

What's wrong with the movie, "The Passion of the Christ": Should Christians support and see this movie?

"But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money." (Acts 8:20)

It's all over the news networks, major newspapers, and talk shows. It's the new movie directed by Mel Gibson "The Passion of the Christ" about the last twelve hours of Christ's life. Spoken in Aramaic and Latin with sub-titles. Mel produced the movie (25 million estimated to make) with his own money.

Please let me say, I'm not against the passion, crucifixion, suffering or resurrection of our Lord Jesus. I affirm those essentials with my whole heart. That is not what's in question. I'm not one of these that are against it for the supposed anti-Semitic message. Nor am I against it because I oppose movies, or that I'm ashamed of the message of the cross not at all. My reasons will be clear. For those that would ask well did you see the movie? No, I did not see the movie. Does that make one less qualified? One does not need to drink gasoline to know it's dangerous. At this point I have a fleshly curiosity, but no spiritual desire.

We need to see what was said prior to the movie being released and after its release. Also, we will examine the content of the movie to see if it juxtaposes with Scripture. We will then look at the end result.

The movie of The Passion of the Christ is just that—a movie which tells of the last twelve hours of the life of Christ. Why does one go to the movies? Ask yourself that, why do you go to the movies? The only answer is for entertainment. Is the suffering of our Lord entertainment? Is it something to make money off of? We do NOT need to see a movie of this kind to be "moved" our Lord can do that by His spirit and His word!

"Artists have every right to create any kind of movie they want, but an audience has the absolute right to pass judgement on that," said Rabbi James Rudin.
(BBC)

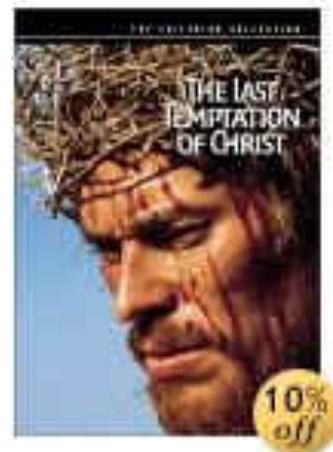
How it Started

This is not the first time, and I would imagine it will not be the last, of the ideas to make a movie about the crucifixion of our Lord. We all remember the horrifying film "The Last Temptation of Christ." What an ugly awful movie.

It isn't difficult to imagine why this 1988 retelling of the Crucifixion story was picketed vociferously upon release--this Jesus bears little resemblance to the classical Christ, who was not, upon careful review of the Gospels, ever reported to have had sex with Barbara Hershey. Heavily informed by Gnostic reinterpretations of the Passion, *The Last Temptation of Christ* based rather strictly on Nikos Kazantzakis's novel of the same name. (Amazon.com, 2004)



At "the height of spiritual bankruptcy" more than a decade ago, abusing alcohol and drugs, the actor Mel Gibson said he once contemplated hurling himself out a window... But instead, he turned to the Bible, which ultimately inspired him to direct his new movie, *The Passion of the Christ*. "I think I just hit my knees," Gibson told Diane Sawyer in an exclusive interview on ABCNEWS' Primetime. "I just said, 'Help.' You know? And then, I began to meditate on it, and that's in the Gospel. I read all those again. I remember reading bits of them when I was younger." "Critics who have a problem with me don't really have a problem with me in this film," Gibson said. "They have a problem with the four Gospels. That's where their problem is." "I don't want people to make it about the blame game," Gibson said. "It's about faith, hope, love and forgiveness. That's what this film is about. It's about Christ's sacrifice." Jesus Christ "was beaten for our iniquities," Gibson said. "He was wounded for our transgressions and by his wounds we are healed. That's the point of the film. It's not. The "spiritual bankruptcy" led him to reexamine Christianity, and ultimately to create *The Passion of the Christ* – "my vision ... with God's help" of the final hours in the life of Jesus. (ABCNews, interview Feb. 17, 2004)



In a December e-mail sent to The Associated Press, Gibson said he did "an immense amount of reading" to supplement the Bible's relatively unadorned account of the crucifixion in the four Gospels. "I consulted a huge number of theologians, scholars, priests, spiritual writers," Gibson wrote. "The film is faithful to the Gospels but I had to fill in a lot of details - like the way Jesus would have carried His cross, or whether the nails went through the palms of His hands or his wrists ... Since the experts canceled each other out, I was thrown back on my own resources to weigh the different arguments and decide for myself." (AP)

