



AT THE MOVIES 2026 • NEW HOPE CHURCH

The Sacrifice You Did Not See Coming (Project Hail Mary)

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[Trailer • Project Hail Mary • dialogue not transcribed]

i didn't want to like that movie somehow i did and um how many of y'all seen it Okay, so several of you have. Look, when we do these movies, we're not necessarily endorsing them. I do think there's a lot about this one that was really well worth it. Let me explain what we're doing here, if you're new. We're using movies, and we're pulling clips of them, similar to what Jesus did when he told parables. In Matthew, it says that... Jesus told many stories in the form of parables, and why did he do it? A good teacher knows that a story can convey truth in a way that just words alone aren't going to stick with you. And so Jesus did all kinds of stories. He did it because he knew that regardless of your age or stage, you could get it.

And in a lot of the parables he told, you could get a surface meaning of it, and if you could keep digging at it, you're going to find more and more. we decided we've been doing this in august for quite a while where we'll do these at the movies we're we're using current movies and we're not saying this is what the intent of the author or the producers had in fact andy weir who wrote the book that became the movie has said publicly he's agnostic, so he's not a Christian. He's a science nerd, and he just likes exploring big ideas. And one of the things about this, and you'll see this as we walk through these clips in the beginning, is that there were truths that, whether you're a Christian or not, they're still true. All truth is God's truth. not everything is true.

We're not going to deal with that right now. But you can understand the value of friendship and understand biblical principles in that without even knowing that it was in the Bible. And there's a lot of things that people grab hold of and they hang on to and they get surprised later on to find out. So that's where that came from. In the business world right now, they've been doing this for a couple of decades. They're talking about servant leadership. It was like there was a brand new concept. No, it's been around a long time. It's just in the business world, they hadn't discovered it. And once they do, it's like, wow, that really makes a lot of sense. Where did that come from? So we're looking at this.

We're going to show several clips in the beginning because I'm not going to spoil the movie for you, but it really does, it highlights some things about courage, about friendship, about sacrifice that the Bible talks a lot about and is encapsulated in this movie. Rylan Grace is a middle school science teacher, happy with his life where it is. but an issue comes up that it affects the whole planet. In fact, there's this substance called astrophage that is slowly but very clearly killing our sun. And if something isn't done, if there's not a way to

find a way to stop this, the Earth is going to enter into a new ice age and everyone will die. He ends up being someone that can really understand it.

He works with this team to come up with a, they're trying to find out, how do we solve this thing? And this first clip, Ryland Grace, he's showing the astronauts that are going to go on this one-way mission because it's so far away, there's no way they could come back, they don't have enough fuel and all that. And he's enamored with them. He wants them to understand what does astrophage do. And so he's going to educate the astronauts, but you're going to see something about him coming to the surface too that we'll explore later.

[Film clip 1 • Project Hail Mary • dialogue not transcribed]

You just need to find someone to be brave for. He has no clue what that means. He's completely caught off guard about all this. He's very honest. He doesn't pretend that he's, you know, he doesn't make big claims or anything like that. He is just not the hero type, and he's not very brave. And he doesn't understand these astronauts that are taking this one way. what they would call a suicide mission. He doesn't understand how they could do it. Even though the cause is important, it's just not, to him, it's just not worth it. And he's going to talk to the director in this next short clip. He's talking to the director of the whole project and he's trying to find out, in essence, in his thought bubble, it's like, what's wrong with these people? They're willing to give up their lives. certainly, an important cost, but is it really worth giving up your life? How are they wired? So this will show a little bit of that for him.

[Film clip 2 • Project Hail Mary • dialogue not transcribed]

Yeah. It must be hard to ask him to do that. And her answer is no. She knows the stakes. She knows if they don't do this mission, everyone's going to die sooner or later. and understanding that. And this is a brand new category for him. And she mentioned something about their camaraderie has helped them stay connected like this. And even in the midst of something that's going to be so hard, they draw something from each other that's really valuable. This next clip. They've run into a problem. They have the astronauts, the people that can run the mission, but they don't have a scientist. The scientist was killed in an accident in training. And, well, you'll see what happens here. But it brings very clearly what he's willing to do, what he's not willing to do.

[Film clip 3 • Project Hail Mary • dialogue not transcribed]

His response is, no, I'm not going to do it. And then some of you have had this happen to you before where you get volunteered. You'll see that. I'm not going to get into all the details of it. And you'll notice, too, that some of this sounds very much like what Jesus asks. Give up your life to follow me. not hang on to both and we'll look at that in just a minute but he he gets volunteered and as it unfolds you'll see him taking hold of the opportunity because there is no other there's no plan b He heads off to a solar system where they have found an environment that looks like they could find, if they can find out what works there, it can take care the microbe that's killing our sun. It's light years away.

