

It's a Wonderful Life

The holidays are straight ahead, and a movie that has become a classic and a staple of Christmas television around the world will once again grace the screens.

It's a Wonderful Life is a 1946 American drama film produced and directed by Frank Capra and based on the short story *The Greatest Gift*, written by Philip Van Doren Stern. The film stars James Stewart as George Bailey, a man whose imminent suicide on Christmas Eve brings about the intervention of his guardian angel, Clarence Odbody (Henry Travers). Clarence shows George all the lives he has touched and the contributions he has made to his community.



Despite initially being considered a box-office flop due to high production costs and stiff competition at the time of its release, the film has proven immensely popular. Theatrically, the film's break-even point was actually \$6.3 million, approximately twice the production cost, a figure it never came close to achieving in its initial release. An appraisal in 2006 reported: "Although it was not the complete box-office failure that today everyone believes, it was initially a major disappointment and confirmed, at least to the studios, that Capra was no longer capable of turning out the populist features that made his films the must-see, money-making events they once were." (Which just goes to prove: Be careful about rushing to judgments.)



It's a Wonderful Life was nominated for five Oscars without winning any, but the film has since been recognized by the American Film Institute as one of the 100 best American films ever made, and placed No. 1 on their list of the most inspirational American films of all time.

Years ago, Capra was asked about the central message of the film. After thinking a few moments, he responded, "I believe the real message of *It's a Wonderful Life* is this: that under the sun, nothing is insignificant to God."



(more)

Now, when you watch the movie again this season, you know that everything that happens has intended and unintended consequences. Everything, because it happened, causes something else to happen. Everybody in that story is important, because he or she relates to everyone else. Nothing under the sun is insignificant to God.

Perhaps you need to be reminded, not only that you are important to God, but also that everyone around you is significant to Him, too.

– Beecher Hunter