Mel Gibson says he took it as a sign to make "The Passion of the Christ" when a strange French woman approached him several years ago and said, "Jesus loves you." James Caviezel, who plays Christ, said he got an equally eerie sign six months before he auditioned when a stranger came up to him and said, "You'll be playing Jesus." Caviezel noted his initials are J.C. and was 33 - the same age as Jesus when he was killed. He said he's had fans bow down before him, and shrugged off the hardships of playing the physically demanding part. (dailynews, 2-19-04)

"Other versions suffer from bad hair or stilted acting. I wanted to make the story real and not portray it as a fairytale. I don't think other films have tapped into the real force of this story. We've done the research. I am telling the story as the Bible tells it. I think the story, as it really happened, speaks for itself. The Gospel is a complete script, and that's what we are filming." http://davidmacd.com/catholic/mel_gibson_passion.htm (Mel Gibson)

It also draws on an old book Gibson found in his library, "The Dolorous Passion," by Anne Catherine Emmerich. He says he didn't know he had it until it literally fell into his hands when he was reaching for another book.

Gibson has also noted in interviews that the script had been inspired not just by the Gospels but also by The Dolorous Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ written by the 18th-century mystic Anne Catherine Emmerich. Gibson has said his original inspiration for the film came when the book literally fell into his hands one day while he was reaching for another on his library shelf. <http://www.adelaideinstitute.org/Dissenters/gibson2.htm>

How did it all begin? Gibson bought an old library of books with some old tomes. He reached up to pick out a book, pulled it out, but the one next to it fell into his hands. He started reading it. That book is the one being used for

the background of the film. (<http://www.baytoday.ca/content/editorials/details.asp?c=1693>)

Mel Gibson and Catholicism

Gibson, a staunch Catholic, has always denied the film depicted Jews in a bad light. The campaign will come amidst heavy promotion of the film by Christian evangelists. (BBC)

"Media names such as columnist Cal Thomas and Web personality Matt Drudge have said the film is "beautiful" and "magical." An avowed so-called "Traditionalist Catholic," a splinter movement that believes in celebrating Mass in Latin and rejects changes in the Church made by the Second Vatican Council, Gibson has said the film is intended "to inspire, not offend," according to a statement he released last June. One man who saw the film Tuesday in Columbia, South Carolina, was unimpressed. "I wanted to leave," he said. "I didn't want to dissect this movie and dissect my faith." A woman in the Columbia audience commented on the amount of blood and violence in the film. "I think it is, in a way, Hollywood's interpretation of something," she said. "And I'm not quite sure of the ultimate purpose, because I do feel it is extremely graphic and somewhat biased." (CNN)

Mel Gibson told CHRISTIANITY TODAY: "I've been actually amazed at the way I would say the evangelical audience has—hands down—responded to this film more than any other Christian group." What makes it so amazing, he says, is that "the film is so Marian." Gibson goes beyond many Catholics when he calls her "a tremendous co-redemptrix and mediatrix." (CT, 2-20-04, emphasis added mine)

"...evangelical leaders like Focus on the Family president Donald Hodel and Harvest Crusades evangelist Greg Laurie. Public figures as diverse as Willow Creek Community Church's pastor Bill Hybels and bluegrass musician Ricky Skaggs have hosted special screenings for pastors. This evangelical enthusiasm for The Passion of the Christ may seem a little surprising, in that the movie was shaped from start to finish by a devout Roman Catholic and by an almost medieval Catholic vision. But evangelicals have not found that a problem because, overall, the theology of the film articulates very powerful themes that have been important to all classical Christians. Mel Gibson is in many ways a pre-Vatican II Roman Catholic. He prefers the Tridentine Latin

Mass and calls Mary co-redemptrix. Early in the filming of *The Passion*, he gave a long interview to Raymond Arroyo on the conservative Catholic network EWTN. In that interview, Gibson told how actor Jim Caviezel, the film's Jesus, insisted on beginning each day of filming with the celebration of the Mass on the set. He also recounted a series of divine coincidences that led him to read the works of Anne Catherine Emmerich, a late-18th, early-19th-century Westphalian nun who had visions of the events of the Passion. Many of the details needed to fill out the Gospel accounts he drew from her book, *Dolorous Passion of Our Lord*. (CT, 2-20-04)

But what you may not know is that Gibson has also put up \$5.1 million so far to run his own personal church near Malibu.

