

THE
SINS
OF THE
MOVIES



JOHN BORUFF

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THE SINS OF THE MOVIES

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I will set nothing wicked before my eyes.

—Psalm 101:3—

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CHAPTER 1

CHRISTIANS AND MOVIE CENSORSHIP

Struggling Against “Cheap Grace” Arguments

After I became a Christian around the year 2000, and I started to read the Bible; and tried applying its moral laws to my life; I started to re-evaluate the world I live in; and compared basically every thought, word, and action in my life to what I read in the Word of God. Christians and even pastors did not help me in this endeavor; in fact, I found that most of them *fought* me on this, and sometimes even *tempted* me to do the opposite. Some pastors even had clever-sounding “grace” arguments for why moral laxity is just part of the Christian life. I have now found that moral ambiguity and relativism, it seems, is the way that most Christians and even their pastors, tend to think about their relationships with God and others, and the world around them. All the while Titus 2:11-12 says: “*The grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. It teaches us to say ‘No’ to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age.*”

Somewhere along the way I came to the conclusion that *most* Christians are all part of the same morally lax hodge-podge of cheap grace reasoning. There is something about this generation of Christians that has truly tried to dissuade me from acting on my desire to live a holy life, which tries to walk in step with Biblical commands. If it weren't for

my fear of Hell and love for God, and my personal walk with God, I probably would have rejected Christianity completely, and become an agnostic or something—that is, if my Christian life were in any way dependent upon the Christians I have had the displeasure of listening to ramble about their morally lax philosophies.

As hard as it is to be perfectly loving, patient, and humble; as difficult as it is to deny the world and fleshly lusts; as trying as it is to put up with disrespectful and abusive people; as ridiculous as prosperity preachers are, and what a disgrace and blemish they are on the good name of Christ:—still, I *want* to be a Christian, because I *have* to be a Christian, because the Holy Spirit has invaded my life, I dread the Day of Judgment, I loathe my own sinfulness, and I look forward in faith and hope to enter Heaven after death. The gospel of Jesus Christ has changed my life; and there's no going back now!

Being a real Christian is hard. It means internal, psychological combat with evil, selfish, and insane thoughts, words, and actions every single day of your life. Just because so many “pastors” and “Christians” are saying and writing things which attempt to lower the moral standards that are required in the Christian life:—it does not follow that their opinions, although popular, are by any means correct. “To the law and to the testimony! If they speak not according to this Word, it is because there is no light in them!” (Isaiah 8:20). THERE IS NO LIGHT in these “Christians” who go around saying things that make Christianity out to be a mere justification for their evil behavior. That is not the meaning of justification (see Romans 6); as if you can just go ahead and *justify* anything and every-

thing that grieves the Holy Spirit of God!? 1 John 2:15: “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.”

Movies: Offering Trips to Hell for a Nickel

Movies were invented in the late 1800s and quickly became the most popular form of entertainment in America. Ever since the beginning of Hollywood and the silent films, this form of entertainment has been a device for *glamorizing basically every type of sin known to man*. Adultery, fornication, crime, lying, drunkenness, gambling, nudity, laughing at righteousness, sexual jokes, night club scenes, stealing, murder, etc.¹ Sexual immorality has always been the most prevalent of these sins, whether as fornication, adultery, prostitution, or some other form. A *spirit of prostitution* (Hosea 5:4) entered the film industry very early on (and many of the movie extras were real-life prostitutes);² this lewd spirit jumped right out of romance novels, and stage plays, and on to the film, something which had been in combat with Puritans (against Shakespeare and other English playwrights), and other Christians for centuries;³ this spirit was now given an even greater

¹ Herbert J. Miles, *Movies and Morals* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1947), p. 98.

² Benjamin Hampton, *A History of the Movies* (New York: Covici Friede Publishers, 1931), p. 287.

³ See Jeremy Collier's *A Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage* (1698) and William Law's *The Absolute Unlawfulness of the Stage Entertainment* (1726). Collier also devotes

platform to express itself, through these widely popular movies for a nickel at the “nickelodeon” movie theaters. These theaters, once opened, were often planted right beside bars and brothels, and proudly displayed movie posters of half-naked women. It’s no wonder why fundamentalist Baptist preachers⁴ were preaching so hard against movies in the early days (especially from the 1920s to 1950). In those days, they “hated what was evil and clung to what was good” (Romans 12:9). From the very beginning, these anti-moral, anti-Christian *sex-appeal romance movies* were seen as an attack on Christian sanctification, the sanctity of marriage, the family, the virginity of teenagers, and the innocence of children. Rev. Wilbur Crafts said these early movie theaters were “offering trips to Hell for a nickel.”⁵ And William Sheafe Chase, the Episcopal rector, said movies were “the greatest enemy of civilization.”⁶

The Hays Code: Trying to Keep the Movies Decent

The Production Code or “Hays Code,” named after Will

chapter 6 (or VI) to extracts of writings by the early church fathers: who were staunchly against Christians attending all plays in the Roman theaters, because of their sexual immorality and profanity.

⁴ See Harry Vom Bruch’s *The Carnival of Death* (1920), John R. Rice’s *What Is Wrong With the Movies?* (1938), and Herbert J. Miles’ *Movies and Morals* (1947). The fundamentalist trend of preaching against the sins of movies was apparently started by R. A. Torrey (d. 1928), editor of *The Fundamentals*, and pastor in Los Angeles.

⁵ Gregory Black, *Hollywood Censored* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p. 3.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

Hays, was a morally strict code that was supposed to regulate movie censorship. But this turned out to be just a legal smoke screen for the movie producers. Other than the fact that it forbade scenes that promoted interracial marriage (due to segregation laws) and animal branding, I'd say the Hays Code was much in agreement with the moral principles of the Bible.⁷ It prohibited any movie scenes that encouraged the imitation of...

1. **Murder and Crime**
Theft; arson; misuse of guns; smuggling; drug and alcohol use.
2. **Offenses Against the Sanctity of Marriage**
Adultery; fornication; seduction; rape; perversion; human trafficking; STDs; child birth; child nudity.
3. **Vulgar and Disgusting Subjects**
4. **Sexual Innuendos**
“Obscenity in word, gesture, reference, song, joke or by suggestion, is forbidden.”
5. **Sexual Dancing**
“Dances which emphasize indecent movements are to be regarded as obscene.”

⁷ Benjamin Hampton, *A History of the Movies*, pp. 299-302; the author says the Code was “earnestly advocated” by Wilbur Crafts.

6. **Profanity**
“Pointed profanity or vulgar expressions, however used, are forbidden.”
7. **Sexual Clothing**
No nudity; no clothes that “permit undue exposure,” especially ladies dancing dresses that prop up their breasts and show lots of cleavage.
8. **Irreligion**
No anti-Christian or anti-religious sentiments; ministers always portrayed as good and serious; never as evil or an object of ridicule; religious ceremonies handled respectfully.
9. **Disrespect for the Government**
Respect for the American flag; other countries must be represented respectfully.
10. **Sexual Name Calling**
“Salacious, indecent, or obscene titles shall not be used.”
11. **Violence**
Hangings; electrocutions; death penalties; third degree murders; brutality; gruesome scenes; cruelty to children or animals; surgery.

