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Grease MP3.mp3

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DURATION

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2 SPEAKERS

Speaker1

Speaker2

START OF TRANSCRIPT

[00:00:00] Speaker1

The following is a message from Wellspring's congregation.

[00:00:05] Speaker2

Hi, good morning. It's so great to be with you. And as we do our summer series, looking for a spiritual message inside of films, I have chosen the ultimate summer film to talk about. And it is the movie Grease. Grease came out in nineteen seventy eight. I was 14 years old at the time and I have such a vivid memory of the first time I saw the film. I was on vacation with one of my best friends and we were in the Poconos. It was the first time I ever went away without my parents, with another family and we the first time I ever was in the country or the mountains, I should say, in a and staying in a little not cabin, but kind of a little trailer home. And every day, Mark and I would my friend Mark and I would just roam through the the woods or walk down an old old dirt road or walk down a country road. And it was a wild experience. And one night we went to the movies and there on the big screen was the movie that would become the movie. I probably have seen more than any other movie in my life, and I don't know if that is something I should boast about, but it is the movie that I've seen so many times, the movie Grease. John Travolta was hot off of his role in Saturday Night Fever. Olivia Newton John was a megastar and it was very common back in the 70s when you were going to put young people in adult situations to use adults to play high school students.

[00:02:11] Speaker2

So right off the bat, there is a challenge with this film in so many ways. The film opens with a montage of Sandy and Danny meeting at the beach over the summer. And they have a innocent, wonderful romance that you just get a glimpse of. And the the shots are very reminiscent of those classic romantic movies from the 50s. And after that little montage, the movie starts. But one of the things I wanted to point out about the opening of the film that I think speaks to. Ah, ah, ah, spiritual, uh, a way of looking at it spiritually, I would say, and that is one of the things I'm always fascinated by is how different we are when we are on vacation, how when we go away somewhere that takes us out of our daily routine, we almost become another person. We're inquisitive. We we meet new people. We talk to people we don't know we are because we're in a new place. We pay attention were present and wonderful things happen to people. Sometimes very adventurous things can happen to people on vacations. But it's interesting that the story starts where these two people are not necessarily who they are in their real lives. And they meet and they spark up a summer romance. Well, once the movie gets cooking, it's clear that it's the nineteen fifties and it's the nineteen fifties through the lens of the nineteen seventies, which is kind of interesting looking back on this imaginary wholesome nineteen fifties through the lens of this play.

[00:04:11] Speaker2

A couple of things about the play that I found interesting. It um, it started in Chicago and what was very surprising to me when I was doing a little bit of research for my talk today because like I said, I've seen this movie probably oh it's probably going on four hundred times at this point. I've seen the play a couple of times and I've actually. Read the book, one of the things that's interesting in the book is the book takes place in Philadelphia, which was really surprising to me that the play was written about a Chicago high school because in the book it talks about drag races on Passyunk Avenue and it talks about American Bandstand. It actually uses some of the real names of things that the the fictional things were based on. But for those of you who haven't seen Grease, basically what happens is, oh, I must say to watch this movie, you have to you have to be willing to have the suspension of disbelief, because right off the bat, there's a major flaw that Danny would have this summer romance with this woman over the summer and never tell her what high school she goes to. So when she shows up at Rydal High, she has no idea it's the same school that Danny goes to that right there. It's like it's like, OK, really.

