



Sweet Home Alabama

Over Christmas, I was obviously awed-out by Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers, and I would totally recommend anyone to go and see it, but for me, the biggest surprise of the Christmas Cinema festivities was the romantic comedy, Sweet Home Alabama.

Now you must understand that I'm not normally into the whole romantic comedy thing, and I only went because of my sister and a free afternoon, BUT it was actually really good.

The basic plot outline is that Melanie Carmichael (Reese Witherspoon) - a major upcoming fashion designer in New York - has just been proposed to by her boyfriend, Andrew Hennings (Patrick Dempsey), who is a major upcoming politician. Little does Hennings know, though, that Melanie has a whole bunch of skeletons in her closet back in her home town in Alabama.

Melanie has to return to Alabama to smoothe a few things over - her relationship with her parents, friends, and - most importantly - her 'ex', Jake (Josh Lucas).

The whole plot really revolves around the fact that Melanie is living two different lives - one as the successful New York fashion starlet, and one as the small-town girl with a childhood sweetheart. Even her accent changes as she talks to her two different groups of friends.

I guess the most striking point in the film comes towards the conclusion where Jake challenges Melanie about whether she gets tired always living two completely different realities.

The great thing about Sweet Home Alabama is that it doesn't say that who Melanie is in New York is completely wrong. Neither does it say that her Alabama lifestyle is completely right. What it does say, though, is that she should be honest about those different parts of her personality.

Reflection

For us, it's quite often the same as it is for Melanie. Try thinking about whether there are parts of who you are that you keep hidden from people because you're embarrassed... do you simply go along with things because everybody else does? Are you ready to stand up for the things that you believe in, even though it might lose you some street cred? What are the masks that you hide behind?

One of the things that always amazes me about Jesus is that he sees through all the stuff that I try to hide behind. It's great that we can be totally honest with God,

and that he can give us his Holy Spirit to help us be courageous and honest.

Prayer

Lord, thank you that you love me to be honest with you. I'm sorry for the times when I've hidden behind a 'personality' because I'm scared to be honest... Send me more of your Holy Spirit of love to help me be honest and not embarrassed, because 'In love there can be no fear - fear is driven out by perfect love' (1 John 4:18)... Amen