Last year, Christopher Noxon wrote in *The New York Times* that Gibson had donated \$2.3 million to make Holy Family Catholic Church in Agoura Hills, California a reality. Holy Family rejects the universally accepted teachings of the Second Vatican Conference and chooses to stick with antiquated Catholic ideology. But it turns out that Gibson has donated a little more than twice that amount to Holy Family since 1999, according to federal tax filings. And that's not counting 2003, since the most recent report has not yet been filed. Gibson and his wife Robyn are listed in federal tax records as directors of the Holy Family Catholic Church. The church is run out of Gibson's Icon Production company offices, with an Icon employee responsible for keeping the church's books. (Fox News 2-23-04)

There will be more reviews tomorrow, but early reviews are certainly valid since the film actually opens today. Some theaters in California – specifically Agoura Hills, where Gibson owns a church – are jumping the Wednesday premiere and listing shows for this afternoon and evening. (Fox News 2-23-04)

Can he go back to spewing obscenities in movies like "Lethal Weapon?" Will he even want to? After Wednesday, he'll be a religious leader, and he could devote the rest of his career to dramatizing the Bible. (dailynews.com, 2-22-04)

Jan. 27, 2004 | The pope gave it two thumbs up. No, the pope didn't give it two thumbs up. Who cares? It's the first movie PR campaign shameless enough to suggest that the pope had any opinion about it at all. Mel Gibson played the pope like a cheap lute. Mel Gibson is a Catholic Traditionalist, an offshoot of Catholicism that rejected the papacy and the reforms of the Vatican II in 1965, which, among other things, repudiated the charge of deicide against the Jews.

In light of this -- and Gibson's father having made various inflammatory, crackpot-conspiracy statements about the Holocaust, 9/11, Jews and Freemasons -- anti-Semitism charges against the film may have been inevitable, but they are perhaps not undeserved. Moreover, a clergyman who made his way to an advance screening suggests that other aspects of the upcoming epic are even more troubling. (Cintra Wilson, Solon.com, 1-27-04)

Caviezel dangled nearly naked on a cross in bone-chilling winds through weeks of filming. He was struck by lightning during a recreation of the Sermon on the Mount. An actor playing a Roman torturer cut a 14-inch gash in Caviezel's back during scenes of Christ's scourging. He dislocated his shoulder carrying the cross, caught pneumonia and a lung infection, endured cuts, scrapes and backaches from the chains he bore. A devout Roman Catholic, Caviezel, 35, would not have had it any other way. "I didn't look at it and go, 'Gee, I'm Catholic, and I'm going to play Jesus,'" Caviezel told The Associated Press. "I turned around and looked at the guy, and I tell you, I may be playing Jesus, but I felt like Satan at that moment. I turned to him, a couple of expletives came out of my mouth." (USA Today, 2-19-04)

Is Mel's Account of Biblical things Accurate?

"Because it was -- he's in the book as protesting. He didn't want to do it. He's saying, hey, remember, I'm not the criminal here, he is. I'm just helping, OK?" (This is a partial transcript from The O'Reilly Factor, February 24, 2004 that has been edited for clarity.)

"The woman we cast is very beautiful. I didn't want the stereotypical devil with horns. I don't believe that is how the devil presents himself/herself. He/she is very seductive and doesn't put out signposts announcing who he/she is." http://davidmacd.com/catholic/mel_gibson_passion.htm (Mel Gibson)

Is the film a true Biblical Account?

The dearth of information about Jesus' crucifixion makes it impossible to describe the event in accurate detail, as Mel Gibson attempts to do in his new film, "The Passion of Christ," Bible scholars and anthropologists say. The crucifixion is the centerpiece of the movie, set to open in U.S. theaters Feb. 25, Ash Wednesday on the Roman Catholic calendar. (AP)

Mel Gibson's account of the passion of our Lord is not Biblically accurate in many places.

Gibson shows Jesus being tempted by a pale, hooded female figure, who whispers to him just such words, suggesting that bearing the sins of the world is too much for Jesus, that he should turn back. In a moment of metaphorical violence drawn straight from Genesis 3:15, Jesus crushes the serpent's head beneath his sandaled heel. He told the pastors at Willow Creek of his "emptiness ... regret, despair, pain." At the time, a little over a decade ago, he had been neglecting his faith since he was 17—a hiatus of about 18 years. (CT, 2-02-04)

There are two things in the above quote that tell us of a lack of Biblical knowledge on anyone's part in producing this movie. One, no where, no where in the Holy Scriptures does it indicate the Devil is a woman. Two, figures of speech are used to indicate a "crushing" of satan under our feet, but in the context of the garden and Jesus praying then crushing a snake (supposed to be satan) under a sandal is wrong a unbiblical.

