

The Impossible

Movie Synopsis:

In December 2004, close-knit family Maria (Naomi Watts), Henry (Ewan McGregor) and their three sons begin their winter vacation in Thailand. But the day after Christmas, the idyllic holiday turns into an incomprehensible nightmare when a terrifying roar rises from the depths of the sea, followed by a wall of black water that devours everything in its path. Though Maria and her family face their darkest hour, unexpected displays of kindness and courage ameliorate their terror.

Redemptive Analogy:

This movie will bring to mind how Jesus came to earth on a rescue mission. God's perfect creation was broken, but God loved it too much to let it stay that way. Jesus came to show the loving heart of a Father who longs to save his lost kids so that He can be with them. No matter what you are going through, God came to rescue you. He is the God of hope. He is who we hold on to when everything around us is falling apart.

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INTRO before showing the movie:

On December 26, 2004, an enormous earthquake triggered a series of devastating tsunamis hurling massive waves almost 100 feet high that eventually took the lives of over 230,000 people in 14 different countries. This movie, *The Impossible*, is based on a true story about a husband and wife, Henry and Maria, and their three sons, Lucas, Thomas, and Simon. What should have been a dream vacation in a tropical resort in Thailand turned into an utter nightmare when one of the world's most deadly natural disasters in recorded history struck.

As we watch the movie, let's see what decisions each of the people in the family makes as they are faced with challenging situations.

TO SHARE AFTER THE MOVIE:

If you haven't already, at some point in life you are going to be hit by an unexpected storm. Hopefully it won't be an actual tsunami but it could be the loss of a job, the death of a loved one, a wayward child, a health issue, a struggling relationship, an unexpected change in your job, you might feel alone – far from God – and your life seems empty, or any other number of challenging and painful events. No matter your circumstance, God wants to be present with you in your pain. Jesus says in the Bible,

I am the light of the world. If you follow me, you won't have to walk in darkness, because you will have the light that leads to life. John 8:12

No matter the storm – no matter the darkness – Jesus wants to bring light to your hopeless situation.

The truth is, storms are inevitable. In fact, Jesus said so in *John 16:33*,

In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.

So whether you are entering a storm, in the midst of one now, or emerging from a storm, the question is what do you do? Where do you turn? When the storm hits, it's incredibly tempting to turn inward, to focus on yourself, and to not engage with or think about others.

Yet we aren't meant to do life alone, and this is especially true when things are hard. That's what's great about getting together with groups of friends. These gatherings aren't made up of people whose lives are difficulty-free. They are full of real people who are going through real life issues, holding each other up during tough times and then celebrating the good times. God wants to shine light into our darkness and then use us to be the light to the world, to comfort others who need help.

In the movie, Maria and her son Lucas had a decision to make. Should they focus on surviving and taking care of themselves? Or should they look beyond themselves and help someone else in trouble? Maria showed such compassion when she told her son they should help the stranded boy, "Even if it's the last thing we do."

Some of you need to be on the receiving end of this kind of help. I hope that you will find hope in your dark situation and let Jesus, the light of the world, shine upon you. Some of us need to make a decision to find someone who is going through a storm and help them, to actually be the light of the world for somebody in need.

So, what does that actually mean? Well, really, just do something. Do anything. Pray for those who are hurting, or simply listen to somebody who feels alone. Send a note to somebody and let them know you care. Help a neighbor with a need they have. Pay someone's overdue bill. Serve alongside organizations who are helping others. We can't do everything, but we can do something. You can make a difference. You may not be able to help everyone, but you can help someone. Because everywhere you look there are people who need your help. Let's do everything we can to be the light of the world and reach out to those who are in need.

We need to remember God wants to bring us through our storms so we can help others who are going through a storm. In the Bible *2nd Corinthians 1:3-4* says it this way,

All praise to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is our merciful Father and the source of all comfort. He comforts us in all our troubles so that we can comfort others. When they are troubled, we will be able to give them the same comfort God has given us.

