

AT THE MOVIES

AT THE MOVIES 2017: THE SHACK

Do you ever feel that if God loves you, He loves you less than others? That you've been handed the hard road, the unjust life, the messes that other Christians didn't have to deal with? God has a unique approach to those who are struggling in their faith. He wants you to encounter Him in a powerful way, but differently that most people who are down-and-out often feel He wants to meet them. This week we look at one Christian's fiction portrayal of the God of the down-and-outs, and we discover how it relates pretty well to the God of the Bible.

16 No one patches an old garment with unshrunk cloth, because the patch pulls away from the garment and makes the tear worse.

17 And no one puts new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise, the skins burst, the wine spills out, and the skins are ruined. But they put new wine into fresh wineskins, and both are preserved."
(Matt 9:16-17, HCSB)

As Jesus was saying this, the leader of a synagogue came and fell before him. "My daughter has just died," he said, "but you can bring her back to life again if you just come and lay your hand on her." So Jesus and his disciples got up and went with him.

Just then a woman who had suffered for twelve years with constant bleeding came up behind him. She touched the fringe of his robe, for she thought, "If I can just touch his robe, I will be healed."

Jesus turned around, and catching her gaze, he said, "Daughter, be encouraged! Your faith has made you well." And the woman was healed at that moment.
(Matthew 9:18-22)

BIG IDEA: God is too wise to be mistaken, and He is too good to be unkind.
When you can't trace his hand, you can always trust His heart.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. How have people attempted to answer the question, If God exists, why did He allow bad things to happen to good people in the past?
2. What verses or stories from the Bible do you think of, that address that question? Give as many examples as you can.
3. Have you seen people run away from God because difficult things happened to them? What could have been different that would have kept them from running from Him?
4. When have you felt like God didn't care? What circumstances made you feel that way?
5. What have people said to you that helped you or added clarity during times like that? What have people said or done that wasn't helpful?
6. How would you comfort a hurting friend who didn't have much faith and had lost someone they loved?
7. Look at what Job says when his life, health, and whole world fell apart, "Because even if he killed me, I'd keep on hoping in Him." What things can you think through or reminders can you create in your own life, so that you to trust in God, and not run from Him during difficult circumstances?

WHAT WILL YOU DO?

Firstly, when great pain comes to us, we must work hard to keep it from distorting our ability to see God, and that He is good.

Secondly, we must believe that God is not only good, but that He loves us too much not to be worthy of our trust, no matter what we go through.

CHANGING YOUR WORLD

Should you expect God to appear and spend the weekend with you to help you sort things out?
No, probably not.

God has a different plan working in the world today: it's called, "YOU"
God uses us to be His representatives on this earth. We are to model His love, and meet people where they are. We are to be the ones who love so well, that people see God's love through us. You can do what the actors in the movie did: model God's love and character for those who are hurting, so that they see Him through you.

