

## **O Brother, Where Art Thou?**

Rated PG-13

*“O Brother, Where Art Thou”* is a highly acclaimed movie, holding two Academy Award nominations. It was written and directed by Ethan and Joel Coen who were responsible for the off-beat, and, in my opinion, off the wall film, *Fargo*. Be that as it may, *“O Brother”* is a film well worth seeing.

This story is taken from Homer’s famous epic and is the quintessential feel-good film. *“O Brother”* has a Three Stooges type presentation that is marinated in rich symbolism and philosophy with the background ambiance of a musical. Together, these elements produce a very amazing, humorous, mystical experience.

The main characters are: George Clooney, who plays Ulysses ‘Everett’ McGill: a debonair, glib, schemer of a man, Tim Blake Nelson as the warm, optimist Delmar whose innocent facial expressions are delightful, and John Turturro as Pete, a simpleton whose occasional outbursts and protests belie his loyalty and friendship to Everett.

The story is set in the early 1900’s and opens with the threesome escaping from a chain gang prison crew. After running down a slow moving train, they meet an aging, blind fellow pumping a hand cart down the railroad track who invites the “boys” to join him. He quickly tells them, “I work for no man. I have no name.” To this, quick-witted Everett retorts, “Well, right there may be your problem of unemployment.” Ignoring Everett, the old man prophetically spells out their future, stating that they will find a fortune, albeit not the fortune they are seeking, but not to fear the obstacles along the way, and “let not your heart grow weary.”

The film moves on to one obstacle and calamity after another, each of which our heroes somehow manage. Along the way each character has an opportunity to find God, or turn to Him when at the end of their rope, both metaphorically and literally.

Along with having its own Cyclops (John Goodman as the sinister, evil salesman), there are many hilarious situations in the film as well as plenty of serious ones that demonstrate the dark side of human nature. These events require the “boys” to fight for what is right or do nothing and let their heart grow weary.

Putting all the humor and slap-stick antics aside, I believe that valuable spiritual messages can be gleaned from this film. Life certainly is an odyssey that brings good and evil to our door. And, each of us in our own way, has the need to reach out to God and to appreciate His ability to work in mysterious ways. This film encourages us to look on “the sunny side of life” and to keep on, and not lose faith.

In the end, this is merely a movie. But, what a feeling you get for seeing it!

By *Curt Levang*