

THE WIZARD OF OZ

Final Week of a 3-Week Series, "Metaphysical Movie Fun"

Rev. Stacy Macris Ros

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Well, good morning again, everybody! Today we conclude our three weeks of "Metaphysical Movie Fun." It's been fun, hasn't it? [Congregants applaud] Have you enjoyed it? I have! Yeah, it's where I take our classic movies that we've all seen and love, and I go ahead and I watch them and I grab out the spiritual lessons and insights so that we can all apply it to our lives.

So, the last couple of weeks I covered "Star Wars" and then "The Lion King." And then today's – obviously – "The Wizard of Oz."

And if you were here at the 11 o'clock last week or watched on YouTube, I just want to point this out: I have not put any Bible names that I cannot pronounce in today's talk. [Congregants laugh and applaud] I also promised to keep the names of characters consistent throughout the talk. If you *didn't* see last week, I did it all perfectly. [Congregants laugh] No need to go back.

Okay. "Wizard of Oz," everyone. So, I saw this as a child; loved it, especially the song "Over the Rainbow." I used to sing it in the mirror in my bathroom at home as a little girl ... just like Kirsten did. [Congregants laugh]

So, "The Wizard of Oz": it was released in 1939; was not a success. Isn't that interesting? It was not a success when it first came out. Re-released in 1949; still not a big success. And then, on television. It got put on television: the first full-length film on television; 1956. And then it became this worldwide classic. Fascinating. Did you know that? I had no idea, either.

Now, at the time – 1939 -- it was critically acclaimed. Because it *did* receive five Academy Award nominations, including Best Picture. It won Best Original Song for "Over the Rainbow," as well as Best Original Score. And an Academy Juvenile Award was presented to Judy Garland, who was 16 at the time of filming. Interesting also, isn't it? Yeah, she was 16; she received it at the age of 17.

Here's another fun fact I found out. So, in the book that the movie is based on, her shoes are silver. But in the film, because there was this new technology – three-strip technicolor film process -- that all of the big budget and prestigious Hollywood films at the time of that era ... they were using that technology. Color in film. So they really wanted to highlight it, so they made her shoes red. Another interesting fact.

Is there anyone who hasn't seen "The Wizard of Oz?" Or, you're afraid to raise your hand? [Congregants laugh] Okay, I was going to say, because we're going to keep you here, because we're showing it at 12:30. Well, if you haven't seen "The Wizard of Oz" for a while -- since 1939 -- here is a recap of how the movie goes.

So, we have Dorothy, a farm girl in Kansas. She lives with Auntie Em and Uncle Henry. And she's longing to be somewhere else. Her life is gray and black and white, and she wants color. And her neighbor, Miss Gulch, tries to take her dog, Toto, away. And so, Dorothy runs off. But she's persuaded by a traveling fortune teller, Professor Marvel, to return home. And she does arrive home right as a tornado hits, and she gets knocked unconscious by a window in the house. And she awakens to find herself in the magical land of Oz ... Backdrop. [Congregants laugh]

And then Glinda, the Good Witch, appears and explains that Dorothy's house has landed on the Wicked Witch of the East, and places the witch's ruby slippers on Dorothy's feet before her furious sister, the Wicked Witch of the West, can claim them. To get home back to Kansas, Glinda instructs Dorothy to follow the yellow brick road to the Emerald City and ask the Wizard of Oz for help.

Along the way, Dorothy befriends the Scarecrow who wants a brain; the Tin Man who longs for a heart; and the Cowardly Lion who seeks courage. Together they reach the Emerald City, where the Wizard appears as a terrifying head. He promises to grant their wishes, but only if they bring him the Wicked Witch's broom.

So, off they go again on their quest. And Dorothy is captured by flying monkeys and taken to the witch's castle. But soon her friends catch up and rescue her. They're there with the witch, though. And now Dorothy -- or the witch, rather -- sets the Scarecrow on fire. And so, then Dorothy throws water to help him out, but it accidentally also gets on the witch and it causes her to melt away. [Light applause]

And now the witch ... Oh, there's applause for that; yes. [Congregants laugh] And then the witch's grateful guards -- they didn't like her either -- they present Dorothy with the broom and then the companions return to the Wizard.