The Passion of the Christ is our greatest opportunity this year to share our faith, if we can get past the hype. Some people will quibble with some scenes in the film. Satan is present and converses with Jesus at Gethsemane. He is also seen sneering on the Via Dolorosa and dancing at Golgotha. Some shots in Christ's cross-bearing journey from Jerusalem to the killing hill invoke the Stations of the Cross. (leadershipjournal.net, 2-10-04)

Again unBiblical scenes. No where in the Scriptures is satan seen snickering or dancing on Golgotha. And to place such catholic overtones as the Via Delorosa is again misleading.

I have no doubt that Mel Gibson loves Jesus. From the evidence of "The Passion of the Christ," however, what he seems to love as much is the cinematic depiction of flayed, severed, swollen, scarred flesh and rivulets of spilled blood, the crack of bashed bones and the groans of someone enduring the ultimate physical agony. When Jesus is arrested by the Jewish high priest Caiaphas's men, a fight breaks out: Peter slices off the ear of a soldier and, for the first of many times, Gibson switches to slow motion, inviting us to linger on the physical abuse and humiliation. What you remember is the image of a crow plucking out the eyes of the thief on the cross next to Jesus, punished by God for mocking his son. (Newsweek, 3-1-04)

Once again unBiblical. We are not told that crows plucked the eyes out of the thief on the cross. One thing is for sure, Gibson can tell good fairy tales.

The first scene shot (it doesn't mean surely it will be the first in the movie) is the hanging of Judas. When Judas hangs, many children run around him, symbolic of the evil thoughts of Judas. In the countryside, in a national natural park close to Matera, in a cottage, they built the set from Jesus' childhood: father's shop and his small house. Indeed, even if the movie is about the last 12 hours of Jesus' life, during his crucifixion, he will be recalling his childhood. In a scene, Madonna gives him some food, in another one, he works as joiner together with his father. We find these scenes in the screenplay, but there is nothing similar in the Gospels. Then, in the first group scene, Jesus falls down two times, and is held by the Madonna. There are extras and roman soldiers. (<http://www.sassiweb.it/thepassion/>)

Wow! Great liberties with the truth there, Mel.

The movie: The Jewish high priests ask Roman overlords to punish Jesus on the charge of "blasphemy," breaking into cries of "Crucify him!" Some religious experts and historians argue that the Romans would have been unlikely to crucify anyone for a religious crime.

The Gospel: In Matthew 26:64-66 (According to this passage maybe)

The movie: As Jesus prays in the Garden of Gethsemane, a satanic figure cloaked in black appears, a character seen throughout the film. Gibson says he created the device "to show there are huge realms out there battling over us."

The Gospel: Matthew 4:8-10 (According to this passage this movie is inaccurate and false)

The movie: In his final moments, Jesus looks to heaven and closes his eyes. An earthquake then destroys the Jewish temple.

The Gospel: In Matthew 27:50-51 (According to this passage this movie is inaccurate and false)

What Other Say

The New Yorker magazine's David Denby said the violence overwhelmed the film. "One of the cruelest movies in the history of cinema," he wrote, calling "Passion" "a sickening death trip." (CNN)

Should Christians support Mel Gibson's blood-soaked film about Christ's final 12 hours on earth? What criteria could we use to form our response? Will this movie ultimately help or hinder the gospel message? Is The Passion of the Christ merely another Hollywood attempt at a box-office blockbuster?

EVERY BELIEVER IN JESUS CHRIST IS SUPPORTING 'PASSION'.
Congratulations again Mel on an incredible movie! But more importantly, congratulations for standing up for your beliefs in Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior. (passionmovieinfo.com)

President Bush wants to see the controversial new Mel Gibson film, "The Passion of the Christ," his spokesman said Friday. (myway.com)

For comments of well known people <http://www.passion-movie.com/promote/comments.html>

Here's one from a very deluded man.