It may be that you are helping someone or praying for someone who needs God and you're not seeing anything changing in their lives. It's easy to get frustrated, discouraged and want to give up, but keep reaching out, keep believing, keep praying. *Galatians 6:9* in the Bible gives us this encouragement,

So let's not get tired of doing what is good. At just the right time we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don't give up.

Whatever you do, whatever you're going through, whatever you're believing God for, hang on and don't give up...God will make a way.

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This movie reminds me of how Jesus came to earth on a rescue mission. God's perfect creation was broken by sin, but God loved it too much to let it stay that way. Jesus came to show the loving heart of a Father who longs to save his lost kids so that He can be with us. Be encouraged that no matter what you are going through, God came to rescue you. He is the God of hope. He is who we hold on to when everything around us is falling apart.

Jesus came **so that** we could know God and His love for us...so that we could share it with others too. He wants everyone to know His love. Maybe you know somebody who is in a storm or doesn't know the love of God, it could be a friend, a neighbor or maybe a family member. Regardless, we must never stop pursuing others because our Father never stopped pursuing us.

Just as we saw in the movie how the father went looking for his son, we can know that there is no distance God will not go to rescue us. Hear that sentence as if God is saying this directly to you "*there is no distance I will not go to get to you and rescue you.*" It is so easy when you're going through a storm to feel like it's all on you, but there is never a single moment where God doesn't see you. I want to encourage you to hold on to hope. Don't let go. Even if you feel alone, God is with you and so are others around you.

Do you ever wonder what God's response is to us when we wander off or go our own way? Does He just wait for us to come back? Does He just get frustrated with our failures and shortcomings? The Bible makes God's attitude toward you and me very clear. In fact, there is a whole chapter devoted to God's love for those who are lost which is found in *Luke 15*. Jesus told three different stories about those who were searching for something that was lost. His whole point was to show how much God loves and cares for us. There's a story about a shepherd who has 100 sheep and when one wanders away, that shepherd leaves the 99 sheep to pursue the lost one. There's another story about a woman who has 10 coins and she loses 1 and she turns her whole house upside down searching for the 1 lost coin. And then there's the story about a father who has 2 sons and 1 leaves home to go his own way and every day that dad wakes up longing for his lost son to come home. When he finally sees his son making his way home...he runs down the road to embrace him, welcome him back and even throws a party to celebrate! That's God's heart toward you today – regardless of what you've done or where you have been.

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Storms sometimes have a way of separating us from God. Instead of running to God – we run from Him. But God longs to be with us. He continues to pursue us. He wants to comfort us in our pain. He wants to continue to rescue us from our mistakes and help put us on better paths for our lives.

God never stops looking for His kids. Perhaps you feel lost and far from God today. I want you to know God is searching for you and wants you to come back home. And when you do, He'll run to you, put His arms around you, and welcome you home.

I hope that the emotion of this movie today will give you an idea of God's great love for you. He sees you, he loves you, he will never stop searching for you. God is running towards you just like the father did in the movie.

If you find yourself far from God today, He wants to be with you. He invites you to come home. If you are ready to respond to that invitation simply surrender to the love of God. Say yes to Jesus and His rescue. If that's you, would you sincerely say to God, "I want to come home." It's a statement of surrender and trust.

Let's take a minute to pray together. If you would like to make the decision today to draw near to God and commit your life to Jesus, pray this with me ... "Jesus, would you be my Lord and my Savior? Thank you for dying on the cross for my sins. I receive your salvation today. In Jesus name, Amen."

If you said that simple prayer, God and all of heaven is celebrating. If you're going through a storm today, you can know the love, comfort and hope that comes from trusting God. As we look around us, let's see how we can be light and love to others. We are created to make a difference in this world. Will you think about who you can help? What can you do to serve someone around you who is hurting? Every one of us can help someone.