



THE PASTOR'S PEN

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The Bible and Hollywood

In the last *Pastor's Pen* it was stated that the members of the Christian Church had once been known as a "people of The Book." Along with that fact the challenge was put forth that we should once again strive to regain that distinction. Lent is a perfect time to attempt that goal, to start reading and studying the scriptures for our own information and enjoyment. This is especially true as five new films are being released by Hollywood this year about the Bible and events that take place dealing with the pages of Holy Writ. As the movie industry debuts their cinematic creations and retellings of familiar biblical themes and biblical doctrines, the question arises: "Are they getting the story right?" Then we need to ask, "How do you know?"

In February Mark Burnett and Roma Downey, in cooperation with 20th Century Fox, released "*Son of God.*" In April, right before Easter, Sony will release "*Heaven is For Real*" based on the book of the same title. Russell Crowe will play the title character in "*Noah*" as Anthony Hopkins, Jennifer Connelly, and Emma Watson round out the cast in this Regency Enterprise release set for November. Then come December, and just in time for Advent, 20th Century Fox will offer the film "*Exodus*" with Christian Bale starring as Moses, Ben Kingsley as Nun and Sigourney Weaver co-starring as Tuya. Also, Lionsgate Films will offer a star packed cast for their production, "*Mary, Mother of Christ.*"

Now do not get me wrong, I think that it is great that Hollywood is producing films about the Bible and biblical themes. My concern is how many people will just watch these movies and think that this is the real story in all of its details? We know that it is impossible to put all of the information of the life of Christ or the story of the Exodus into a two hour movie. We also know that Hollywood has a huge reputation for editing and rewriting stories to make them fit in the limits of the big screen. So, unless we read the book and know the actual, true, factual story, how will we know what Hollywood has gotten right and what it has changed? How will we be able to answer our friends' questions when they ask us who is Nun and Tuya?

Perhaps you may already have a few questions about parts of the Bible that you have already read. Perhaps you might want someone to talk with about what the Bible has to offer on various teachings and practices of the Church? If so, then let me encourage you to come to the Sunday evening Bible Study at 6:30. It is a great place to bring up your questions and discuss them with other Christians as well as getting the opportunity to express some of your own thought about the Bible.

In closing this article, I would like to ask you to take just a moment to look over the following list of twenty-five comments that people have made about what is in the Bible. As you read the following statements ask yourself if they are true or false. Are they found in the Bible or not? You can wait for next for the next newsletter for the answers and see how you do, or you could just go ahead and look up the answers for yourself. Either way, it should be an interesting self-examination of how much you really know about the

Bible.

Angels have wings.

People become angels when they die.

Angels are not singing at the birth of Jesus, but rather, they are just speaking.

The devil has horns and a pitchfork.

The Bible talks about a singular, apocalyptic, Antichrist figure.

The Bible never says anywhere that the Antichrist is the “Beast” of Revelation.

That Adam and Eve ate from an apple tree when they sinned.

The Bible never suggests that [clergy should perform marriages](#), or that a wedding is anything but a family/community ceremony and reception/feast.

The fish which swallowed Jonah was a whale.

The Bible says nothing about Jesus being married or single.

There are no records of a vote in the early church, nor are there any congregational business meetings mentioned.

The Bible never gives a date for Jesus’ birth.

Scriptures do not provide any evidence that Jesus wanted the government (Caesar) to take care of the poor.

That should be the job of the Church.

Everyone must pray with hands folded and heads bowed.

Church music should only be reflective, subdued, or played on an organ/piano.

The Bible says that women can’t wear pants.

Women should not work outside the home.

Elijah was taken up to heaven in a chariot.

The word “wine” is never associated with the “cup” at the Last Supper.

The “rapture” is never mentioned anywhere in the book of Revelation.

The Bible never uses the phrase “personal relationship with Jesus.”

There is no record of anyone ending a sermon in the Early Church by inviting people to receive Jesus into their hearts.

Cleanliness is next to Godliness.

A penny saved is a penny earned.

The Bible says that Christians can “fall from Grace.”

How do you think you did? Don’t wait for the next newsletter, go ahead and check your answers now.

Blessings,

James