always the choice to do what’s right.

Choice has always been a huge theme in comics, and was a major theme during the second movie in the series, with the posters promoting the movie using the words “Choice, Destiny and Sacrifice” on separate posters.

Peter makes his own choices, both good and bad, to ask MJ to marry him, to have Gwen Stacy kiss him, to wear the new black costume, to kill Sandman, to fight Eric, to ask Harry for help... He makes a bucket load of good and bad choices, each with their own ramifications.

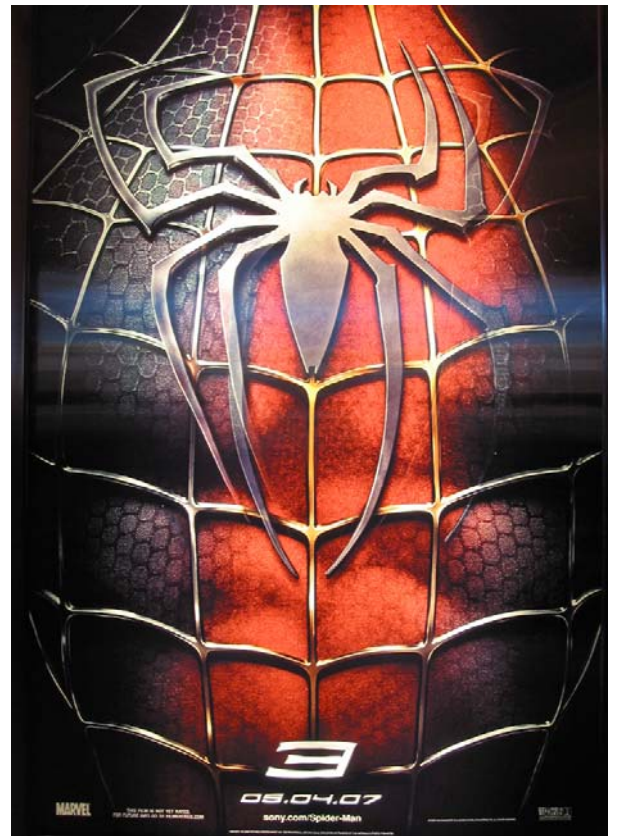
Harry makes his choices too, as does MJ, Flint, Eric, in fact, all the characters make their choices, for the good and the bad their choices guide their role in the story. The good thing is that many of the characters get a second chance, this time to make the right choice and correct their errors.

## Questions:

1. What have been some of the biggest choices that you’ve had to make?
2. Have you ever had a second chance to correct a choice that was perhaps the wrong one?
3. What’s the hardest choice that you’ve ever had to make?
  - a. Why was it so hard?
4. How do you make choices that are so big?
  - a. Do you pray?



- b. Do you have a mentor that you go to for help?
- c. Do you toss a coin?
- 5. What if your choices affect others, does your decision making process change at all?
  - a. How?
- 6. Do you have any decisions that you're having to make now?
  - a. Would you like people to pray for your decision now?



## Theme: When a monster looks like a hero...

I guess that it's all pretty easy when the hero wears a special suit, we can spot them out a mile off, they're the one doing good deeds, being celebrated by the public and looked up to by the young people around us. But it gets slightly difficult when the monster looks a lot like a hero...

When Spiderman becomes Venom-Spiderman...

When Superman gets in contact with red Kryptonite...

When Syndrome (The Incredibles) appears to save the day in a super outfit...

When Mystique disguises herself as Wolverine...

And that's pretty much the same in real life...

### Questions:

1. What happens when someone we look up to as a good person, as a hero turns out to be a monster?
  - a. How do we react?
  - b. How do we feel?
  - c. How do we deal with the disappointment?
2. And what's more how do we tell the difference between the hero and the monster when they look so much alike?
3. Can you think of a time when you've realised that someone who you thought was good was doing bad things?
  - a. How did that make you feel?

Enjoy!

Darren Wright