Now, thanks to Toto ... because the Wizard's still mean. He's like a booming voice mean! But Toto the dog pulls back the curtain and reveals the Wizard is just an ordinary man. And the Wizard assures Dorothy and her companions that they already possess the qualities they sought, and he gives them a token as proof.

He offers to take Dorothy back to Kansas, because he happens to be from there, as well ... take her back in his hot air balloon. But right as it launches, there goes Toto running away again. And so, Dorothy goes after him, and now she's afraid she cannot get back home to Kansas.

Ah, but Glinda the Good Witch: she appears and tells Dorothy that she always had the power to return home, and the magic slippers will help take her there. So, three clicks of the heels -- it's hard on carpet. A heartfelt goodbye; she clicks her heels and awakens in her bed in Kansas, joyfully reunited with her family and Toto, and declares, *"There's no place like home."*

And then we have credits, everybody. [Congregants applaud]

So, what struck me as I was watching this movie -- and maybe it's because I'm a Unity kid; I grew up in Unity. And so, as I was watching it, I was just fascinated about how Unity's 12 spiritual powers are actually embedded in this film. And so, I'm excited to share that with you. And of course, that powerful truth that we carry within us already -- our worth and our divine gifts. That nobody outside of us needs to validate us. That within us already, we have our divine gifts and the power we need: just right inside of us! And we just need to claim it.

But first, let's just jump into the spiritual powers. So, in Unity, we teach that we have 12 spiritual powers or attributes/characteristics, and they make up our divine identity. They resonate in different parts of the body, similar to chakras, right? They're associated with different parts of the body -- energy centers. And also they have colors associated with them.

Since color is such a big part in this film -- I mean, they created it purposely in that contrast of black and white and color -- I instantly went to seeing some of Unity's 12 spiritual powers and the significance of color in this film.

So, we start with Dorothy's famous light blue gingham dress. Now, light blue is the color associated with the spiritual power of imagination. It's located in our forehead between the eyes. Why? Because it's our ability to imagine, to dream, to envision. And this, of course, is exactly what Dorothy does. She's dreaming and envisioning a life in color on the other side of the rainbow. She's actually in a dream for most of the movie. And it's through her imagination that she comes to realize that everything she's been wanting, she already has. See, she's been wanting this life of color and fun and newness, but it's through her dream -- and dreaming about the other side of the rainbow -- that she starts to realize that, what she

really wants, she already has. That's family and love. And it's this great reminder to us that what we daydream about -- what we visualize with great emotion -- can come true. Dreams really can come true!

And imagination is the first step in the process of manifestation. So, whatever we want to manifest first, it starts with visualizing it; dreaming about it. And what I love about this story, too, is that our imagination can help us recognize what's important to us: what we want and don't want.

So, it reminds me of this time -- it was probably 15/16 years ago -- we had a great acupuncturist back in California. And I don't know what I was going through 15/16 years ago, but I kept showing up week after week complaining that I wanted a fancy new car. I know. I don't know why. But he obviously got tired of hearing me, because he said, "*Stacy, what kind of car do you want?*"

I said, "*I don't know. I just want a fancy new car.*"

And he said, "*Next week you're coming back and you're going to tell me exactly the model, the make, the color; everything. I want details.*"

So, I said, "*Okay.*" So I went online. I built my Mercedes. [Congregants laugh] The model, the color inside, the color outside, the special features. And I came back the next week to him, and I gave him all the information, the specifics. And I said, "*But you know what I realized? I don't actually want a Mercedes.*" Especially at that time with two small kids, I'd rather take that money and have family memories with it. But what I really need is a Honda. [Congregants laugh]

But it was through that process of really visualizing and building the car that I came to understand what I wanted and what I didn't want. So often we think imagination and visualizing is only on what we do want ... and yet, it can also help us get to, "*Huh; and maybe that's what I don't want.*" It can help us get clear, as we see that happens to Dorothy in this movie.