Joseph Breen, an influential journalist for the Code, advised that “no picture shall be produced which will lower the moral standards of those who see it. Hence the sympa-

thy of the audience shall never be thrown to the side of wrong-doing, evil, or sin.”⁸ But the Code was constantly fought by movie-makers and the rules were bent frequently. They just couldn’t do without the sexuality and the cleavage; they knew that **SEX SELLS**; they knew it would attract more movie patrons, and raise the box office hits (this was even the case with Cecil B. DeMille, who made *The Ten Commandments*, first in 1923 and again in 1956).⁹ 1 Timothy 6:10: “The love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.” This is very true of movie-makers and actors. Movies, while claiming to be part of “the Arts,” have proven to be just about making money; for gratifying the carnal hearts of unsaved men, who want SEXUAL IMAGES to gratify their fallen hearts (especially *sexy young women* showing off their bodies); they feel, that if they can just watch a sex-saturated movie, or a movie that portrays a beautiful woman in less-than-modest clothing, then they got the thrill they were paying for. Prostitution! Pornography in seed form! It’s no surprise that the Code was done away with in 1950, by a Supreme Court ruling in favor of all movies as “free speech.”¹⁰

⁸ Robert Johnston, *Reel Spirituality* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2000), p. 36.

⁹ The golden calf scene, for example; or the unbiblical “love intrigue” between Nefretiri and Moses; or the immodest and sexual ways in which the Egyptian women were dressed.

¹⁰ Lynn Schofield Clark, “Entertainment Industry,” *Encyclopedia of Fundamentalism*, Brenda Brasher, ed. (New York: Routledge, 2001), p. 147.

The Evil Influence of Bad Movies on the Mind

As a Christian who is now very critical of movies, it makes me consider how *so many movies dehumanize women, and make them into sex objects*. Jeremy Collier, the Puritan, argued that the stage was sometimes influenced by woman haters, who treated women roughly, and exposed them to emotional and sexual abuse, by means of acting out certain play scripts.¹¹ This is something that feminists and women's rights activists should be able to agree with me about—even though I would like to add, that I'm the total opposite of a feminist, yet not a male chauvinist. The point though, I'm trying to make, is that Hollywood appears to be a sexually abusive and exploitative environment, especially for young women. It is the last place on earth, other than Las Vegas, that any good father would want his daughter to end up pursuing a career. Why then, I ask, are there Christian colleges offering film production degrees? Fuller Theological Seminary even has a Hollywood internship program!¹²

Sexual impurity is not the only area where movie-makers have trespassed against us. They have infused popular culture with a *glorification* of profanity, criminal activities, anti-Christian ideas, luxury, and every type of sin imaginable. The taboo-oriented nature of Hollywood has narrowed it down to a science: **SIN SELLS**. They know that IF SIN IS GLORIFIED, THEN IT WILL INCREASE

¹¹ Jeremy Collier, *A Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage* (London: S. Keble, 1698), pp. 171-172.

¹² <http://fuller.edu/eatfe>

MOVIE SALES. All of the things “society” or the “workplace” tell us are wrong, or not allowed, or improper—people can go and watch a sin-filled movie and *vicariously live it out through mentally visualizing themselves taking part in the sin*. Their hearts and minds become absorbed with these movies: and I’d say this is especially the case with teens and children, of whom Jesus said, “If anyone causes one of these little ones—those who believe in Me—to stumble, it would be better for them to have a large millstone hung around their neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea” (Matthew 18:6). To **DEFILE** the innocence of children;¹³ to inflame and inspire their sinful hearts with ever-increasing transgressions; to give them *even more bad ideas* than their little minds can come up with, is the total opposite of “training up a child in the way he should go” and “the nurture and admonition of the Lord” (Proverbs 22:6; Ephesians 6:4).

Kids: what they behold they will become; monkey see, monkey do; they are what they eat. Not that I’m a “Lockean” who believes children are born with a “blank slate” and have no sinful nature; I strongly believe in the

¹³ *Modern antinomians justify watching bad movies* by quoting Jesus, of all people: “Nothing outside a person can defile them by going into them. Rather, it is what comes out of a person that defiles them” (Mark 7:15). But if you read the context of the passage, Jesus was talking about eating food with unwashed hands (Matthew 15:11). This is worlds different from watching bad movies; thinking about impure movie themes for hours; and then afterwards, going to church, and saying your favorite book is the Bible! What “comes out of a person” that loves movies? Quotations; often impure jokes taken from scenes, that will make them and their movie-loving friends laugh at off-color things. That is defilement! (Eph. 5:4).

natural sinfulness of children (Psalm 51:5; Romans 7); however, I believe that *most movies, if left unchecked, will only accelerate children in evil-doing*, and not help them to resist sin, like the Bible instructs us to train them. The majority of movies teach children how to sin. The Bible teaches children how to be holy. This is definitely a conflict of interest.

But *this is not merely a childrearing issue*. “Without holiness no one will see the Lord” (Hebrews 12:14), including adults, who are more responsible before God for their choices. How can you call yourself a follower of Jesus; and then also say, “I love movies” without reservation? If you have any measure of the Holy Spirit in you, shouldn’t you *feel something is wrong* in your heart? That inwardly you know most movies *promote sin*, not merely *portray sin*? That they *encourage sinful thinking*; and not just include sins to make their stories or movie plots more interesting and realistic? Don’t you see, Christ-follower, that *it CONTRADICTS your sanctification*, to willfully go to the movie theater, watch a TV show, put a DVD in the video player, *if you know beforehand that there are going to be wicked things in this movie*, that you are willingly choosing, of your own free will, to set before your eyes! (Psalm 101:3).

What witch or movie-maker has cast a spell on you!? You are under their spell, bewitched; and you need to pray that its power be broken off your mind in the name of Jesus! And if you don’t know if there are sins glorified in a movie beforehand, why would you *risk defiling and polluting your thoughts* without checking out a parent’s guide on

the internet first?¹⁴ Why the lack of caution? Is it depression: a meaningless, movie addicted, obsessive-compulsive desire to be gratified with Hollywood entertainments, that draw you to be so indiscriminate in your habit of movie and TV watching? Why not kick the habit? Or at least bring it under strict control of the New Testament?

Don't you fear God? At these times, aren't you aware that God is going to judge your life; and every idle word that you speak outwardly and inwardly, you will give an account of on the Day of Judgment? (Matthew 12:36). Of course you don't think about *God watching you* watch your movies; but He is! God is watching you right now. 2 Chronicles 16:9: "The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth." God has watched every movie in the world—past, present, and future; more than you have! And all the sin that deeply offends Him in these movies will be burned with fire on the Day of the Lord (2 Peter 3:10). They are idols and unclean things in His sight.

The Holy Spirit once took the prophet Ezekiel up in a vision, and he could see idolatry being committed in the temple of God! Ezekiel 8:8-10, 12:

He said to me, "Son of man, now dig into the wall." So I dug into the wall and saw a doorway there. And He said to me, "Go in and see the wicked and detestable things they are doing here." So I went in and

¹⁴ Personally, I use google.com and I will type in a movie title followed by "parents guide imdb"; and that will give a quick run through of all the sexuality, profanity, and violence in the movie...and consequently lead me NOT to watch it.

looked, and I saw portrayed all over the walls all kinds of crawling things and unclean animals and all *the idols of Israel*...He said to me, "*Son of man, have you seen what the elders of Israel are doing in the darkness, each at the shrine of his own idol? They say, 'The Lord does not see us; the Lord has forsaken the land.'*"

Looks like the idea of pastors standing before evil pagan images, for their own entertainment, is nothing new. Many pastors today read *Harry Potter* books with their kids and praise these movies for their so-called moral teachings! But God sees it as paganism; and so do His prophets!¹⁵

Biblical Discretion Is Advised!

