

'Odd Life of Timothy Green' Charms With the Gift of a Child

The Bible says children are a gift from God; *The Odd Life of Timothy Green* shows that a child can indeed bring some of life's greatest gifts.

A happily married couple, Jim and Cindy Green (Joel Edgerton and Jennifer Garner) can't wait to start a family. But weeks, months and years go by with no child. Having explored every medical option, their doctor gives them the hard news. Hope lost and hearts broken, they return home to the reality that family is just the two of them.

Together, in their shared mourning, they write down all their dreams and hopes they had for a child, put the list in a box and bury it in the garden. A great storm blows in during the night and when they awake, they discover a mysterious visitor (CJ Adams) who calls himself Timothy. As they and their small town of Stanleyville get to know Timothy, they discover the blessing of a child.

The Odd Life of Timothy Green is a wonderful movie for the casual viewer. The screening I attended was loud with laughter at times and quiet with tears as we rode the emotional roller-coaster with Jim and Cindy. There were moments so surprisingly funny that I full-out bellowed in laughter, then self-consciously looked around to see if I had just scared any of my neighbors with my loud outburst. No matter, they were laughing just as loudly.

My wife and I are not casual viewers of the movie. *The Odd Life* deals with infertility—an issue that is heart-wrenching to not only live through, but to experience through the lives of others as well.

It took us six years of trying everything, except In Vitro Fertilization, before we also drove home to an empty house knowing that there was nothing left we could afford to do except be a couple. After a little soul-searching, we laid our circumstance at the feet of Jesus, and stopped trying to do His job. We were pregnant with our first child a little more than a year later.

Even with a happy ending to our story, to say this was a difficult movie to watch is an understatement. Once you go through that experience—blaming yourself, God and each other—the wound may heal, but the scar remains. It hit us personally—not in a bad way. But my wife said the only reason she didn't just get up and flee the auditorium was due to our two precious children at home with the babysitter.

The scar was still tender. As a man, I found myself overwhelmed at times with emotion as well. Having the audience surrounding me also in tears made it easy to hide, but it was painful. We sat through to the end of the credits to pull ourselves together before we left. I hugged my kids extra hard that night when we got home.

Bottom line: If you have lived through this type of ordeal, fair warning in watching a magical boy who comes into the lives of a couple who thought they couldn't have children.

The movie's storyline is part fantasy, of course. Your child may or may not question the origin of Timothy, for instance. Let's just say he doesn't have a belly button. You take it from there. Learning to accept people who are different than you is a central theme. Parental pride and embarrassment, and how it can hurt is portrayed nicely.

When Timothy is exposed to direct sunlight for the first time, he basks in it the way that made me feel guilty for how nonchalantly I have treated the presence of God in my life. The option of adoption and the desperate love of a couple

waiting to have their own child is handled quite well.

Disney is promoting this as a family movie for all ages. I imagine that the younger set (5 and under) may get bored with it, although there were many families in the audience at the screening I attended and all appeared to enjoy it.

The Odd Life of Timothy Green is rated PG for mild thematic elements and brief language. Granted, the movie was difficult for my wife and I to watch, but there was nothing even remotely offensive in this film. I did not detect any offensive language. Joe and Cindy have a loud argument, and the husband and wife are seen kissing several times.

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