So blue: the power of imagination and tapping into it.

Then, of course, we have her ruby red slippers, which is associated with the spiritual power of life. That's our ability to be energized, to be vitalized, to be enlivened. And we all know when we have energy around something, because we're excited to do it. And when we don't have energy around something, and we're dragging our feet around it.

So here we have her life energy literally in her feet and she's skipping and singing down the yellow brick road, because she's so energized and excited about this idea of getting to her goal to meet the Wizard to get home.

So, noticing: Where are you placing your life energy? What are you putting your energy around? And what are you not putting your energy around? Because what you have more of in your life is where you're putting your energy. What you don't have as much of, you're not putting as much energy there. It's like watering a flower. What are you watering?

So just noticing: Where do I maybe need to make adjustments so that what I really, really want to be experiencing and enjoying in my life -- that's where I'm putting the spiritual power of life into. My life energy and joy into.

So those red slippers remind us to tap into our joy.

Because then, as we do so, we get to yellow -- the yellow brick road: the spiritual color of wisdom or judgment. And this is not about judging other people. But it means to discern, to evaluate, and then to apply what you know to the situations in your life.

So, spiritual wisdom is about taking all the information, and then running it through your heart, your soul, your intuition ... and *then* making a decision.

So, here we have Dorothy embodying imagination and life energy walking down the road of wisdom. And, in the end, they're all wiser by realizing that they have the power within them. Because she's learning-- by walking on this yellow brick road of wisdom -- that her heart's desire was in her own backyard the whole time. And so now she's applying that wisdom that she's gained from a situation.

So, as you start your day, perhaps visualizing that yellow brick road of wisdom before you. As you go out into your day, imagine the yellow brick road of the wisdom of the universe -- the "Force"; the "Circle-of-Life" energy -- guiding you forward; leading you forward. And allowing you to remember to discern, *"What is best for me?"*

And then we have the emerald-green city -- Emerald City. Emerald green. And that color is represented by spiritual power of strength. And our spiritual power of strength is to endure, to stay the course, to persist, to persevere. And our beloved characters, of course, do just that. They find their strength.

And it's really when they go back and return to the Wizard a second time that they really step into their spiritual strength. Because they say, *"We're not leaving until you give us what we want."* And isn't that a great reminder? I'm going to claim my good. I'm going to claim what I'm wanting for my life; for myself. It's that reminder to claim it. Use your spiritual strength to claim your good! Claim what you want!

And don't be discouraged if it takes longer than you think it will to accomplish it. Because remember: it takes them a second trip back to the Wizard to accomplish the goals.

And, since God is strength, and you are an expression of God, it means that you are strong in mind and spirit. It means that you can move through any challenge and be an expression of divine strength in that. You have it within you! You are spiritual strength.

So, you see; the colors, alone, tell a story: the one that the creators really wanted to emphasize. Because we can then use your imagination to dream and visualize what you want life to look like. And as you walk towards that goal, you do so with great energy and joy around it. Don't be dissuaded if it takes longer than expected but, instead, turn within and know that you have the wisdom and the strength to go get what you want. To go down the path towards your goal.

So, it's when we embrace the spiritual attributes of imagination and life, wisdom, strength, that life gets colorful, and what we desire becomes real. Our dreams come to life!

And then we can apply the spiritual powers to characters.

So, we have the Scarecrow. The Scarecrow thinks he lacks wisdom and intelligence. And he sings, *"If I only had a brain."* And he's got one of the best lines in the movie, because he tells Dorothy he doesn't have a brain, and she says, *"Well, how do you talk if you don't have a brain?"*

And he says, *"Some people without a brain do an awful lot of talking."* [Congregants laugh]

She says, *"Yes; I guess you're right."*

But it's because of the quick thinking and wise decisions throughout the story as they go along this journey that they get out of some really scary situations. And so, here again, we have our divine wisdom. He represents our divine wisdom. But he also represents those times that we forget that we are created from the One Power and One Presence: God, the Good -- the wisdom that underlies all of existence, including yourself. Expressed also through yourself.