Are *all* movies and TV shows bad? No; and that is why I feel this booklet will be helpful, to assist the Christian who values his growth in holiness more than the thrills of movies, while at the same time, and especially from a child-rearing aspect, answer the question that is constantly

¹⁵ In the most literal way possible, the sin of idolatry in the temple as mentioned in Ezekiel 8, was committed when the Church of England allowed Gloucester Cathedral to be used as "Hogwart's School of Witchcraft and Wizardry" for filming the *Harry Potter* movies! Warner Brothers producers bribed the priest, Rev. Nicholas Bury, the total of £100,000, as **Hollywood has bribed pastors** and likely Christian magazine reviewers for many years. ["Costs of Harry Potter Filming Revealed" in *Gloucester Citizen*, July 24, 2009]. Bury retired from ministry in 2010.

pressed on him by American society: is this movie bad, or good, or okay, or a waste of my time? The idea of *criticizing movies* and *judging movies*, and standing above them morally with the Bible, and *censoring* them, if need be—that whole idea is pretty much foreign to modern Christianity. It wasn't that way about 80 to 90 years ago, when evangelicalism was a lot stronger. In those days *Moody Monthly* frequently criticized movies as a menace to Christian morality.¹⁶ However, nowadays popular magazines like *Christianity Today*, heartily support a carnal movie like *Lincoln*, which has a scene with a woman in her underwear, 13 occasions of g-d, 5 s-words, 2 f-words, and other cuss words!¹⁷ When this same magazine also says, "There are times when adult language is appropriate,"¹⁸ it should not surprise us, when they further advocate watching hundreds of ungodly, **sin-glorifying movies**, and yet try to salvage these wicked things, by drawing out a semi-Christian theme, writing a movie review, and then suggesting a pastor should preach on a "clean scene" from the

¹⁶ L. Ray Miller, "May Christians Attend Picture Shows?" *Moody Monthly* 25 (March 1925); Edward L. Jeambey, "Are the Movies Really a Menace?" *Moody Monthly* 27 (July 1927); William H. Short, "The Social Influence of Motion Pictures," *Moody Monthly* 35 (Sept. 1934); Rev. William Evans, "Hollywood's Scale of Values," *Moody Monthly* 38 (Nov. 1937).

¹⁷ *Lincoln* "topped the list" of *Christianity Today*'s annual "Critic's Choice Awards" for 2012. <<http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2013/january-web-only/critics-choice-movie-awards-2012.html>>; <<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0443272/parentalguide>>.

¹⁸ Carolyn Arends, "The Trouble with Cussing Christians" *Christianity Today* (April 2013, Vol. 57, No. 3, p. 60) <<http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2013/april/what.html?start=2>>

movie in his sermon as an illustration! This is rat poison in the cheese! Movies, which encourage such gutter level moral standards, which should probably be banned or burned by churches at the goading of fiery preachers, for being such *an extravagant menace to Christian sanctification*, are instead being *quoted by pastors* favorably in their sermons! It's unthinkable! But it's happening every Sunday now—especially in youth ministry. This has to be proof that American Christianity's moral strength has greatly deteriorated in the past 100 years.

Back in the glory days of Christian movie censorship, the accusation was leveled against movie-makers that *some movies even encouraged criminal activity*: especially in the case of *gangster movies*, which would be watched by young boys and then imitated, and turn them into juvenile delinquents.¹⁹ Willing to save their necks, the movie-makers replied that the kids got “nothing but amusement from movies.”²⁰ My response to that would be: Yeah...kids get nothing but “amusement” while watching movies that glorify gangsters, prostitutes, fornicators, crimes, profanities, and violence of all sorts. Yeah...that

¹⁹ There is no doubt this was caused by Al Capone and his mobsters in Chicago in the 1920s, which had created a popular demand for gangster movies, which were then imitated by young men seeking thrills. A group of sociologists did a massive study of juvenile delinquents, and found that many of them had been influenced into their criminal activities by learning crime techniques from gangster movies. These findings were published in Henry James Forman's *Our Movie Made Children* (1929); see also John R. Rice's *What Is Wrong With the Movies?*, chapter 7: “Movies Proved a School for Crime: Actually Produce Criminals” (1938).

²⁰ Gregory Black, *Hollywood Censored*, p. 12.

really sounds a lot like great, wholesome, harmless fun: expose kids, who are not yet settled in their parent's moral convictions, and not yet fully educated in Biblical morals...just let them watch whatever movies they want—without censorship—no matter what the movie contains, because it's not like the kids are going to think, talk, or act like the immoral scenes they have seen: those scenes which once brought such delight, thrills, and laughs, and fun, and gratification...it would be downright silly and ABSURD to imagine that these scenes would not translate into thoughts, words, and actions!? What sort of mind-numbing thinking is this? Raymond Hamilton, a member of the "Bonnie and Clyde" gang, was given the electric chair in 1935. Among his last words were, "I can't tell you how to raise your children, but I know I learned a lot about hijacking and bank robbing at the movies."²¹ Proverbs 1:18-19: "These men lie in wait for their own blood; they ambush only themselves! Such are the paths of all who go after ILL-GOTTEN GAIN; it takes away the life of those who get it."

Movies! Nothing but amusement! This must be why now *some pastors sport their favorite Rated R and PG-13 movies on their Facebook pages*, so all their church members can see! So proud of their sin! But the reality is: most movies are spiritually harmful and are in direct conflict with New Testament sanctification. "*Whatsoever things are pure...think on these things*" (Philippians 4:8). He who watches filth will become filthier in his mind. You are

²¹ John R. Rice, *What Is Wrong With the Movies?* (Murfreesboro, TN: Sword of the Lord Publishers, 1938), p. 63.

what you eat: and eating rotten food out of a dumpster in the alley is not much different than watching most movies, in the spiritual sense. What you behold, you will become. Behold Hollywood, and you will become filled with its sins. Behold Jesus, and you become filled with His righteousness. Hollywood is not from the kingdom of Heaven, and you know it. It is from “the carnal mind, which is enmity with God” (Romans 8:7); it’s of the world, the flesh, and the devil; its “earthly, and sensual, and demonic” (James 3:15); and Hollywood knows this is the most profitable route to take in writing movie scripts; *it is intentionally taboo-oriented and sin-oriented*; people get to indulge in “the pleasures of sin for a season” (Hebrews 11:25), so they think, because they are not committing the sins themselves, the actors are—but God “judges the thoughts and intents of the heart” (Hebrews 4:12)!—so it is *the actors’* sins, not *theirs*, so they think, they are watching; and while Christians go on watching these sinful movies, their consciences becoming more and more desensitized to the Holy Spirit, and may in some cases become seared all the way (1 Timothy 4:2), and lead to backsliding and apostasy from the Christian life!

Compromising Christians who continue to watch sin-filled movies are basically saying this to God: “God, I don’t really care what the Bible says right now. I’m watching this, just a while. I love you God, but...this movie is sooo funny—it’s hilarious! After all ‘a merry heart doeth good like a medicine’ (Proverbs 17:22).” That’s backwards thinking; laughing is great, but not if it means you are *allowing your thoughts to make you laugh because of blatant sin!* I believe everyone needs to laugh frequently, and sin-

cerely, on a weekly basis. But if that laughter is brought about by the things often encouraged in *comedy movies*, then I can tell you plainly, that is not “the joy of the Lord” (Nehemiah 8:10), that is not of God, it’s a sin, and is not the type of laughter Jesus or the apostles would do. YOU’RE LAUGHING YOUR WAY TO HELL! AND THE DEVIL IS LAUGHING AT YOU! Keep yourself under control; and don’t allow the *hysteria* of demonic, sinful laughter to spread in the air around you, and allow that unclean spirit, that “prince of the power of the air” (Eph. 2:2), to enter into your heart and make you laugh for all the wrong reasons. Ephesians 5:4: “Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place.” Just to make sure we’re clear: the Greek words for “obscenity” (*aischrotes*), “foolish talking” (*morologia*), and “coarse joking” (*eutrapelia*):—Matthew Henry and Adam Clarke agree that these three words are speaking against all sexual jokes, innuendos, and defamatory jokes used to make fun of people.

