

June 18, 2023

GATM: The Shack – Wounded Healer (Luke 23:32-43)

God understands your pain and can transform your hurting heart.

Bumper In – Trailer

Open (5min)

- Greeting and Connect Card
 - o Love this church – bathrooms out but people are still coming in. Love this!
 - o New people being invited, 8 first time visitors, and 7 new people on Teams.
 - o Sermon notes in app
 - o Happy Father’s Day – best place to be as we hear about the heavenly Father’s love.
- Christian movie – but not everyone agreed with the teaching in the book or movie.
 - o God as Trinity represented as three people?
 - o God doesn’t punish anyone?
 - o Universalism?
- My take – the book and movie are trying to bring biblical concepts to non-Christian audience to answer one of the hardest questions of human life. Maybe missed a few important things, but this is a great lesson on communication as you and I share the hope of Jesus with non-Christian people.
 - o Longer clips this week.

Prayer – silence to hear from the Lord.

Plot and Themes (5min)

- Plot – Mack suffered abuse by his father growing up, yet has a good life with his wife and three kids. On a camping trip, his daughter was messing around on a canoe, and Mack jumped in to save her, leaving his youngest daughter Missy on the shore. Missy was kidnapped and murdered. Mack derails, and his daughter Kate blames herself for her sister’s death.
 - o Mack receives a letter – that he believes is from God – to the Shack (where they found evidence of Missy’s murder). He goes and encounters Papa (God) and Jesus and the Holy Spirit.
 - o First step is Mack understanding what God is truly like.
 - Not old man with white beard (Santa Claus).
 - Not vindictive judgment.
 - God loves ALL His children – even Mack’s father...even Missy’s murderer.
 - This takes time for Mack to understand.
 - o Mack then forgives himself, then his father, then (hardest one) the murderer. He is led to Missy’s body and is able to bury it in a Garden (representing Mack’s heart) where the tears of sorrow bring new life.

“To transform religious and irreligious people into Fully Devoted Followers of Christ.”

- ****Themes**
 - Dealing with your pain before it destroys you.
 - Forgiving yourself and those who have hurt you.
 - Wrestling with why God allows evil.
 - *We are going to touch a bit on each of these.*

***God is perfectly good and completely loving – even for those who are neither.**
(10min)

- Luke 23:32-38 (p.878)
 - ³² Two others, both criminals, were led out to be executed with him. ³³ When they came to a place called The Skull, they nailed him to the cross. And the criminals were also crucified—one on his right and one on his left.
 - ³⁴ Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they don’t know what they are doing.” And the soldiers gambled for his clothes by throwing dice.
 - ³⁵ The crowd watched and the leaders scoffed. “He saved others,” they said, “let him save himself if he is really God’s Messiah, the Chosen One.” ³⁶ The soldiers mocked him, too, by offering him a drink of sour wine. ³⁷ They called out to him, “If you are the King of the Jews, save yourself!” ³⁸ A sign was fastened above him with these words: “This is the King of the Jews.”

- God suffers with us and for us.
- Only Christianity teaches this – and it changes everything.
- Jesus understands your pain. Jesus is with you in your pain. Jesus can transform your pain.

- ***Cave scene (2:42min)**

- Setting – Mack meets Sophia, God’s Wisdom, who invites him to sit on the seat of judgment. Mack starts by judging so many worthy of judgment – especially his father. Sophia – what about this boy being beaten? Mack – he’s a kid, I won’t judge him. Sophia – you already did...that is your father.
- Show clip
- Scene goes on – Why did God allow Missy to suffer? Why didn’t He stop it? Sophia – God doesn’t stop a lot of things. There is no promise of a pain-free life. As long as there is another will free do disobey God, evil can find a way in.

- ****If God is good and powerful, why do bad things happen?**

- *The answer is in the true story of Jesus – anchor yourself in that.*
 - *Part of our website (covenantgrove.org/jesus) – about that question and other main questions people ask.*
- Pagans – gods are not good and need to be appeased.
 - Hard to believe humans are the most moral beings in existence.
 - The question presupposes that there IS a standard of good and justice, that we can know it to an extent, and we can perceive that it is not happening.
- Secular – there is no divine being, and the fault is all on humans.