[00:05:42] Speaker2

But anyway, I digress. So if you haven't seen the film, it's the story of Danny, who had the summer romance with Sandy, and now he's back in the role of being the greaser, the guy in a leather jacket who's sort of the the tough guy who's part of this little gang. And there is a a group of women who have a similar gang and they're all friends and they all hang out together. And I think one of the things when I saw the movie that really struck me is how how, you know, even the people that. Seem to want. I put on like they're the coolest or they have it all together or they get dressed up in their leather jackets, how much they are want to belong. They want to be part of a group, a part of a family. They want to be connected. And so many times as young people or even as just people, we don't know how to do that. And we think that putting on a certain way of looking or or dressing a particular way or being something will actually get us accepted. And those things that we think, even if they are who we are, can be such a big barrier for us actually to make connections. And at the same time, those those outfits can make us feel part of a a little family. I know that one of the things an embarrassing thing that I will admit after seeing the movie Grease maybe two or three times that me and a handful of my friends, we went to a pep boys or some kind of car place, and we got these stickers that we could put on the back of our jackets, our denim jackets, and we became the Cobras because it was the only sticker we could find.

[00:07:45] Speaker2

It was a cobra and it's a cobra in the back. So we stuck them on the back of our jackets. Now, we were a bunch of weirdos. We were kind of the outcasts in school. But and it wasn't that we weren't already hanging together, playing in bands and stuff like that, but it was like. There was something about the movie that spoke to that sort of tribal connection that people have when when they don't feel like they fit in anywhere, and it's clear that this little band of guys and women who were all sort of put together were kind of they kind of found each other because they didn't quite fit in anywhere else. And they were very wedded to those identities. And here comes Sandy, who really doesn't fit in with that group played by Olivia Newton John. She comes in and. They kind of toy with her because she's so different than the rest of them, but I think the underlying message of all of this is how? Wedded to these identities, we can be and and I know one of the things that has been an amazing experience for me being here at Wellspring's is that I've gotten to know and be connected to people who are so different than a lot of the people that I've known in my life.

[00:09:13] Speaker2

And I know a wide variety of people, but most of them are in the arts and most of them are musicians or artists or have some connection. I mean, I do know a lot of therapists, but it's been great to have my world expanded and and being able to take that leap. It has made me take the leap in it, almost like Wellspring's was practiced in some way for me, being able to open up to the more different people in my life, to be able to just feel comfortable and be OK with OK, that person's not an artist, but I can hang with them and we can find things to talk about. And it doesn't all have to be the thing that I'm most comfortable about talking about. And I think that is very evident in the movie Grease, where the little grouping of friends that Danny hangs out with, they're all in the cars and that's all they talk about as cars and they're talking about rehabbing this old car. And there's even that great number in the play called Greased Lightning, where they express their love and obsession for cars. But the real story here is about Danny, Danny and Sandy and how and soon is Danny and Sandy find that they're in this school together? It doesn't go well, Danny.

[00:10:38] Speaker2

Puts on his cool act and acts like he's just doesn't know who she is and. Sandy is heartbroken because this guy, she had this wonderful experience, seems like a completely different person. And so. But there is something there there is some kind of connection, but it keeps getting interrupted throughout the film by the challenge of this identity that they both wear and ended up going out on a date, which doesn't go very well, because now Danny's back in his environment and he thinks there are rules that apply to him now that he didn't apply to him over the summer. He tries to to at the drive in movie theater, he tries to put his moves on Sandy. And it's a very different way than he was over the summer. And she's not having any of it. And they end up in a huge break up. But something interesting happens, even though, uh. Danny, is this is the is the leader of the of his gang, so in some ways he he decides to step outside of himself. And. He actually tries to do a sport, he sees Sandy talking to one of the jocks and he says, OK, I'm going to try that. And he goes on this journey and he doesn't do very well. It's actually a little comical how he felt, how he fails at it. But he he keeps trying and. It's very interesting, this aspect of the film, because I think this is the bigger, deeper message in the movie, and that is that love, love.