If comedy movies are your only means of obtaining laughs, then you have a shallow, and probably unregenerate life! You need to make some adjustments about your amusements in general; and definitely about your movie watching habit. You are willfully putting your mind (and your kids’ precious minds) in the hands of corrupt Hollywood scriptwriters! Men who are all motivated by money and couldn’t care less about the sinful influence of their movies on your families’ minds: their thoughts, their words, and actions! This is corrupt! 2 Timothy 3:13: “Evildoers and impostors will go from bad to worse, deceiving and being deceived.” Actors and actresses, by and

large, are evildoers, impostors, and *hypocrites* (the literal Greek of the word is *actor*): they deceive Christians and themselves into thinking that their careers in the movie industry are not inherently sinful. In the time of Jesus, the Greek word for actor was *hypocrite*; and since they were often filled with “hypocrisy and lawlessness,” Jesus felt like this was a good word to use when He spoke against *the Pharisees* (Matt. 23:27-28). On the outside actors look beautiful, but on the inside they full of everything unclean.

In Jesus’ name I pray that some souls will be saved from *the flames of Hell* to which *many movies* are dragging them! Yes, and I believe watching some movies can lead to backsliding and falling away from the Lord! Stay away from that FILTH! Hollywood and the Bible are polar opposites! Actors and prophets: totally different. Scriptwriters and the New Testament hardly *ever* agree. While you will not find me supporting the view that the only way to live holy is to completely say “No” to all movie watching, you will see me point to purity of heart. Philippians 4:8:

Whatsoever things are *true*,
 whatsoever things are *honest*,
Whatsoever things are *just*,
 whatsoever things are *pure*,
Whatsoever things are *lovely*,
 whatsoever things are of *good report*;
If there be any *virtue*,
 and if there be any *praise*,
THINK ON THESE THINGS!

CHAPTER 2
THE BIBLE IS
AGAINST BAD MOVIES

1. **Matthew 9:4: “Why do you entertain evil thoughts in your hearts?”** Jesus asks this because He expects us not to entertain thoughts that are evil or sinful; we are, on the contrary, to think on things that are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, of good report, virtuous, and praiseworthy (Php. 4:8). If the movies we are watching only assist us in entertaining evil, sin-encouraging thoughts in our hearts, then to be sure Jesus is opposed to watching bad movies.

2. **Exodus 20:4: “You shall not make for yourself a graven image.”** Symbolized by the Oscar trophy, a golden idol of an actor, it is obvious, that at least in the movie celebrity phenomenon, there is a worship of actors, and consequently of movies, almost to the same level that pagans worshiped the images of idols. Watching movies is image worship; at least in the case of *“fans” of actors*. And it’s especially harmful in the case of young people who want to be actors, since so often the supermarket tabloids display paparazzi findings, of the latest adulterous affairs and divorces of the actors, which are so frequent that you lose count!

3. **Ephesians 4:29-30, KJV: “Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. And grieve not the Holy Spirit of**

God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.” The majority of movies convey corrupt communications, representations, and music; scenes that glorify either sexual immorality, profanity, violence, or the occult. To support a movie in which corrupt communications are coming out of the mouths of the actors, because they are reciting corrupt movie scripts, is to contradict Scripture and *the spirit of purity* that the Christian life requires. To pay money to watch such a movie, and what’s more, to see it as fun, is to “partake of their sins” (Ephesians 5:7), just as if you, though a spectator, were saying the same things the actor was. 1 Corinthians 15:33: “*Evil communications corrupt good manners,*” no doubt; for what will go into the heart from the corrupt communications of a movie, will certainly come out of it later, for “out of the overflow of the heart, the mouth speaks” (Luke 6:45). To read the Bible for devotions, but to watch corrupt movies for entertainment:—is not only a mark of ignorance and spiritual immaturity, but a mark of rebellion against Biblical morals. Romans 6:13: “Do not offer any part of yourself to sin as instruments for unrighteousness.” Including the EYES and EARS with which you can watch movies!²² Ephesians 5:3-4: “Among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God’s holy people. Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place.”

²² See references to the “Eye Gate” and “Ear Gate” in John Bunyan’s *The Holy War* (1682).

4. **Colossians 3:5, 8:** “Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed...you must also rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips.” Most movies are *slammed down* by this! Every sinful thought that is stimulated by watching movies is condemned here, except for the occult. But that is condemned by 1 Samuel 15:23: “Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft.” Movies which glorify crime should go without saying, as *murder* and *stealing* are condemned by the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:13, 15), often the leading theme in *action movies*. All these things must be PUT TO DEATH; or, mortified: “killed” within one’s heart, to walk in the state of salvation. If you reply, “That is only included in the movie to make the story more realistic,” then I would reply, “So what? Jesus calls you to be in the world, but not of it (John 17:14). If being ‘of the world’ means being ‘realistic,’ then renounce Christianity and embrace your worldly, carnal realism. But the Christian life called for in the New Testament is *purity of heart and life*; and if that is ‘unrealistic’ to you, then it is probably because you are not born again of the Holy Spirit.” As for cussing: “*In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin*” (Proverbs 10:19). The more movies, the more words, the more sins of the mouth! Of the making of movies, there is no end; and all of it is vanity! (Eccl. 12:12). So much for the movie industry.

5. **Matthew 5:28:** “Whoever looks on a woman to lust after her has committed adultery with her already in his heart.” Most people consider this to only apply to mar-

ried men, not single men. But why wouldn't it apply to single men? Firstly, few single men can tell if an attractive young woman is married or not. It is natural for them to feel sexual lust just from looking at her; in such cases, *adultery of the heart* has already occurred, knowingly or not. After the fall of Eve, God clothed her (Gen. 3:21); her nudity was only meant to be seen by her husband during special times. Prostitutes and Hollywood harlots go against this covering act of God. Secondly, many young, sex-symbol actresses in movies are actually married. Often times, they play in *seductive scenes* that show off their bodies indecently. To look upon these women with "*the lust of the eye*" (1 John 2:16) is committing adultery of the heart. Thirdly, the old English word "adultery" applied not only to married people, but it also included *all sexual immorality*, including fornication between the unmarried, because "adultery" is an "adult" sin committed by "adults" as "adult stores" today do nothing but promote adultery of the adult heart. Fourthly, watching movies that encourage seduction, lust, and sexual immorality of all kinds, and sexually impure thoughts, are contrary to Jesus' command not to look upon a woman to lust.

Such movies are "*the pleasures of sin*" (Hebrews 11:25) and should not be tampered with! Anyone who is serious about the condition of his soul should consider this: that such movies are a "gateway drug" to porn! Mark 9:47: "If your *EYE* causes you to stumble, pluck it out!" I can't believe Jesus meant this literally; but I can believe that He would have you to stop watching movies that make you stumble in such a manner, and to exercise more self-control with your eyes. James 4:4: "*Adulterers and adul-*

teresses! Do you not know that *friendship with the world* is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an *enemy of God.*” Don’t be a friend of the movies: they are the world’s image and voice.

6. **Jude 1:8: “Filthy dreamers.”** He who indulges in the carnal delights of a sexually unclean movie, or porn, is no different than the filthy dreamers Jude described as false prophets, ready for Hell: who saw their sexually impure dreams—which were really *demonic dreams* inspired by succubae—wrongly seen as prophetic, under a deluded impression that they were apostles of Christ. How many pastors are just filthy dreamers; and still how many more churchgoing Christians? Don’t approve of sexually filthy dreams, whether in sleep or in a movie.

