

Summer *Movies and Faith* Series
Everyday Heroes – The Blind Side
July 19, 2020

Overarching theme: In 2020, FUMC will be a **Go** church!

Instructions:

When using this material as teacher, feel free to pick and choose the point you want to emphasize in the lesson. *The format of the curriculum is designed to have an abundance of information in which to refer as desired.*

Core Point:

The past is the past. There is nothing that can be done about it. The past can only be used to gain wisdom for the future. What can change is the future. When we, as God's people, are willing to follow God in our daily lives, God will make a good way in the future. The way may be bumpy at times and have curves, but the process will be filled with God's love and grace.

Ephesians:

This week, the scripture focus is found in the Letter to the Ephesians. This letter was written by Paul to the church and surrounding people of Ephesus sometime around 60 A.D. Paul wrote this letter from jail, and probably wrote the letter to the Colossians about this same time. Paul's ministry at Ephesus totaled about 3 years, so he was very knowledgeable about their needs and issues. Ephesus was the most important city in western Asia Minor having a harbor that opened into the Cayster River. That river emptied into the Aegean Sea making accessible by ship very easy. Consequently, the city was an intersection of major trade routes, and a strong commercial center. It boasted a pagan temple dedicated to the Roman goddess Diana, or Artemis in Greek, which served the fertility religion of its time. Paul wrote to expand the horizons of his readers, so that they might understand better the dimensions of God's eternal purpose and grace in Christ Jesus (Ephesians 2) and come to appreciate the high goals God has for the church.

Reflect on this Scripture:

Ephesians 4:4-6; 11-16 NRSV

⁴ There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, ⁵ one Lord, one faith, one baptism, ⁶ one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all. ⁷ But each of us was given grace according to the measure of Christ's gift.

¹¹ The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, ¹² to equip the saints for the work of

ministry, for building up the body of Christ, ¹³ until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ. ¹⁴ We must no longer be children, tossed to and fro and blown about by every wind of doctrine, by people's trickery, by their craftiness in deceitful scheming. ¹⁵ But speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, ¹⁶ from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body's growth in building itself up in love.

Questions to ponder about the passages:

What jumps out at you from this passage?

What does the repetitive use of the word "one" emphasize?

Why is the human body such an apt metaphor for the "body of Christ" (the church)?

Commentary: The letter to the church at Ephesus is a passionate call for all of God's people, both Jews and Gentiles, to live into the grace of Christ and the Divine plan to truly be unified as the Body of Christ. Chapter 4 then builds on this theme through a specific call to spiritual unity. Consider the number of times the word "one" occurs – "**one** body and **one** Spirit, just as you were called to the **one** hope of your calling, **one** Lord, **one** faith, **one** baptism, **one** God and Father of all...".

In the midst of this clarion call for unity is the recognition for the need of spiritual guidance in the body (note the five functions - *apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers*). This is so that through hearing the truth spoken in love, God's people may develop in healthy ways and be equipped for their unique functioning in the body. The goal is maturity (not a childish susceptibility to deceit - being "tossed to and fro"), so that the body can grow up under the leadership of Christ, the head. For the body to be fully functional, however, every ligament (and other parts of the body) has to work properly. This metaphor is powerful – the body of Christ is profoundly interconnected, even as the human body is interconnected. Without Christ the head (especially!), and without each member of the body functioning properly, the people of God will not fulfill their purpose as a healthy, 'growing in love' community. That said, when the body of Christ is operating in Holy Spirit-led unity and purpose, there is a powerful, eternal impact.

Last week, Aladdin. Aladdin is a timeless tale of a diamond-in-the-rough, street-urchin Aladdin, and his journey that began as a nobody on the streets of Agrabah.

In the Bible we read of another diamond-in-the-rough, shepherd-boy David, and his journey that began as the 8th son of Jesse of Bethlehem. In a world where being first-born was everything, and eighth born was an also-ran, David was, in the eyes of his society, a nobody from nowhere.

Early on in his story, Aladdin unwittingly meets undercover Princess Jasmine going rogue. Dressed in street clothes, she snuck out of her cloistered palace for a day to see what life was like for the ordinary people of her realm. Aladdin is smitten!! But in time he realizes the truth about Jasmine – she’s a princess. So she was not only out of his league, she was out of his universe!

And according to royal law Jasmine was required to marry a Prince and Aladdin was clearly the furthest thing from a Prince that Agrabah had to offer.

However, in the course of time, ‘diamond in the rough’ Aladdin finds himself in the Cave of Wonders, discovers a magic lamp, and encounters an amazing Genie played by Will Smith. The Genie informs Aladdin that he is the recipient of three wishes, one of which Aladdin uses to become a ‘Prince’, to provide an opportunity for courting his beloved Jasmine. With the help of an impressive Genie-inspired marketing plan, Aladdin becomes fictitious Prince Ali from the made up land of Ababwa:

Well, how does this storyline relate to ‘diamond in the rough’ Biblical David? Again, in his world, David was least likely to do anything really significant. He couldn’t be further down the line of royal succession. And there are no Genies in the Bible! But there is a God who sees potential in David that no one else sees. And because David trusts in God (rather than Saul’s Armor), God does remarkable things through David and his ‘five smooth stones.’ David becomes one of God’s **“everyday heroes.”**

This week, The Blind Side.

Each part of the body matters. In this film, Michael Oher was in danger of slipping between the cracks. As the 13th child in a dysfunctional family, Michael had tremendous, but largely untapped gifts. In some ways, Leanne Tuohy’s was quite the opposite. She had everything (according to the American dream) – a beautiful family, a successful career, and a home that could grace the cover of Southern Living magazine. But even with ‘everything’, like Michael, Leanne had tremendous, but largely untapped gifts.

It is only when their paths cross that the gifts of God begin to develop in these two. Michael’s presence begins to elicit a powerful gift of compassion in Leanne. Leanne in turn sees gifts in Michael that might have gone unnoticed and underappreciated. Her consistent support fans the flame of Michael’s protective tendencies to then end that both of them live into a greater sense of their

potential as **Everyday Heroes**. Their connection serves to illustrate the powerful truth that “every ligament” matters. Let’s read Ephesians 4:16 again: *...the whole body, joined and knit together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body’s growth in building itself up in love.*

Questions to Ponder for accountability in the group:

In these passages, what is the main practical lesson?

What happens if the body of Christ is not connected with its’ head, Jesus?

What happens when a ligament does not do its’ part?

What kind of ligament are you? (i.e., what is your unique contribution to the body?)

In your unique role, how can you better promote the growth of the body of Christ, practically speaking?

Activity of for the life of a disciple:

1. Remember to find encouragement for the day by reading the daily devotional from FUMC.
2. Ponder and pray on this scripture this week: Ephesians 4:15-16
But speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body’s growth in building itself up in love.
3. What can you do this week to live into your unique gifts/calling and be an “Everyday Hero?”