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- Then why are we so upset about it? (doesn't answer our deep desire for justice)
 - #1 question people have, and one of the main reasons people leave faith.
 - Jewish, Muslim, Christian – God is good and powerful, but humans have a level of power and responsibility for how the world is messed up.
 - Evil is a choice not a “thing.” Evil enters when a being who has choice chooses to disobey God’s will. Satan a fallen angel who tempts humans (who also tempt themselves).
 - Solution is not to take away our choice but to change our will. The gospel (only Jesus can change our nature).
 - Sometimes even happens *through* suffering (burned hand teaches best).
 - Christian answer – totally unique! God suffers with us and MORE than us.
 - Kazoh Kitamori (from Japan) great book – *Theology of the Pain of God*
 - You can pray and accuse, just remember who you are talking to.
 - Rather than turning indifferent, self-centered, or bitter, we can be part of God’s peace plan solution.
- ***God understands your pain and can transform your hurting heart.**
 - Pain will transform you...
 - You have a choice HOW it will change you...
 - **Pain will either make you better or bitter.**

You will either be a wounded healer or an unhealed wounder. (10min)

- If we don't deal with our pain, we end up hurting ourselves and those we love most.
 - Or we can follow the way of Jesus – who was wounded for our sakes and is the Healer.
- Luke 23:39-43

³⁹ One of the criminals hanging beside him scoffed, “So you’re the Messiah, are you? Prove it by saving yourself—and us, too, while you’re at it!”

⁴⁰ But the other criminal protested, “Don’t you fear God even when you have been sentenced to die? ⁴¹ We deserve to die for our crimes, but this man hasn’t done anything wrong.” ⁴² Then he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your Kingdom.” ⁴³ And Jesus replied, “I assure you, today you will be with me in paradise.”

 - The first criminal didn't care about justice – only wanted to escape his own pain (not the pain of those he had wronged).
 - The second criminal saw JESUS – with him in his pain.
 - *Will you deal with your pain...with Jesus?*
- Kitchen scene (1:46min)
 - Give God your pain...
 - We ALL have it. Don't bury it...deal with it with God.
 - Part of our discipleship process – going inward and knowing our own story (EHS).

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- Not struggling now? Help others!
- ****How:**
 - Pray, journal, reflect, grieve (Psa 56:8 – you collected my tears in a bottle).
 - Go back to move forward.
 - *We all need to mourn for what was lost – so we can move forward with God’s help.*
 - *Our culture struggles with grief – but endlessly happy is not true human flourishing.*
 - Share with others (Gal 6:1 – carry each other’s burdens and fulfill the law of Christ).
 - Allow others to weep with you and care for you.
 - *Don’t worry about burdening others – let it out so you can release the burden.*
 - *Use professionals if needed (brochure and financial help).*
 - Help others through your pain (Acts 18:2 – Priscilla and Aquila lost their home when emperor expelled all Jews from Rome).
 - Priscilla and Aquila didn’t stop serving others (many people do). They continued in ministry, found great friends in Paul, Silas, and Timothy, and trained Apollos.
 - Become a wounded healer, allow Jesus to transform your pain to help others.
 - *Brother who lost a child – he didn’t turn bitter but his faith in Jesus gave him hope to see his child again.*
 - *Friend who lost everything due to bad choices with addiction – but learned to accept Christ’s forgiveness and move beyond shame.*
 - *Sister who learned to forgive others by reflecting on how much she had been forgiven – now she is free not to be the judge.*
- **God understands your pain and can transform your hurting heart.**
 - Will you give God your pain?
 - Will you walk with others through their pain?

Punch – Ghenet Testimony (5min)

Prayer

Bumper – Flash Trailer

- Haven’t seen it, and some controversy around Ezra Miller – don’t need to see the movie...we will be talking around the ideas and themes, with Scripture.

Benediction – John 15:5

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