7. **Philippians 4:8: “Whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure...think on these things.”** Scripture commands Christians to mentally concentrate on that which leads to pure thoughts, loving thoughts, noble thoughts, and righteous thoughts (such as Bible study, or listening to sermons, or good or Christian music, reflecting on nature, or doing fun harmless activities). Watching the majority of movies is in direct contradiction to this Biblical command. *Most movies force Christians to think about what is untrue, ignoble, unrighteous, impure, immodest, lustful, perverted, criminal, profane, vile, and unholy:--and they make these thoughts out to be objects of fun and entertainment, which is far worse. If you obey Philippians 4:8, then “the God of peace shall be with you” (4:9).* In this way, you would be glorifying God “IN

YOUR SPIRIT” (1 Corinthians 6:20, KJV). Christians are expected not to be “in the flesh, but in the Spirit” (Romans 8:9). But the majority of movies will put them in the flesh; and grieve the Holy Spirit, and drive the Holy Spirit away from them! Ephesians 4:30: “*DO NOT GRIEVE THE HOLY SPIRIT OF GOD!*”

8. Galatians 5:19-21: “The works of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; idolatry and *witchcraft*; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.” So many movies, whether popular or not, capitalize on *immoral themes* such as these. There is no need for me to list the hundreds of movies, and catalog sin by sin. All you have to do is search 5 popular movies, Google “imdb parents guide” along with the movie title, and there you have it! Sin, sin, sin.

Notice how it says WITCHCRAFT is a “work of the flesh,” and that those who “live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God,” not go to Heaven! **HARRY POTTER!** C’mon people! Why have Christians and even *pastors* allowed this into their homes!? This is not only training your children’s minds to think favorably about *occult themes*, but it may lure a great number of them into New Age cults when they get older! And what about yourself? Do you think God will hold you guiltless because you do not practice witchcraft in real life? That because you are not a cult member, a Wiccan, or a Satanist, that God looks upon your *Harry Potter* fascination with any less disgust? Forget it! 1

Samuel 16:7: “The Lord looks at the heart.” Antinomians will be surprised to find that this verse will condemn them, rather than justify them, when God looks at their hearts, and finds an appreciation of wizards, and witches, gods, and goddesses, fairies, goblins, elves, and trolls, spells and magic—all just for fun? Just like the idol worshipers of the golden calf, who “sat down to eat and drink, then got up to play” (Exodus 32:6). God DOES look at the heart: which means that *Harry Potter* fans got a real problem!

A quick reading of the article on Wikipedia entitled, “Religious Debates Over the Harry Potter Series,” will show that the majority of Christianity sees these **pagan stories** as a harmless “Fantasy” entertainment; what’s more, is that they praise the stories for getting kids excited about reading, and for supposedly teaching that good triumphs over evil. (The Puritans used to train their kids to get excited about reading too: reading themes about good triumphing over evil—such as THE BIBLE, the Westminster Catechism, or John Bunyan’s *The Pilgrim’s Progress*. What novel ideas!)²³ Very few Christians have developed a strong stance against these stories, among whom I am one of them. Those with the strongest opinions against *Harry Potter* include Chick Publications (*The Nervous Witch* tract), associated with the Independent Fundamental Baptist movement (IFB); Caryl Matrisciana (the 2001 *Harry Potter: Witchcraft Repackaged* video), who is an independent evangelical apologist associated with Calvary

²³ Francis Bremer, *Puritanism: A Very Short Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), pp. 63-64; Warren Wooden, *Children’s Literature in the English Renaissance* (Lexington, KY: The University Press of Kentucky, 1986), p. 138.

Chapel and the Berean Call; Jack Brock, an independent Pentecostal pastor who led his Christ Community Church to burn the books in 2001; traditionalist Catholics, like Gabriele Amorth (a leading exorcist); the Greek Orthodox Church; and the Orthodox Church in America.

Harry, however, has succeeded in bewitching just about every other pastor in the world. Mixed opinions, indecision, confusion, and ambiguous attitudes have been expressed by the majority of leaders in the Roman Catholic Church, the Anglican Communion, Assemblies of God,²⁴ the Southern Baptist Convention, the United Methodist Church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, *Christianity Today*, Calvinist pastor Tim Keller,²⁵ and others! To me, all this is surprising, shocking, and devastating! What grief the Holy Spirit must feel (Eph. 4:30); what betrayal Jesus must feel, when **pagan stories that glorify witchcraft and the occult**, are being praised and even publicly endorsed by *pastors* all over the world! Surely these are prophets of Baal! Truly we need a reformation in our American churches; and true holiness revival! Let revival begin with tearing down this golden calf of pagan entertainment! These spineless, weak-willed, spiritless preachers! Dogs that can't bark! They don't know the Gospel! How will these vipers and blind guides escape from Hell? (1 Kings 18:19; Exodus 32:20; Isaiah 56:10; Matthew 15:14; 23:33). Some Christian leaders have even taken a fully supportive view of these pagan stories: *Cor-*

²⁴ Joan Rhoden, "What's Harry Doing in the Potter's House?" in *Pentecostal Evangel* <http://ag.org/pentecostal-evangel/Articles2003/4667_potter.cfm>.

²⁵ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tim_Keller_%28pastor%29#Theology

nerstone magazine (outlet of the Christian rock mecca: Cornerstone Festival) and the Russian Orthodox Church.

All of this massive dismissal of the *Harry Potter* stories seems to rest on the belief that the occult is of the “Fantasy” genre; that it is *not real* (and hence, *not a real sin*); and that it is superstitious or insane to believe so. Jacobus de Voragine’s *The Golden Legend* is not fantasy literature; neither is Gregory the Great’s *The Life of St. Benedict*; nor Adomnan’s *The Life of St. Columba*, neither are John Howie’s *The Scots Worthies* fantasy stories, nor George Fox’s *Book of Miracles*, nor John Wesley’s *Journals*, nor Stanley Frodsham’s *Smith Wigglesworth: Apostle of Faith*, nor Donald Gee’s *Concerning Spiritual Gifts*. But I think that the vast majority of Christianity is so out of touch with the miraculous power of the Holy Spirit; it has de-supernaturalized everything in the Bible with regard to modern Christian living, it has gotten so incredibly unbelieving and nihilistic, it has reached such a poor state: that when PAGAN STORIES like *Harry Potter* reach massive popularity in the world of entertainment, and glamorize witchcraft—pastors can’t see anything wrong with it. They don’t even see witchcraft as real!

How BLIND are these blind guides! Matthew 6:22-23: “The eye is the lamp of the body. If your eyes are healthy, your whole body will be full of light. But if your eyes are unhealthy, your whole body will be full of darkness. If then the light within you is darkness, how great is that darkness!” When Revelation 21:8 says, “THOSE WHO PRACTICE MAGIC ARTS” will be cast into “THE FIERY LAKE OF BURNING SULFUR,” why even entertain *supportive ideas* about the occult, even by way of fic-

tion? I know you might not have plans to become a wizard, or witch, or join some cult; but please, if you value your immortal soul, and the Word of God clearly says that magic arts are worthy of eternal damnation in Hell-fire, isn't totally avoiding the *Harry Potter* movies and books the reasonable thing to do? Definitely!

