

DRIVING MISS DAISY

“How you know the way I see, less you lookin’ outta my eyes?” ~ Hoke

Guide by Dr. Phil Tallon, Dean at Houston Christian University & Consulting Theologian for A.D. Players at the George Theater

Things Changin’: Discussing *Driving Miss Daisy*


Driving Miss Daisy is a play that moves swiftly into the future in a place still haunted by the past. We see the characters age with the smoothness and speed of an automatic Cadillac while they navigate the bumps and scrapes of difference and disagreement.


Set in Atlanta in the mid 20th-century, the characters are all outsiders in some way. Whether Black or Jewish, they understand that they stand out. But these characters know how to make their way in the world, until time begins to break down their independence.

Independence and interdependence. Past and present. Black and white. Christmas and Hannukah. These are the intersecting roads that our characters must navigate.

Let’s discuss

Characters:

 **Daisy Werthan:** An aging, Jewish woman who doesn't want help with her flower bed or anything else.

 **Hoke Colburn:** Daisy's black chauffeur who can't help but help out.

 **Boolie Werthan:** A man who knows how to control everything except the women in his life.

Discussion Questions:

Q: Of the three characters in the play, which one most closely reflected your stage of life?

Q: The three characters wrestle within the power dynamics of a single household. All are driven by different impulses, but eventually come to a place of harmony. There is much trouble and misunderstanding within the Werthan house, and outside of it as well. What does *Driving Miss Daisy* have to teach us about the work of peacemaking?

Q: William Faulkner once said, "The past is never dead. It's not even past." That seems like a fitting quote for this play. How is the past still present in the lives of Daisy and Hoke?

Q: Toward the end of the play, Boolie worries if he's supportive of Martin Luther King, folks will start calling him "Martin Luther Werthan" behind his back. Have you ever felt this way?

Q: One of the distinct elements of *Driving Miss Daisy* is the unique situation of Jewish southerners in a predominantly Christian culture. What did the play show about experience of Jewish Americans?

Q: The play ends with Hoke feeding Miss Daisy her Thanksgiving pie. What do you make of this final moment?

Q: Which Bible verse seems most fitting to describe *Driving Miss Daisy*?

"Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up." - Galatians 6:9

"Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." - Galatians 6:2

"But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him." - Luke 10:33

"Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult. On the contrary, repay evil with blessing, because to this you were called so that you may inherit a blessing." - 1 Peter 3:9

Key Quotes:

"I don't need you. I don't want you. And I don't like you saying I'm rich."

"I'm a man nearly seventy two years old and I know when my badder's full."

"I'm being trouble. Oh God, I don't want to be trouble to anybody."

"Things changin', but they ain't change all that much."

"You know I don't give Christmas presents."

"How you know the way I see, less you lookin' outta my eyes?"