

A "Shero" Study

Discussion Guide for "Hidden Figures"

What Happens When Women Use Their Gifts



ere are some suggestions for those who have not yet seen the movie as well as some questions to follow up after you've watched it. (This would be a great activity for February - Black History Month or March - Women's History Month!)

Before you see "Hidden Figures," ask your group to watch for these things:

1. Watch for ways the Christian faith is portrayed in the movie.
2. Watch for moments of transformation in people's attitudes and actions.
3. Watch for examples of things Jesus would do.
4. Watch for historical surprises.
5. Listen and watch for ways words are used to both denigrate and elevate human beings.
6. Watch for signs of positive leadership behaviors.

After you see the movie, discuss these questions:

1. How was the Christian faith portrayed in the movie?
2. What specific moments of transformation did you witness? What specific event/occurrence do you think sparked that transformation in that person's life?
3. Where did you see someone do what Jesus would do?
4. Which details of American history were new to you? Why do you think you never learned them before?
5. What positive and negative impact did the use of certain words have in the treatment of human beings? So why do the words we use matter?
6. What positive leadership behaviors stood out to you?

The movie based on the book *Hidden Figures* (by Margot Lee Shetterly) has given us a memorable and engaging visual representation of the intellectual contributions of three African-American women to the success of the U.S. space program. Many of us who saw it walked away wishing we had known their stories years before. Many older movie-goers were reminded of a cruel page of recent American history and regret not having done more to bring about needed changes sooner. Many younger movie-goers were introduced to the realities of our American past that illustrate how painfully slow we can be to truly



Hidden Figures movie photos from http://www.kalambakal.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/hidden_figures.jpg

live out the justice, equality, and freedom we love to proclaim.

If such recent occurrences in our American history are virtually unknown to us, even though we have had access to the amazing results of these women's actions for the past 40+ years, how much more uninformed are we of the contributions of women in the ancient world, specifically biblical women? (See www.WomensMinistryCoach.com for examples.)

The African-American women whose stories came to life for us in the movie "Hidden Figures" had to overcome numerous obstacles just to be able to do the work for which they were so capably gifted and trained: They were women in a majority-male profession. They were black, which carried all kinds of challenges in a segregated society. They were subjected to the negative assumptions of others. They were the victims of unfair laws and immoral social codes.

Hiding those stories over the past four decades has only thwarted more technological advancements. If more girls and people of color had been exposed to those stories, how many more gifted minds would we have had working to cure cancer, prevent birth defects, eradicate common diseases, and develop more technology that could bring more peace and cooperation to our world?