Deuteronomy 18:10-12: “*Let no one be found among you who sacrifices their son or daughter in the fire, who practices divination or sorcery, interprets omens, engages in witchcraft, or casts spells, or who is a medium or spiritist or who consults the dead. Anyone who does these things is detestable to the Lord.*” 1 Samuel 15:23: “*Rebellion is as THE SIN OF WITCHCRAFT.*” I understand there are always going to be Christians who say *Harry Potter* is “just fantasy, not reality”:—but **WICCA IS REALITY**; it's a real life pagan cult that is growing more popular in the United States every year, because J. K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* stories have excited interest among young people to dabble in the occult!²⁶ They are designed to seduce children into the occult, no doubt. These books and movies are inspired by the devil. They are evil; and should be utterly rejected, destroyed, preached against, and entirely hated by all Christians! Matthew 18:6: “*If anyone causes one of these little ones—those who believe in Me—to stumble, it would be better for them to have a large millstone hung around their neck and to be drowned in the depths of the*

²⁶ It is estimated that the Wiccan population in the United States has grown from “a few hundred thousand” in 1996, to 800,000 in 2006 after the first four *Harry Potter* movies screened from 2001 to 2005 (Ethan White's *Wicca*, ch. 16). It is probably much higher now, being 10 years later; seeing that most pastors do not preach against Wicca!

sea.” May God have mercy on Ms. Rowling! May the Holy Spirit lead her to recant this incredible blasphemy, idolatry, and worship of false religion!

9. Romans 1:29-32: “They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; they have no understanding, no fidelity, no love, no mercy. Although they know God’s righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also *approve of those who practice them.*” This is an accurate description of movie-makers, actors, actresses, and a great majority of *movie fans*. Whether we’re speaking of the “wickedness, evil, greed, and depravity” of action, gangster, or other crime-glorifying movies; or those movies which make bad guys look like good guys. Pirates in the 1700s were notorious for their “murder, strife, deceit, and malice,” but I remember back in 2003 when *Pirates of the Caribbean* came out, and Jack Sparrow, the friendly, likeable pirate, was the craze among youth groups! Pirates were renowned for killing, raping, and stealing—but Hollywood makes them out to be likable swashbucklers. How immoral is that? Young Christians “approve of those” actors who make such films; and even idolize them, putting movie posters on their walls.

God help the church of Christ! Why is it that the bad guys are called good guys? Why do Christians say that Harry Potter, a pagan wizard, is a good guy? Why do they

look at Jack Sparrow, a notorious fugitive and pirate, as a good guy? Isaiah 5:20: “Woe to those who call evil good and good evil, who put darkness for light and light for darkness, who put bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!” What *lawlessness* must be in their minds! I understand they always say, “This is just fantasy, adventure, fiction, just for fun”: but STILL...the IDEA—why don’t they see the IDEA CONFLICT with the BIBLE and CHRISTIAN HOLINESS? They are spiritually blind because of impenitence and unbelief in the Gospel; or Biblical illiteracy. That’s my only explanations. Ephesians 4:18: “They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to *the hardening of their hearts*.” And their hearts are hard at least for one important reason: they love watching immoral movies. They do not “love the Lord their God with all their hearts and with all their souls and with all their minds” (Matt. 22:37). Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 6:14, 15, 17:

What do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness? What harmony is there between Christ and the devil?...Therefore, “Come out from them and be separate, says the Lord. Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you.”

10. **Hebrews 13:4: “Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge.”** Romance movies, with their *sexual themes*, unmarried actors kissing and fondling one another,

sex scenes, etc., are just one step away from porn, but are no less a sin against *the sanctity of marriage* in the eyes of God! Adultery, fornication, porn watching, scenes of a *semi-nude harlot*, or a loose promiscuous woman, or some lewd gold digger, in a movie, with either partial or full nudity is **TOTALLY OFF LIMITS FOR THE CHILDREN OF GOD!** All who fail to see this: “God will judge”: and they will learn it the hard way. The Whore of Babylon is in the movies! It’s a *demonic* principality! Revelation 17:5-6: “Upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.” This *prostitute spirit* is still in the business of killing Christians spiritually: and she is using the movie industry as her number one means of doing so. Do you think that *romantic and sexual movies* are harmless for unmarried teenagers? Read this testimony of an unmarried teenage girl from the 1920s:

Passionate love pictures do stir me up. Some and most times I go out from a movie and stay out late with a fellow. Sometimes never think of coming in until 2:30 AM...One night I went to a movie with a fellow of mine who drives a very chic little sport roadster. In the movie he sat with his arms around me, and every time the fellow would kiss the girl, he would look at me lovingly and squeeze my hand; after the movie we went to my girlfriend’s house and got her

and her fellow. *Then we all went for a moonlight spooning ride and had sexual relations.*²⁷

All sins, even fornication, can be forgiven by God, by repentance (permanently turning away) from this sin and faith in the blood of Jesus. But such things will not be without grave consequences. God, who is in control of the world, has ways of *judging* those who indulge in sexual immorality. Sexually arousing, romantic movies are a BAD INFLUENCE on unmarried young people! Moms and dads: “Do not prostitute your daughter, to cause her to be a harlot, lest the land fall into harlotry, and the land become full of wickedness” (Leviticus 19:29).

11. 2 Timothy 1:7: “God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.” Jesus said Christians should have a healthy fear of God and Hell (Luke 12:5).²⁸ But *horror movies*, and *suspenseful movies*, (and scary Halloween activities), are in direct contradiction to this passage! God does not want you to walk in *fear of demons or men or ideas* communicated through scary movies! God wants Christians to have power, courage, love, and sound minds. Sadly, the sociological study conducted for Henry James Forman’s *Our Movie Made Children* (1929), found that such movies have created permanent nervous tension, phobias, anxiety disorders,

²⁷ John R. Rice, *What Is Wrong With the Movies?*, pp. 88-89.

²⁸ See Solomon Stoddard’s *The Fear of Hell Restrains Men from Sin* (1713).

sleeplessness in children, poor concentration at school, spikes in high blood pressure, and even fainting!²⁹ It is God's will for such people to have *the spirit of fear* cast out of them in Jesus' name, by repentance from watching scary movies, washing their minds by reading the Word of God (Eph. 5:26), and faith in the blood of Jesus for the forgiveness of their sins! Galatians 6:7-8: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for *whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap*. For *he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption*." If you invest time watching movies with heroes that glorify sexual immorality, getting drunk, smoking, cussing, witchcraft, gang activity, or horror movies about devils and murderers—is it reasonable to say that such thoughts, once cultivated, will fully grow up into a crop of corruption in your life? Or from a medical point of view: into anxiety and mental illness? Yes, of course.

1 Corinthians 15:33: "*Do not be misled: 'Bad company corrupts good character,'*" or good morals; whether that company consists of real friends and family in your social life—or the immoral actors and actresses of the movies. 2 Corinthians 6:17: "Therefore, '*Come out from them and be separate*, says the Lord. *Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you*.'" While any Christian striving for holiness should remove himself from *the immoral influence of bad friends*; he should especially remove himself from *the immoral influence of bad movies*, especially since movie-makers seem to intentionally concentrate all the sin found

²⁹ See John R. Rice, *What Is Wrong With the Movies?*, ch. 6: "Physical, Nervous, and Mental Results Caused by Movies."

in American culture into 2 hour movie scripts; and then try to express it flamboyantly, glamorously, alluringly, attractively, and defiantly. God-haters move to Hollywood and Beverly Hills and rule the minds of America from there! Why then, do pastors and Christians endorse so many movies without caution? *The movie industry is of the world and is an enemy of God* (James 4:4).

12. Isaiah 55:7: “Let the wicked *forsake* their ways and the *unrighteous* their thoughts. Let them turn to the Lord, and He will have mercy on them.” So many Christians are indulging in the unrighteous thoughts of movie-makers! FORSAKE THESE UNRIGHTEOUS MOVIE THOUGHTS! TURN TO THE LORD AND HE WILL FORGIVE YOU! Do you think that unrighteous thoughts are not considered sin by the Lord God who knows and sees all things? Don’t argue with God.

