



# Auckland Community Church

## **Kid's Movies**

Given by Cathy Hartles on the 19th February 2006

*Lord, grant us peace and gentleness at this moment, and may these words be Your words, as we seek to understand You and find our own unique place in your created world.*

*Amen.*

I'm a person with a lot of strange habits and quirks - just ask Liz! One of them is my tendency towards, in fact passion for childrens □ movies.

"Oh yes", I hear you say, she hasn't grown up yet, or at least, "She's a latent developer".

The truth is, childrens movies are wonderfully colourful, clever, funny and sad on the one level but they always contain deep adult messages. You only have to watch The Incredibles or Shrek to know this is true.

Madagascar shows us four pampered animals from New York's Central Park Zoo who accidentally find themselves shipwrecked on the exotic island. They find there really is a jungle out there, the grass isn't always greener on the other side and it's pretty scary.

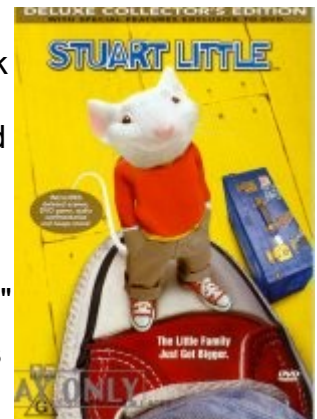


Before I get too carried away we should return I think to today's Gospel. There's so much that comes to mind in this picture - to be very very simplistic it demonstrates loving our neighbour. But it's so much more... It's a story, initially, of need. The paralyzed man's need moves his friends to action and what an action! Look at verse 4.....

"They couldn't get to Jesus thro the crowd, so they dug down thro the clay roof above his head. Then they lowered the sick man on his mat, right down in front of Jesus." (One presumes they didn't even go down into the room themselves at all, as it was already too full.)

Amazing effort was made to reach the truth. Why? These guys dug down through the thatch and clay and framework of the house. Some of you will know what it's like to struggle thro crowds at the Big Day Out or Main Street Taipei or Hong Kong. This was not an easy thing to do.

In this movie Stuart Little, we have a scene when Riko a "rotten, unpopular, smelly, freeloading skunk" (his words, not mine!) is at rock bottom and forced to admit he's let his little friend Stuart (a dreamy little mouse) down. Riko has a kind of Damascus Rd. experience and just knows he must help out in a very dangerous situation. "When it comes to friends, sometimes you just gotta take a risk."



The next verse, - 5, is even more interesting. "Seeing their faith (not the patient), Jesus said to the paralysed man, Your sins are forgiven."

I'm not going to try to unpack the heat and judgement of the religious leaders who were watching all this - we could maybe do that another time, but have a look at v.10.

This is the first time in Mark that Jesus is referred to as "The Son of Man". While Jesus is the son of God, he is also fully human, - as such he can identify with each woman and man's deepest needs. Yours and mine! When we take the risk that Rico spoke of and step

out with a friend in search of Truth, it requires a level of trust. You see God, in her humanity through Jesus Christ reaches right past those religious leaders in verse 6 "Some of the teachers of religious law who were sitting there, said to themselves ....."

In "Finding Nemo", Dory is warned not to swim over The Trench. Marlin, a little clownfish who is on a mission to find his son Nemo, tries to persuade Dory to go thro the Trench. "Trust me on this" he says. "Trust you?" asks Dory. "yes, that's what friends do." Of course Dory doesn't listen and we find that one danger was replaced by another, far worse. YOu see, these childrens' movies remind us of the vulnerability of being childlike and letting go in order for God to do amazing things!!

Let's come back to this question of need - we don't have to look too far in our own families, workplaces and friendships to have a sense that need is everywhere.

I'd like to share a story from an amazing book Liz is reading called "Jobs for the Boys".



Do you remember a time in NZ when women just didn't stand up and speak in Church?

I do and I remember the anxiety and pressure that came with the change to allow women into ministry - officially i.e. Apparently it was worse in the UK - a lot worse. Women there who struggled for ordination in the dear old C. of E. really had to take courage in both hands. One such was Rose Hudson-Wilkin. Rose came from Jamaica to London in 1979 to train as an officer in the Church Army. Eventually she was priested and sent to minister in Haggerston, an abjectly poor part of the East End.

A man phoned Rose one day, asking her to take his mother's funeral. The mother had never met Rose but lived in her parish - the son lived miles away. So she did the funeral. Quite soon after the man's wife died tragically - he got in touch and insisted that Rose lead this funeral too.

"So he turned up at the church to see me to talk about it. He's a big guy and he's standing there sobbing his heart out. I just held him. We didn't talk about the funeral that day because he was too distraught. A few days later I drove out to where he lived, and he said to me, "When you did my mother's funeral, I didn't know you were West Indian. My mother hated women priests and black people, and when we drove to the chapel and saw you there I went, "Oh....." and my relations in the car said "Your mother is going to turn in her grave."!!! He said, "But it was so beautiful. That's why I have to have you for my wife's funeral. And when I came to see you the other day, and you held me, I needed that. If a man had done that I would have thumped him." !

As I close, I'd like to encourage all of us as we struggle with the difficult, sometimes dangerous and certainly painful business of getting involved in each others needs.

Last Sunday, at the Big Gay(not Day!) Out I was tremendously proud of 2 of our young ACC members who responded to the needs of others without a moments hesitation. One of them was able to stand up to and debate clearly & vigorously with a certain fundamentalist gentleman there. The other responded quickly to an ugly situation where a member of the crowd reacted vigorously to the constant barrage from an anti-gay protester. He attempted quietly to defuse tensions, incurring the wrath and some physical shoving around as his natural sense of justice and fair play was stretched to the limits.

I say to all of us though, "get involved". Be not afraid. As we heard in the reading fr. Isaiah, "For I am about to do a brand new thing. Do you not see it? I will make a pathway thro' the wilderness for my people to come home. I will create rivers for them in the desert."

Though you may get thatch in your eyes and clay under your fingernails and splinters in your skin from demolishing the roof as you seek to reach that Truth of the love of Jesus, just hold to that wonderful promise.....

Lastly, I encourage you to get some light relief, watch The Lion King, or Nemo - they will delight you and give you much pause for thought.