By the time he gets there, he'll have used up all the fuel. The astrophage also makes a really good fuel. That's what he's used to get there, but he's nothing like that to get back. And he transforms from being someone that's just not fearful but just so self-involved to where he buys into this mission and he realizes that it has to be done. And he has seen this modeled by some others around him. And we'll get into that in a minute, too. It's a one-way trip. As he gets into the new solar system, where he's thinking he can find the remedy, he runs into another alien. And remember, he's an alien as well as that spider that's made out of rocks, Rocky. They're both aliens. They look weird to each other. They're from entirely different environments. But like Grace, Rocky has come.

He's lost his whole crew. Grace lost his crew on the way. So there's just two solo guys coming to save their own planets. their mission is the same, they're trying to figure out what can we do, and they build this friendship on a common mission together. Their differences don't divide them, their differences actually help them out. They're now the only hope their planets have. um in this last scene rocky the spider looking weird thing finds out that grace isn't going back home and what he's going to do is gather all the information he can and they have some probes that he can send information on how to use the what he believes is going to be a remedy for what's killing the earth's sun. He's going to send that back, and Rocky discovers this, and I want you to watch how their friendship has developed, and I want you to watch how they handle this together. It's pretty fascinating and surprising.

[Film clip 4 • Project Hail Mary • dialogue not transcribed]

Rocky's willing to give up six years, delaying him going home so that Grace can. Grace transforms from a very self-absorbed, fearful, unwilling to sacrifice person. Part of it because it was modeled by the others, the astronauts that had gone before him and then with Rocky. Courage can be contagious. It seldom happens in a vacuum. And this idea of sacrifice, it just means giving up something you care deeply for for something you choose to care for more deeply. Just go through a handful of things here to follow up with this. One is real love is not an emotion. We're used to emotions. We're used to, well, I'm in love because I feel, you know, I'll feel all hallmarky or whatever it is. And that's kind of how grace has been operating. But fear was a bigger emotion in him.

Now, a lot of people will claim to love and to care, but at the end of the day, Listen to this verse in Proverbs. It says, Lots of people claim to be loyal and loving, but where on earth can you find one? You have to go to another solar system, apparently. A lot of people declare things, but do they really live it out? Do we live it out? If I'm honest, many times what I do and what looks like an act of love of service is really I'm doing something because I'm going to get something in return. Or I can do it with extra because it's not really costing me my comfort and my convenience. Love is not like that. Real love is devotion to someone I value more than myself. and it's a choice.

It is a deliberate choice, and sometimes it'll be made with tears. Grace finds that out. He was around some really good examples, and this thing, you know, character and courage are more easily caught than they are taught. You can read books about it, and you can hear all kinds of quotes, but when you watch someone live it out, It can change things dramatically. Our supreme example of that is Jesus Christ. He sacrificed everything so you and I could have brand new lives. We have this model that is just incomparable. And

followers of Jesus learn to love others like Jesus does. And we do that because we love him. In response to what he's done, I'm going to follow his lead. Jesus said this, and we've looked at this. This is not in your notes.

But he said, if you try to hang on to your life, you're going to lose it. But if you give up your life for my sake, you will find it. And that's kind of a picture you see throughout this movie. John 15 says, this is my commandment, love each other in the same way I've loved you. This is what we're called to. This is what his church has been assigned. There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for our friends. And he says, you are my friends if you do what I command. This is what we're called to do. This is what his church is to be. We come as we are. God begins to change us from the inside out. And we become something that we weren't before. And we've become something that becomes more and more looking like Jesus.

But it takes really being connected. It doesn't happen accidentally. It doesn't happen. By every once in a while showing up, it means, and some of us, what we do with church world is we just kind of show up periodically when it's convenient. There are people that do church hopping. They're just going to, I like the messages here. I like the music here. I like what they did. We're going to be a community where we deliberately connect with each other. Imperfect, and if you ever find a perfect church, don't join it. You'll screw it up. We're imperfect. We're not going to always get it right. We're going to work through things together. And sometimes it's really hard, but that's how character is built. I'm going to give you a handful of examples. Renee Haurige was baptized this past January.