It's all Christians need to prepare for the opening of the must-see film "The Passion of the Christ." Don't miss being a part of this unequivocal movement of God. (RNS News Service 2004)

Churches buying out theaters for Gibson film, expecting audiences to pack their pews later Santa Rosa pastor Andy VomSteeg openly wept watching a special screening of "The Passion of the Christ" in Los Angeles, saying the film will not only pack theaters but church pews as people seek to know more about the life and death of Jesus. Religious leaders such as Fogal have strongly embraced the film because they say it's an accurate portrayal of Scripture and Christ's passion. (Santa Rosa Press Democrat, 2-22-04)

What people are saying http://www.usatoday.com/life/movies/news/2004-02-25/passion-reax-sidebar_x.htm

One woman in East Wichita, Kan., collapsed during the movie and died a short while later at a nearby hospital, the local television station KAKE News reported on its Web site. Audience members at the Warren Theatre East said

the woman, in her 50s, collapsed during the segment of the film depicting Christ's crucifixion, reported KAKE, an ABC affiliate. Nurses watching the movie administered CPR, according to the TV station. The woman was pronounced dead shortly thereafter at a hospital in Wichita, the KAKE Web site said. Churches from coast to coast reserved entire theaters for opening day, while the National Association of Evangelicals (search), which represents more than 50 denominations with 43,000 congregations, helped sell tickets on its Web site. (Fox News, 2-25-04)

More gory than glory, more agony than ecstasy, Mel Gibson's *The Passion of the Christ* is unrelentingly brutal. Though there is undeniable power and artistry in the filmmaking, and Jim Caviezel plays Jesus with the perfect blend of magnetism and quiet dignity, one longs for modulation and subtlety, less blood and guts and many more quiet moments showing the compassion and humanity of Jesus. Though the focus is on Christ's final day of life, the floggings and flagellations eventually grow numbing and the too-few flashbacks to sermons and suppers are welcome relief. His resurrection is depicted almost as an afterthought. This is not a movie that families could gather around and watch every Easter after brunch. (USA Today. Com, 2-27-04)

In New Jersey, 90-year-old Edna Oatman of Pleasantville dressed in her Sunday best for her first visit to a movie theater since "E.T. The Extra-Terrestrial" in 1982. The New York Times said the film was half "horror movie" and half "slasher film" and likened its cruelty, brutality and violence to that of Quentin Tarantino, best known for directing "Pulp Fiction" and the more recent "Kill Bill." (MSNBC, 2-26-04)

"The Passion of the Christ" has been carefully photographed by the gifted Caleb Deschanel, who makes Gibson's relatively low-budget production look much bigger than it is. Still, if you flogged yourself for two hours and six minutes, the result might be about as enlightening as this film. Jim Caviezel is barely recognizable as Jesus behind horrific makeup in "The Passion of The Christ." (MSNBC.com, 2-24-04)

Although Charroin said he "didn't particularly want to support Mel Gibson and his politics," he did want to experience "an important cultural phenomenon."

The Pope Approves? He would

Producer Steve McEveety, who had flown to Rome uninvited to show the film to as many Vatican officials as he could, gave the DVD to Msgr. Dziwisz on Friday, Dec. 5, 2003. The Monsignor and the pope watched it together. Mr. McEveety said of John Paul. "He's pretty well booked. But he really wanted to see it." (<http://www.hollywoodjesus.com/passion.htm>)



Papal spokesman Joaquin Navarro-Valls issued a statement after John Paul's longtime secretary denied widespread published reports that the pope had given the thumbs up to the film by saying, "It is as it was." The quote, attributed to the pope by the filmmakers, came after John Paul had a private screening of the film. (USA Today, 2-19-04)

Personally, I don't care what the Pope says or thinks. However, what a stupid statement to make "it is as it was."? Was he there? I don't think so.

Not a Documentary

We need to be sure and understand one thing--this movie is NOT A DOCUMENTARY! It has no real life characters relating to that time. The below statements are very troubling to me in regards to the thinking of Christians and non-Christians alike. Deluded people are thinking like it's a documentary. Very sad indeed.