13. 1 Corinthians 6:9-11: “Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor *homosexuals*, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.” All these are damnable (or Hell-deserving) sins if not repented from; if there are people living lifestyles where these sins are finding a continuous expression, then such sins will drag their souls to an eternal, burning Hell when they die! Such peo-

ple will not go to Heaven. In the movies such immoralities are abounding; especially with *sexual romance movies*. There is no way that anyone could be in a state of salvation who would fill their hearts with such thoughts. Jesus said it will be *the pure in heart* that will see God (Matthew 5:8). “Christians” who love *sexually themed romance movies and books* have an empty profession of faith, totally worthless (see Matt 7); their justification under the New Testament is null and void; if they truly want salvation, then they have to repent; but they will go to Hell if they DO NOT REPENT, forsake, and turn away wholeheartedly from such vile, and abominable, desires and practices.

NOR HOMOSEXUALS, NOR SODOMITES (nor girly men; nor gay prostitutes; nor effeminate men; nor *cata-mites*) will go to Heaven! But conversion from even this is possible by the Spirit of God. There were ex-gays in the church of Corinth, which is why the apostle Paul said, “such *were* some of you” (1 Cor. 6:11), speaking of their former gay lives in the past tense. Gay pornography has been around since the 1960s, and so have bizarre gay indie movies; but now **the gay “hero” theme** is being popularized by major movies and TV shows, such as *Brokeback Mountain* (2005) which has a scene with gay sex, several f-words, and was nominated for eight Academy Awards; and now the gay-friendly talk show *Ellen*, which has been running in the day time since 2003. Hollywood is SODOMIZING America in broad daylight! And what is the evangelical church doing about it? Nothing!

14. Luke 16:15: “You are those who justify yourselves before men, but God knows your hearts. For what is

highly esteemed among men is an abomination in the sight of God.” Movies are highly esteemed among men, but seeing that most if not all movies are made by godless Hollywood producers, it follows that most movies are an abomination, or extremely hated, detestable thing in the sight of God. If you want to be closer to the Holy Spirit, to have deeper communion with God, then you need to hate what He hates, and love what He loves. God loves righteousness (Heb. 1:9)—so that automatically means that **God hates the majority of Hollywood movies.** To justify and excuse the movies is to play the devil’s advocate, in the most literal sense. Don’t defend the devil. Be a man of God. The Baptist preacher Herbert J. Miles, after surveying 100 movies at random in the 1940s, said, “We conclude, from the Christian viewpoint, that only approximately 5% of the movies from Hollywood are fit to see.”³⁰

Don’t compromise Biblical morals. Follow God! Glorify God, not the devil! Pursue the visions of God through prayer; and detoxify your soul from the immoral influence of Hellivision! Be persecuted for this type of righteousness (Matt. 5:10): get called a prude, a goody-goody, a killjoy, a moralist, a legalist, whatever. Movie-fanatic Christians have no Biblical argument to stand on. All that matters is that you have a ***clean conscience before God*** (Acts 24:16); that you have peace with God from thinking on pure things (Php. 4:7-8); that you have peace of mind, and dwell in the shadow of the Almighty (Ps. 91:1), that the holy well of salvation within you is producing more tranquility and spiritual rest (Heb. 4); that there is no man but

³⁰ Herbert J. Miles, *Movies and Morals*, pp. 14, 58.

you that can come between you and God; that you view this strictly as something between you and God; that your faith-based relationship with the Holy Spirit will not be broken, grieved, or done away with.

OH, HOLLYWOOD! YOU ARE DEAD IN YOUR TRESPASSES AND SINS! FULL OF ALL DECEIT AND FRAUD! CHILDREN OF THE DEVIL! ENEMIES OF ALL RIGHTEOUSNESS! WILL YOU NOT STOP PERVERTING THE STRAIGHT WAYS OF THE LORD?

(Eph. 2:1; Acts 13:10)

CHAPTER 3
CHURCH FATHERS
ARE AGAINST BAD MOVIES

The following are paraphrased arguments, in my own words, from several of the early church fathers; their views against attendance at plays in theaters, were just as strong as any fundamentalist Baptist preacher, if not stronger. Instead of using the word “plays” I have used the word “movies” to make the arguments sound more up to date. This is taken from chapter 6 of an old 1698 Puritan book: Jeremy Collier’s *A Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage*.

TERTULLIAN
(160 – 220 A.D.)

1. Because **so many movies are filled with *superstition, idolatry, and sexual immorality***:--Christians should avoid watching them; also, because they have a tendency to *bewitch the spectators* into making unreasonable excuses for them and to *ignore the warnings of their conscience* (pp. 253-54).

2. Some Christians excuse the indiscriminate practice of watching all movies, because the Bible is silent about it: nowhere does it say, “You shall not watch movies,” as it says, “You shall not kill” (Exodus 20:13); but this is not worthy of being considered an argument. We have the meaning of the prohibition all over the pages of Scrip-

ture;³¹ for example, Psalm 1:1: “*Blessed is the man that walketh not in **the counsel of the ungodly**, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.*” People who make such excuses must either not have a sensitive conscience; or not be skilled in practically applying Biblical principles to their lives (p. 254).

3. We have a case of a woman who became *demon-possessed after going to the movie theater*. During the exorcism, the demon was asked how he gained access, and it said, “I have done nothing but what I can justify; I seized her on my own ground.” And so, we see that she was to blame for coming under the influence of the demon, by agreeing with the pleasure of the bad movie. It is also no wonder that *we have seen many Christians apostatize due to watching movies*. 2 Corinthians 6:14: “What communion has light with darkness?” Matthew 6:24: “No man can serve two masters.” Who cares if these movies look great and sound great? Look at these things as *honey droppings from the bowels of a toad*! Christians should get their thrills from living a holy life and casting out demons! (pp. 257-260).

³¹ “Although the Bible does not literally say, ‘Thou shalt not attend the movies,’ if Ephesians 5:3-11 does not say in effect, ‘Thou shalt not attend the movies,’ then truth, facts and words have no meaning” (Herbert J. Miles, *Movies and Morals*, p. 93). I would go further than that; and include all of **Ephesians 4:17-5:21**, which the NIV sections as “Living As Children of Light.”

CYPRIAN

(200 – 258 A.D.)

Because movies are so *sexually immoral*, it must mean that the Christians who watch them have made up their minds to cast away all intentions of *modesty*. By getting used to *watching these lewd images for pleasure*, they will certainly learn to *do them* in real life. Also the *profanities* of dramas and comedies do nothing but make *vice* familiar and recommended to the human ear. All true Christians should wholeheartedly *avoid these vanities*. If a Christian needs *refreshment*, he should read the Scriptures; and if a Christian is seeking *friendship* he should seek it among good Christians, and certainly not with any actors, who are sexually immoral (pp. 262-64).

LACTANTIUS

(240 – 320 A.D.)

Comedies so often revolve around *sexual jokes* about debauching virgins and the experiences of prostitutes; and so, *Christians should avoid these diversions, lest the bad influence overtake them*. Such things are prone to make us *forget about God* and *become lukewarm* in the practice of righteousness. If a Christian were to have movies like this in his house, would not his reputation suffer extremely, and everyone consider him a notorious *antinomian*? No doubt. Such movies flatter us only to cut our throats. It is the devil's device to use these movies as instruments of *sensuality and Epicureanism*, to lead Christians into *hedonism* and *eternal destruction*; moreover, these visual

pleasures are causes of real *misery* in this life (pp. 265-266).