[00:12:53] Speaker2

Is not a thing that we feel or that is this magical thing, but it's something that is nurtured, it's something that we. Decide for some reason, maybe there is a connection or some some there may be, there is some unknown thing that happens, but when it turns into real love, it's because there is effort made. There is work. There is time put into. Creating this relationship and that turns into love, I wanted to read something. Sharon Schlosberg, who is the founder of the Meditation Insight Society, says that love is a verb. Love is often viewed as though it's something that someone else hands you think, says Saltzberg, but it's not a UPS package for someone to give us. It's something it's not something that someone gives us. It's something that's inside of us. And if we want love, it is our responsibility to be present and accountable. Pay attention. It isn't a skill, it's not a skill that we're born with, it's like flexibility or physical stamina, it's developed over time. It's a muscle to strengthen practice, to nurture a series of neural pathways, is established and expands. Love is also what grounds and connects us. It's much like a dream Salzberg shared, which is. What she says is, as someone asked the question, why do people why do we love people? And she answered, it's because they see us. And so I think in some ways, Danny is trying to get Sandy to see him, but in other ways, he sees her and he sees what he.

[00:15:10] Speaker2

I don't want to make this clear, I don't think it's so much that she he's lacking something or that he's not good enough to be loved, but because he wants to be with her, he's willing to expand or grow who he is. And and that is the best parts of when you are loving someone that they can challenge you into being more than you who you are, I think in other movies. Well, you hear the line. Oh, you complete me. It's not that the other person completes you. It's that you're better off by the love that you give to that person, by the love that you share. It's not only sharing, but it's it's like growing a plant. You you nurture it, you water it, you tend to it. You are expressing the physical act of love. And I think that there are so many aspects of the film in Greece that are this message of how the friends and their imperfect friends, but how they are so accepting and so manifest the love for each other. In the closing scene of the movie, the last two scenes after the big race, and there's a couple of things that happened in between where Danny and Sandy keep getting back together with something gets in the way. There's the big dance where the big dance contest and one of Danny's old flame jumps in and pushes Sandy out of the way.

[00:16:54] Speaker2

And they win the dance contest and Sandy's hurt. And then there's the the big race where you don't know, of course, you know who's going to win. But the big race and Sandy gets an idea that she's going to try something. And, you know, in talking to a couple of people about this, a lot of people felt that because Sandy is this representation of of purity and goodness in the film, that in some way her transformation was negative. And I actually thought, wow, she steps into her own power when she become when she gets dressed up in the leather, she finds another part of herself. And I think that both I think at the end of the film, it's so powerful that Danny comes onto the scene and he's lettered in a sport and Sandy is wearing this. There's this leather outfit and she's she's got attitude now. She's she's she's she's cool. And and, of course, in the typical Hollywood ending, they ride off into the sunset, literally into the sunset, as all of their friends sing will always be together. Um, so like I said, I've seen this film so, so many times and it makes me so happy. It's one of my guilty pleasures and I think. And I feel that, uh, the the. The biggest message in the film is that is love, it's it's the love that we create between our friends. It's romantic love. It's the the power of love. And I think that, as I was saying earlier.

[00:18:56] Speaker2

You really see love happen when you are called to grow, and it just makes me think of the challenge of the past year and a half on all of us, all of us in the congregation, all of us in this country and all of us in the world. How this pandemic has really. Pushed us to in ways that so many of us haven't been pushed before, and I I do believe that because of that way of being pushed, we all have seen the physical manifestation of love. We we've experienced it and we share it and and. We are touched by it. So there you have it. That's my film for this this session or of. Of spirit flicks, and if you haven't seen the movie Grease, go and go and watch it, it will make you happy. It will make you feel good. The songs are amazing. And if you have seen it, maybe watch it again. It's a perfect summer film. It's so much fun and, uh, have some people that you love around to watch it. And, uh, and and share and express that love. We pray with me. Spirit. Well, whether God of our understanding. Allow all of us to find. Our way to grow through our expression. Of love. Through our connection. Through our desire to. Be connected. And. Ah. Desire and willingness to step out of our role that we're comfortable in and. Reach a little bit further, be one step above or ahead of where we are. And grow. Amen.

[00:21:55] Speaker1

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END OF TRANSCRIPT



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