So sometimes we go through life feeling "not enough," forgetting the wisdom within us. But just like Scarecrow and the straw; it's stuffed within us. It's already within us. So, we may be thinking that we're not smart enough, or we may get distracted by flying monkeys ... but to stop and remind yourself that you have the answers within you.

Here's a quote from our first author here on the screen. *"You are one thing only. You are a Divine Being. An all-powerful Creator. You are a Deity in jeans and a t-shirt, and within you dwells the infinite wisdom of the ages and the sacred creative force of All that is, will be and ever was."*

So, the Scarecrow also reminds us that infinite wisdom lives within us.

And then we have the Tin Man. And the Tin Man wants a heart. And, of course, he's got another great line in the movie, because he says, *"I really ... I don't have a heart. I want a heart."*

And the great Wizard says, *"How lucky you are not to have one."*

Because life -- with its tornado-like storms -- can cause us to feel like we'd rather not have a heart sometimes. And yet, the Tin Man reminds us that love lives within us. It's innately who we are. He says, *"I could be kind and human if I only had a heart."*

But again, just like the Scarecrow, he demonstrates over and over again that which he thinks he doesn't have. It's just that his heart doesn't look like other people's heart. And yet, he's expressing loving kindness and compassion -- especially for Dorothy -- throughout the story.

And he tells Dorothy that, if they get to Emerald City; if he can't have his heart, he's still ... he's going to go with her, and he's going to make sure that she gets home. It's that compassion.

And it's *after* that that Dorothy says to Scarecrow and Tin Man, *"I feel I've met you before."* Now, of course, we know that the characters are ones that are actually her friends back at the farm that are now these characters. But here's what I hear from this. We recognize love and wisdom. [Something beeps loudly] That's right. [Congregants laugh] Thanks for the emphasis.

"I feel I've met you before." Because we recognize love and wisdom, because that is who we are. We are that. We are love and wisdom. And so, of course we're going to recognize it. You'll recognize it.

Here's from Unity co-founder Charles Fillmore on the slide: *"God is the love in everybody and everything. God is love; man becomes loving by permitting that which God is to find expression in word and act."*

See, the Tin Man is our reminder to lead with love; to lead with our heart.

And then we have the Lion. And the Lion comes out roaring and scary and tough. But really he's a coward, right? Dorothy has to smack him. [Congregants laugh] And then he cowers, and he's afraid of everything.

And here we see the spiritual attributes of strength; of power. Power meaning mastery: mastery over our own thoughts, words and actions. And he, too, keeps showing up through each challenge that comes their way. He's already having great courage within him.

And it's the opposite of the Wicked Witch's power, because her power is coming from fear and ego. And, like her, sometimes we can turn ourselves green with envy. Sometimes like her, we can be unkind or manipulative to get our way.

But the Lion reminds us that we have divine mastery and strength already within us. It's only when we let our fear overtake us that we're forgetting that, within us, is a wellspring of strength -- that spiritual strength to tap into.

And then we have Dorothy. Dorothy's our inner child. She's our imagination; she's the dreamer within. And that child within -- the dreamer within -- needs all three of her friends. She needs love; she needs wisdom; and she needs courage. They walk to Emerald City arm in arm saying, *"Even if you're too afraid, I've got you."*

See, Dorothy travels closely with these three spiritual attributes, which allows her to realize that there's no place like home: home being the loving awareness, the essence of Spirit of God within you. We need to remember that, within us, we have wisdom, love, courage, spiritual mastery, strength to bring us back home again to the home within.

So, with these characters in mind, I want you to think of something right now that you're maybe ... A challenge in your life; something you're struggling with. And, as you think about that, now I want you to consider: How can you apply spiritual wisdom to that situation (your Scarecrow energy)? How can you apply some wisdom, some intuition, some discernment? Maybe it's discernment of medical treatment or a job. Maybe it's trying another way of doing something. But just sitting with: How can I apply some spiritual wisdom to this?