THE COUNCILS OF ILLIBERIS AND ARLES

(305 and 314 A.D.)

Because the professions of acting and comedy were so immoral, the church fathers saw fit to *forbid Christians from marrying actors and comedians; and also, to excommunicate anyone who took up these professions* (p. 250).

THE THIRD COUNCIL OF CARTHAGE

(397 A.D.)

Because movies are so immoral, pagan, and blasphemous against Christ, *all pastors are forbidden from watching such evil movies* (p. 250).

AUGUSTINE

(354 – 430 A.D.)

When movie theaters are built, and Christianity declines; when materialism and prodigal living is admired, and true charity is laughed at; when actors can party among the rich, and the poor scarcely have enough to keep themselves alive—when God allows these things to flourish, we can be sure that He is very angry... movie theaters are cages of uncleanness and public schools of debauchery; to put it plainly: *lewdness* (pp. 274-275).

CHAPTER 4

ARE ANY MOVIES O.K. TO WATCH?

I actually believe it's okay to watch some movies: few movies. In the preceding chapters I've been preaching against the sins of bad movies; but, I would agree with Herbert J. Miles' conclusion mentioned on page 41: that only about **5% of the movies from Hollywood are fit to see** for the Christian who plans on living a holy life. In the case of good movies, I see this as a harmless Christian liberty, agreeable with Romans 14. Here I am referring to harmless movies and family-friendly TV shows, which have no sexuality, no profanity, no witchcraft, or any glorification of sin. Such entertainments are like a treat; and are like finding a needle in the haystack of a movie garbage dump.

To take such a strict view of allowing *some movies*, under Biblically strict moral guidelines, puts me at the total opposite end of the spectrum of those who would call themselves "movie fans" or those who "love movies" unconditionally. On the other hand, it puts me just out of the category of those Christians who say "No" to all movies 100%, because in their minds this makes it easier for them walk with the Lord. To those Christians, *I salute them*; if they feel that *abandoning all movies* 100% is what they need to do, in order to stay clean with the Lord, then *more power to 'em*. But I see myself as an *almost* no-movie Christian, just not quite; I'm a few steps away from it; but I can't find anywhere in Scripture that makes it a *neces-*

sary measure to take; nor an *absolute dogma to teach* to others.

The pleasures of SIN are what contradict the Christian life and weigh down the Christian's soul (Heb. 11:25); it is SIN that is the enemy of the Christian; it is SIN that tempts, allures, and destroys the faith of Christians. Although 95% of HOLLYWOOD MOVIES are anti-moral, sin-glorifying, tempting, apostatizing, sex-saturated, profane, occultic, and murderous—it does not mean that all DVDs are *sins*. Videos are harmless things in themselves; they are *instruments* that can be used for evil, for good, or just plain *harmless diversions*. The same can be said of books and CDs.

In my personal judgment and opinion, I've always been encouraged in my faith while watching *Martin Luther* (1953), which accurately portrays the life of the reformer as he stood up to the tyranny of Rome; or *John Wesley* (1954), which sketches the life and ministry of the Methodist church founder and evangelist; the TV movie *Hildegard* (1994), which sketches the life of the Catholic visionary; *The Gospel of John* (2003), which goes word-for-word through the Good News Bible, and I think has got to be the cleanest and most well-done of all the Jesus movies; *Pilgrim's Progress* (the 1978 cartoon) is a favorite of mine; *In His Steps* (1964) does a great job at showing the difference between nominal Christianity and a real born again experience; *Time Changer* (2002) is an interesting, albeit low budget Christian movie, about an 1800s seminary professor who is thinking about becoming a liberal Christian; but his colleague sends him to the 21st century in a time machine, and he is appalled at the immorality in our

society; and by the end of the movie, he changes his mind and remains Reformed and conservative in the view that morality cannot be separated from the person and work of Christ; my wife and I both like *Shadowlands* (1993), where Anthony Hopkins plays C. S. Lewis as he struggles with his new sickly wife; we allow some episodes of *The Andy Griffith Show* (1960s) and *Little House on the Prairie* (1970s), provided there are no off-color, sexual, or romantic scenes; sometimes the Christian bookstores will sell interesting documentaries, creationist videos, and children's cartoons; and we try to keep our children away from watching anything that is scary, or magic, or encourages sin.

There are many, many movies that most evangelical Christians would accept as "okay" that I would definitely reject. I would *vehemently protest* many of these hypocritical "Christian" movies—these gates of Hell—which still find plenty of time to display *semi-nude women, cleavage, cussing, and glorifications of sin*. Most of the arguments against bad movies that I have expressed in this booklet: many Christians would likely dismiss or explain away as legalistic, and refuse to label their beloved movies as "bad" movies. *There is a lax attitude about movies and Christian morals*; if you go to Christian bookstores, and look at their movie sections, you will find what appear to be many movies about the Bible, Jesus, and other Christian themes. But I have found that most of these Christian movies contain at least one or two scenes with either *partial nudity*, sexual promiscuity or *immodesty*, romance and sensual kissing and feeling between unmarried actors, *cuss words*, beautiful women showing *obvious cleavage on*

Christian movie covers, some having scenes with extreme or *unnecessary violence*, *scantily clad women* in tight or silken garments, etc. These “Christian” movies still appear to be very much under the influence of Hollywood’s low moral standards. While we have to show our fellow Christians mercy, wherever they are in their Christian walk; and while it just might not be clear to them that the Bible totally forbids nudity, profanity, emotional adultery of the heart, etc...let’s also try to remember that *hypocrite* is the Biblical Greek word for *actor*! Philippians 4:8:

Whatsoever things are *true*,
 whatsoever things are *honest*,
Whatsoever things are *just*,
 whatsoever things are *pure*,
Whatsoever things are *lovely*,
 whatsoever things are of *good report*;
If there be any *virtue*,
 and if there be any *praise*,
THINK ON THESE THINGS!

FURTHER READING ON MOVIE SINS

Most of the views and Biblical arguments, against the sins of the movies, that I have expressed in this booklet, were influenced by William Law, John R. Rice, and Herbert J. Miles.

Bruch, Harry Vom. *The Carnival of Death: or the Modern Dance and Other Amusements*. New York: Book Stall, 1920. Possibly the first fundamentalist book to preach against movies.

Campbell, R. C. *Modern Evils*. New York: Fleming H. Revell Co., 1933.

Collier, Jeremy. *A Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage*. New York: AMS Press, Inc., 1974. Originally published 1698. Puritan preachings against the theater.

Forman, Henry James. *Our Movie Made Children*. New York: Macmillan, 1935. An influential work that was the product of multiple sociologists' findings about the evil effects of bad movies on children.

Law, William. *The Absolute Unlawfulness of the Stage Entertainment*. Gale ECCO, 2010. Originally published 1726. Law was an Anglican theologian that greatly influenced John Wesley's view of holiness (and consequently mine); however, with Wesley, I would strongly disagree with Law, on the point that later in his life he embraced Christian universalism.

- Miles, Herbert J. *Movies and Morals*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1947. This conservative Southern Baptist pastor studied 100 movies at random and catalogued the sins that he found were glorified in them. He concluded that 95% of Hollywood movies are morally inappropriate for Christians to watch (p. 58). In the last chapter he argued that Christ-glorifying Christian movies should be produced by independent Christian groups and churches, but not by Hollywood.
- Rice, John R. *What Is Wrong With the Movies?* Murfreesboro, TN: Sword of the Lord Publishers, 1938. Originally published by Zondervan. Mostly influenced by Forman's findings, only with more Biblical and fundamentalist views added on. Went through 19 editions; clearly the most popular fundamentalist book against the movies during the 1930s, 40s, etc.