



sermon notes

The Gospel Story in Pinocchio

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Some Things to Keep In Mind

This sermon series is designed to help us see the gospel story through the retelling of some of Walt Disney's classic fairy tales. Although the stories are classic and timeless, we know that in the world we live in, on this side of heaven . . .

- There is not always a happy ending.
- Human love does not always conquer all.
- People do not always live happily ever after.
- Step-parents and step-siblings are not always evil.
- There is not always a prince in every man and a princess in every woman.
- There is not a fairy-godmother who makes everything work out.

Why a series on “where faith meets Disney”?

Biblical scholar Marcus Borg tells us that we receive wisdom in two ways:

- _____ Wisdom is the prevailing value of our culture. It is the belief held by most people.
- _____ Wisdom is the belief that challenges conventional wisdom. It is taught by “thinking” teachers like Jesus. Alternative wisdom attempts to transform lives and create new values and cultural norms. Jesus called this alternative wisdom the “Kingdom of Heaven” or the “Kingdom of God.”
- Jesus taught “Alternative Wisdom” by telling stories called parables. Disney also told stories that challenged the “Conventional Wisdom” and spoke to the culture.

The Parable of the Lost Son

Luke 15:11–24 (NIV)

“There was a man who had two sons. The younger one said to his father, ‘Father, give me my share of the estate.’ So he divided his property between them.

“Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent

him to his fields to feed pigs. He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.

“When he came to his senses, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.’ So he got up and went to his father.

“But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.

“The son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’

“But the father said to his servants, ‘Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let’s have a feast and celebrate. For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ So they began to celebrate.”

Parallels between The Prodigal Son and Pinocchio

Gospel Parallel #1:

God _____ and _____ into Adam.

The Lord God formed the man . . . and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.
Genesis 2:7 (NIV)

Gospel Parallel #2:

Giving into temptation keeps us from being _____

_____.

God blesses those who patiently endure testing and temptation. Afterward they will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him.
James 1:12 (NLT)

Temptation defined by Jiminy Cricket:
“It’s doing the wrong thing at the right time.
It is trying to be right when you know you are doing wrong.”

_____ is a name used for the Devil in Scripture.

_____ is _____ spelled backwards!

Parallels between The Prodigal Son and Pinocchio (cont.)

Gospel Parallel #3:

Like the Prodigal Son, Pinocchio leaves home only to find himself _____ and _____.

- Pinocchio believes he is going to a wonderful, fun place that will allow him to be fully alive.
- Pinocchio discovers the truth about temptation and tempters:
 - Tempters are only looking out for themselves.
 - There is no concern for your well-being.
 - His “friends” use him for their own gain.

Gospel Parallel #4:

_____ **pursues his lost child.**

This is the essence of both stories:

- The Prodigal Son: The father runs out to meet his son even before the son comes home.
- Pinocchio: The same extravagant love of the father sends Geppetto out to pursue his lost son.

The greatest love you can show is to give your life for your friends.

John 15:13 (GW)

This son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.

Luke 15:24 (NIV)