And then how can I apply spiritual love or harmony (that Tin Man energy)? Maybe it's being gentler with yourself. Maybe it's extending loving kindness or harmony or forgiveness to another person. But just thinking about/sitting with: How can I bring more Tin Man energy to this?

And then: How can I apply spiritual courage to this current challenge? Maybe it's staying the course; persevering even when you want to give up. Maybe it's taking mastery over your thoughts about yourself or others, and remembering how powerful your words and thoughts are in creating your life experience.

But see, all three of our characters already have what they need inside of them to get home -- to get back to the divine within them. They just needed to be awakened to it.

So, sometimes we think we're not worthy of receiving what we desire. When we finally ... When they finally meet the Wizard, he says, "*I am Oz, the great and powerful. Who are you?*" He's really mean! I mean, he really reinforces their insecurities and their perceived shortcomings.

And we can do this to ourselves, also. We can be a really loud, booming voice that says, "*You're not worthy*" and points out our insecurities and our perceived negatives. We think we might not be worth accomplishing our wildest dreams. I mean, even the Wizard says, "*You've got to show me that you're worthy; now go get the broom.*"

That's usually when the Wicked Witch part of us also swoops in and says, "I don't care about love, wisdom and strength." See, she leaves those three behind just to get Dorothy. Sometimes our fear shows up and says, "*I don't want to think about love and wisdom, strength, courage.*" It's when your fear of showing up in your divine identity overpowers your ability to move forward toward that which you're desiring. That's when we need to pour water over our fears and watch them dissolve.

That's when we pour water -- those words of clarity, of healing, of spiritual truth -- and dissolve the negative commentary that you have going on in your head. Dissolve it with words of truth!

Here's a quote by Marianne Williamson: "*Love is what we are born with. Fear is what we learn. The spiritual journey is the unlearning of fear and prejudices and the acceptance of love back in our hearts. Love is the essential reality and our purpose on earth.*"

And ultimately, that is what all four of these characters learn: that they are loved; that they are powerful; and that they had it within them the entire time. So often, we look to the outer world for validation and for answers -- for something better than we have now. Social media doesn't help with this! We keep thinking that it's, you know, life is better on the other side of the rainbow. Or what we used to say, right? "*The grass is greener on the other side.*"

But, at some point, I Invite you to get quiet and know that it is within you That no one out there -- no magic potion -- can give you what you already have. It's inside of you to make your own dreams happen; to create the life you want. It's within you!

So, like Dorothy, you've had the power to go back home -- to remember the divine being that you are -- the entire time. To remember the divine Presence that lives at home within you. To remember that you are a creative presence, and that you can manifest the world you want to live in.

So, pull back the curtain; take off the mask; stop pretending that you're something that you aren't. And know that you're already powerful. That no one can take your power from you. That you have these spiritual attributes -- and more! -- already within you.

Here's a beautiful quote from Rev. Edwene Gaines on the slide: *"God is glorified when you stand up and acknowledge who you are and claim your birthright. And who are you? You are a divine being, a child of God the Most High, a person who deserves to have every good thing that life has to offer."*

And at the end of the movie, our dear Dorothy exclaims, *"We're home, and I'll never leave, because I love you all! Oh, there's no place like home!"* So, sometimes we forget to stay focused on gratitude and remember that we have what we want and need in our own backyard.

But when the storms of life happen -- and they will; they do -- just remember to return home: to your inner being; to the indwelling Spirit. Because that's where love is. And there's nothing like being surrounded and immersed by love.

So, whatever you're facing in life -- whatever it is -- your power lies within you. You are wise. You are loving. And you are courageous.

And that's the spiritual insights, my friends, from the classic, "The Wizard of Oz." [Congregants applaud]
Thank you for coming to the movies with me this summer! Blessings, everyone!