

**“Miracle” starring Kurt Russell, Patricia Clarkson, Nathan West, 2004, PG, 135 minutes**

**Major themes:**

- Family
- Leadership
- Ice hockey
- Teamwork
- Sportsmanship
- Competition
- Tough love
- Priorities

**Major characters:**

- Herb Brooks (head coach)
- Patti Brooks
- Craig Patrick (assistant coach)
- Walter Bush (general manager)
- Doc Nagobads (team physician)
- Al Michaels (Television sportscaster)
- Players:
  - Jim Craig
  - Mike Eruzione
  - Jack O’Callahan
  - Rob McClanahan
  - Ralph Cox
  - Mark Johnson

### Background info:

- Al Michaels recreated his commentary for most of the games. The final ten seconds of the final game shown and his "*Do you believe in miracles? YES!*" call, were from the original 1980 broadcast, because director Gavin O'Connor felt he couldn't ask Michaels to recreate the emotion he had experienced at that moment.
- Herb Brooks was an accomplished ice hockey player before becoming a coach. He had been a member of the 1960 U.S. Olympic team, but became the last player cut from the team a week before the Games started. Three weeks later that team won the gold medal. He did play for the U.S. in both the 1964 and 1968 Olympic Games.
- This movie was dedicated to Herb Brooks, who died in a car accident shortly after most of the filming was completed. In 2006, he was posthumously inducted into the Hockey Hall of Fame, with the following inscription: "*A man of passion and dedication, Herb Brooks inspired a generation of Americans to pursue any and all dreams.*"
- The young men chosen to portray hockey players were chosen primarily for their hockey skills, with acting ability being secondary. Most of them were at least good amateur ice hockey players, and several were former pros, resulting in authentic action sequences. 4000 men auditioned for 20 U.S. Olympic Ice Hockey Team roles.
- This film has six taglines:
  - "*What America needed was a miracle. What it got was a hockey game.*"
  - "*If you believe in yourself, Miracles can happen.*"
  - "*The story of the greatest moment in sports history.*"
  - "*Believe.*"
  - "*Their game made them winners. Their spirit made them heroes.*"
  - "*Do you believe in miracles?*"

## Movie Nights for Thinkers and Seekers

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### Scriptures:

Colossians 3:17 – 21 (The Message) – *“Let every detail in your lives—words, actions, whatever—be done in the name of the Master, Jesus, thanking God the Father every step of the way. Wives, understand and support your husbands by submitting to them in ways that honor the Master. Husbands, go all out in love for your wives. Don’t take advantage of them. Children, do what your parents tell you. This delights the Master no end. Parents, don’t come down too hard on your children or you’ll crush their spirits.”*

Romans 12:6 – 8 (ISV) – *“We have different gifts based on the grace that was given to us. So if your gift is prophecy, use your gift in proportion to your faith. If your gift is serving, devote yourself to serving others. If it is teaching, devote yourself to teaching others. If it is encouraging, devote yourself to encouraging others. If it is sharing, share generously. If it is leading, lead enthusiastically. If it is helping, help cheerfully.”*

2 Corinthians 6:4 – 10 (The Message) – *“Our work as God’s servants gets validated—or not—in the details. People are watching us as we stay at our post, alertly, unswervingly . . . in hard times, tough times, bad times; when we’re beaten up, jailed, and mobbed; working hard, working late, working without eating; with pure heart, clear head, steady hand; in gentleness, holiness, and honest love; when we’re telling the truth, and when God’s showing his power; when we’re doing our best setting things right; when we’re praised, and when we’re blamed; slandered, and honored; true to our word, though distrusted; ignored by the world, but recognized by God; terrifically alive, though rumored to be dead; beaten within an inch of our lives, but refusing to die; immersed in tears, yet always filled with deep joy; living on handouts, yet enriching many; having nothing, having it all.”*

Romans 5:3 – 4a (NLT) – *“We can rejoice, too, when we run into problems and trials, for we know that they help us develop endurance. And endurance develops strength of character . . .”*

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### Discussion points:

1. Share a time when you have worked so hard for something that it pushed you to your limit physically, mentally, or emotionally. Was it worth it? What did you learn from that experience?
2. Which leadership qualities did you notice in Herb Brooks? What other kinds of qualities make a good leader great?
3. Leaders are often tasked with delivering both good and bad news. What can we learn from the way Herb Brooks delivers news to his players? How do you think his own experience of deep personal disappointment affected the way he treated others?
4. What helped the players to reach their fullest potential? What hindered them?
5. One of the challenges in our culture is balancing family life, work, and other responsibilities. Where do you notice a healthy or unhealthy balance in this film?
6. *"Great moments are born from great opportunity."* How can the way we view our circumstances encourage or thwart the transformation of opportunities, positive or negative, into great moments?