

Could 'Captain America' Spark Political Change?

As *Captain America: The Winter Soldier* storms into theaters, one can't help but wonder what those in Washington, D.C., are thinking of the latest Marvel cinematic installment. With dialogue and themes that make it feel as if it's been written by America's Founding Fathers, it's not too often we get to see a movie that so deeply exposes governmental overreach on such a large scale.

Could this movie bring a political shift or change? What kind of impact could this story have?

In the movie, a mysterious assassin called the Winter Soldier critically wounds Nick Fury, Captain America's boss at SHIELD. Fury hands Captain America a flash drive showing SHIELD has been compromised. "Don't trust anyone," Fury tells Cap before lapsing into a coma.

Using the flash drive, Cap learns a secret cabal has infiltrated SHIELD. The cabal also controls the Winter Soldier. Ultimately, it plans to use newly developed SHIELD technology to rule the world. Now Captain America and the only two friends he trusts must avoid not only the Winter Soldier but all of SHIELD so they can stop this evil plot.

While the changes America needs to make are many, *The Winter Soldier* offers a few inspiring and crucial lessons for anyone who wants to make a difference.

Steve Rogers (Captain America) struggles with being a part of SHIELD, an agency that's more than willing to sacrifice American liberty for power and control. More than once, he's asked to get on board with what SHIELD is doing, but he refuses every time.

The difference between the America we have now and the America we've lost isn't just one bad decision; it's a multitude of small compromises, many of which were made with noble intentions. Cap is willing to make the hard choices, but never at the cost of compromising the very virtues he's fighting to support. Guard your heart, guard your mind, and never compromise what is good and right.

Contrary to popular opinion, the enemy isn't this president or the last. Neither is it your neighbor who votes differently from you. The enemy is the devil, who uses our own selfish desires to spread darkness.

Captain America and Nick Fury have very different opinions on what real freedom looks like, but neither Fury nor SHIELD is the enemy, even though their actions are horrendously misguided. The real enemy is a lie—a lie that says we needed to “take the world as it is,” rather than make it into a better one. A lie that compromises virtue and seeks power. The same lie that fed Hitler's National Socialist hate and greed in Germany before and during World War II.

Some lies, like that of Nazi Germany, may require actual fighting to defeat them, but in most cases, the best weapon against a lie is the truth. The truth, if spoken in love, can open eyes and transform hearts.

As James writes in James 5:19-20, “My brothers, if anyone among you wanders from the truth and someone brings him back, let him know that whoever brings back a sinner from his wandering will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins” (ESV).

Captain America: The Winter Soldier may not start an ideological revolution sparking instant political change, but it will create discussion and shed light on aspects of our government that some would like to ignore or hide. It doesn't take an army for change to happen. It just takes one person

who's willing to stand for virtue and fight for liberty.

So, whether you're a schoolteacher, a politician, a sheriff or a superhero, we each have a responsibility to speak the truth wherever we happen to be in our lives. Who knows? Maybe this movie will spawn real-life Captain Americas—young men and women who'll break free from the lies, humbly pursue the truth without compromise, and show the world once again what true freedom really looks like.

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