Earlier, we have an open mic we do every Thanksgiving, the Sunday after Thanksgiving, and Renee had gotten up and spoken then and just announced that she had stage four cancer and it had gone to her brain. And she was thanking God that he was taking care of her in the midst of that. She had a seven-year-old daughter. She was grateful for her small group that were walking with her through all this. She was not alone. And that January, she gets baptized with her daughter. And her influence was huge because people saw in her courage to admit this publicly and to not just live in bitterness and anger and all the things I'm losing. But she was... realizing how grateful she was for what time she did have. Renee just passed away two weeks ago. Short life, big legacy. We're all going to die.

I don't know if you knew that or not. But how we live is what matters, what time we've got. And I'm so grateful to have known her and to be able to be a part of her life and to learn from her. Yesterday at the men's breakfast, Dan Murphy, Dan's a tough guy. No one would ever accuse Dan of being a weenie. He was a command sergeant major in the Army. He led SWAT team in Arlington. I mean, he's a guy. He's a tough guy. But as he told his story, he was talking about when he was just completely thrown. And that was when his five-year-old grandson, Michael, drowned last year. Accidental drowning. And it just crushed Dan, obviously. And he was willing to tell his story about how God has worked in his life and has carried him through.

He said, I didn't handle it perfectly. But let me tell you my story. And he offered hope in the midst of telling his story so others, if they go through something like that, would know I can do that. When he was talking, he was talking about his small group coming alongside and supporting him. He was talking about Grief Share, which is a program we have here that has just helped hundreds of people that are going through something

horrible and difficult and painful and not having to do it alone. Coming broken and struggling and all that, but then coming to a point where they're still struggling and working through it. They're able to help somebody else doing the same thing. Very much like what Rocky and Rylan Grace did for each other. Carrying each other through a really tough time.

God intended us to be a community where we walk through things together, where we love each other, we're willing to sacrifice and serve each other for a great cause. and that's to honor Jesus. When you came in today, you probably got one of these flyers, and it's got contact information. Grief Share is just starting up again. We've got a group for guys that don't like to talk about cancer, the Cancer Cowboys, where they can come together and talk about what's really, really hard and difficult and scary. I mean, this idea We have Celebrate Recovery where people come in and they're admitting, I have really, really messed up. I'm broken. I don't know what to do. And then they get help from others that have been the same place they are. And then over time, they get to offer that to others.

This is what God's church should be like when we do it well. 1 John 3 says this, we know what real love is because Jesus gave up his life for us. So, we also want to give up our lives for our brothers and sisters. We ought to be following his lead in this, investing in each other, putting up with each other, supporting each other, coming alongside, offering strength and encouragement and challenge and help. It's interesting, it says, if someone has enough money to live well and sees a brother or sister in need but shows no compassion, how can God's love be in that person? In other words, if I'm connected, if I know something and I'm not willing to do anything, Rylan Grace wasn't willing to do anything. Oh, there's a big need. I sure hope someone steps up.

He needed to look in the mirror. He goes on to say, dear children, let's not merely say we love each other. Let's show the truth by our actions. Real love is not an emotion. It is actively living this devoted life to Jesus and to each other. We build this community of imperfect people working to figure out how can we help each other grow and develop and become all God wants us to be. I was reading an article by Mia Saab, she wrote for Christianity Today, and she was looking at this movie, and she made a statement that I thought was really interesting, talking about friendship and the value of it. And she goes, it's a beautiful sight to behold, a friendship like that in an era that has exaggerated, listen to this, that has exaggerated the importance of emotional boundaries. transactionalism, and self-care over self-sacrifice.

It doesn't mean we don't take care of ourselves, of course, but it's not to the exclusion of people around me. You know, when you're on the airplane and the oxygen mask comes out, I need to put mine on first so I can help others. And we got to figure out what does this mean to follow Jesus and to be willing to sacrifice what I want, my comfort, my convenience for the sake of others around me, for people to find Jesus and for others to be able to continue to walk strongly with him. And to live in the world so that people see something that could be compelling, something that could be inviting to them. I'll close with this. This is Galatians 2.20. It's a tremendous verse, and you'll see this in the take-home sheet. It says, My old self has been crucified with Christ.

It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. So I live in this earthly body by trusting in the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself up for me. When you and I do this, when we choose to... put our self-interest aside, not pretending we don't have them, just choosing not to pursue them. What we'll discover along the way is there's this great God that is right there with us. He'll give us what we need so that we can live lives that matter, lives that have an impact. I think this movie really illustrates that in a way that ought to challenge. I know it challenges me. I hope it does all of us. Let me pray. God, you know us. You know that, like Ryle and Grace, we're, in many cases, very caught up in our own agenda.

Please help us to see you, to see what you offer, and then to see the opportunities we have to make a difference in this world and help us to choose to pursue and to fulfill our God-given potential individually and collectively. For Jesus' sake, amen.