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Remember the Titans

Remember the Titans has been one of my favorites for a very long time. Remember the Titans has so many exceptional points that can still ring true today. I think that the most important one is that of racism due to ignorance. Now racism may not exist in the form of slavery, which is great but it is still around in many other forms. Remember the Titans was set in the 1970’s when segregation of schools was still a thing, but was in the process of being changed because it was found to be unconstitutional. “Tensions were high as parents and students wondered how three rival high Schools could successfully merge as one, the T.C. Williams Titans. How would black and white students adapt to this new environment? Would the newly formed football team be successful? There were too many unanswered questions. It took a lot of hard work and determination, but the coaches and players eventually became a strong, unified force” (Cranmer, G. A., & Harris, T. M. (2015). This happened in a couple of ways, first was the experience at football camp, second was the football season and school year and lastly was the support from the community.

“When people fail to interact with others from different ethnicities or cultures, a fear of the unknown can prevail” (Cranmer, G. A., & Harris, T. M. (2015). This is what was seen firsthand as these schools try to merge. Now segregation was never the right answer but I could see how this change would cause a lot of fear and confusion. All this fear and confusion started at the football camp. I really liked how coach Boone did his own thing. “Upon assuming the role as head coach, Coach Boone had a clear vision of what success looked like. He didn’t have his eye solely on unifying the divided team or winning a couple of games, but envisioned achieving the big win, the state championship.” (Ard, G. (2016). Carol Boone said that if more people had the ambition like her husband Herman Boone, the world would be a better place.

When it was time for the football players to leave for camp and they continued the segregation because that’s what they knew and it was easy to stay that way. Coach Boone didn’t like that so he forced the players to be mixed by making them sit as the offensive and defensive teams. He also encouraged them to get to know one another. He made it mandatory and that each player had to learn something about each player of the opposite race. Coach Boone said “you don’t have to like each other but you will respect one another.” This is important because not everyone has to get along but it is crucial for everyone to be respected. Change is hard and being complacent is easy, and it is shown so well throughout the time at camp. There are players that open up quicker than others and some not at all, and they resist the change. My favorite scene is when he takes them on the morning run where the battle of Gettysburg was fought. I think the most powerful words from the entire movie are when he says, “50,000 men died here fighting the same fight the we are still fighting today”. Its sad to think that so many men have given their lives in the past for a fight we are still fighting today. During camp we see bonds formed that without those bonds the success of the titans would never have been. It was easy to see when the players got back to the town and started school. Even though they overcame huge obstacles at camp, the real world was a lot harder. The players tried to continue to be accepting but the other students made it hard; which is one of the reasons that I love how coach Boone said in the locker room, “don’t let anything tear us apart or get between us.” It was important for them to stay unified and continue to work together. I think that without coach Boone and his determination and zeal none of this would have been possible for the school or the town of Alexandria.

“The movie Remember the Titans was written by Gregory Allen Howard, who felt inspired by the story of the 1971 T. C. Williams high school football team. Howard wrote the screenplay with the intent to commemorate and promote the racial cooperation and integration he admired within the community of Alexandria, Virginia. To further understand the purposeful intentions of this text, he described the decision to write about the Titans: This town [Alexandria] is more socially integrated than anywhere I’ve ever been or seen. I wondered why. Then I began talking with the locals, and always they referred back to a football team that brought the city together.” (Rameca, L. (2013). I found this interesting because the impact that the Titans had not only affected their immediate friends and family but those of future generations and it is noticeable by someone who is not part of that community.

Bringing the city together wasn’t part of the plan for the Titans or coach Boone but that’s what happened and it was a better community because of it. With the success of the Titans the outside community was able to breakdown social barriers and come together and stand behind a team that was able to overcome skin color and who knows how long that would have taken or if it would have happened at all without the Titans. One scene that I love is when Julius is going over to meet Gerry’s mother. You can tell that he is nervous because it’s a “white” area. A cop drives by and Julius stutters saying officer, all the cop had to say was good job and tell your coach good job. It seems pretty obvious that the officer was a little hesitant to say it as well but I think that was a good representation of the social barriers being broken down. Another scene that I really liked is after Gerry was injured and it shows his mother walking in the stands of the football game and the whole crowd applauses for her and she goes down and gives coach Boone’s wife a hug. This same women that earlier in the movie would not even give Julius a chance because she had already made up her mind.

It just goes to show that with effort from everyone social barriers can be broken down and new relationships can be formed. It is just hard because not everyone wants to participate, or they resist the change. This is shown from the scene when coach Boone is at his house with his family and Sheryl is over there too. In that scene there is a brick thrown through the window. Whoever threw that brick was trying to resist change and trying to scare a family simply because of skin color. I think that if people would put as much effort trying to understand people of a different race and culture as they do for resisting and discriminating against it, the world would be a better place. I think that the most important thing to take away from this movie is a quote from coach Boone that is worth repeating. “You don’t have to like each other but you will respect one another.” I feel like that is something to live by. Just because we don’t understand someone doesn’t give us the reason to hate them. We don’t have to like everyone we meet but we do have to respect him or her and this is what would make a difference

Works cited

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