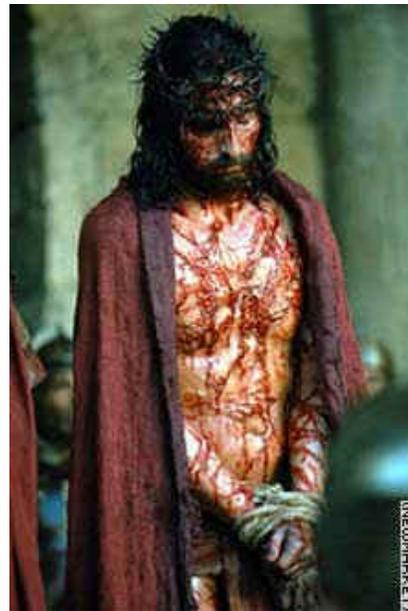
February 24, 2004 -- Hundreds of New Yorkers got a sneak preview of Mel Gibson's controversial movie, "The Passion of the Christ," yesterday - leaving many deeply moved and in tears, but some taken aback by the film's gory violence. "I'd give it 10 stars. It's one of the best movies I've ever seen in my life," said Maritza Castro, 32, who had tears streaming down her face as she left a preview screening for church groups at the Magic Johnson Theater in

Harlem. "I knew from the Bible that he did take a beating. I didn't know how intense," she said. "The movie just . . . made me feel like I was part of that crowd [at the crucifixion], like I was there . . . So much so that my chest is just caved in. It's awesome." "The story is about someone who was murdered in a horrific way. It's not a pretty thing. But it was an accurate portrayal and extremely effective," he said. "I cried through much of it," he said. "It's a very accurate, powerful, visceral experience." "It was very powerful. If you don't know Jesus, by the time you finish watching this movie, you definitely will," she said. (The New York Post)

A tearful Colleen Gasser told the Indianapolis Star, "It's breathtaking to think he suffered through that for me."

"It's one of the best movies I've ever seen in my life," a tearful Maritza Castro, 32, told the New York Post as she left a screening in Harlem. "I knew from the Bible that he did take a beating. I didn't know how intense."

After the movie, Mary Hatella of St. Paul wiped her tears and blew hard into her tissue. "I didn't realize before just how much he suffered so we could live in eternity," she said. "It just makes you realize how much he endured." Hatella said that she's going to change many things in her life because of seeing the movie. "The first way is the way I worship on Sundays. Jesus deserves to be worshiped with all your heart, and this Sunday I'm going to be on my face at the altar praising Him," she said. (AP, Wednesday, Feb. 25, 2004)



"If Jesus actually received the amount of punishment dished out in this film, he would have been dead three times over before arriving at Calvary." -- Jeffrey Westhoff, NORTHWEST HERALD (CRYSTAL LAKE, IL)

Merchandise Mart

Is our Lord's work on the cross a money market? They have made our Lord's suffering R rated. Our Lord Jesus is not someone to make money off of. There was an article that ceramic nails were being sold at a record pace. They're

calling the nails a "hot item." Father, help them. Everyone is getting in on the act. CNN is doing a show they are going to air called "The Mystery of Jesus." Many Christian and catholic web sites are promoting the movie and the goods to go along with it.

A nail pendant is among the official movie merchandise for The Passion of the Christ; a large one on a leather string sells for \$16.99.

Churches are encouraging group ticket sales, and stores are stocked with film-related products, such as licensed cross-nail pendants, crosses, coffee mugs, coffee-table books and artwork.

Witness cards. More than 1 million "witness cards

Jewelry. Siemon shipped about 100,000 small and large pewter nail pendants on a leather string in the past week

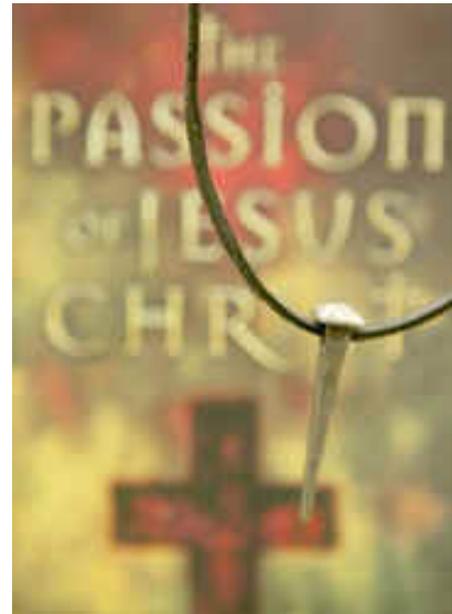
Books. The biggest seller at Family Christian is a colorful, behind-the-scenes coffee-table book about The Passion

NASCAR. Interstate Batteries Chairman Norm Miller asked that the hood of the race car his company sponsors, Bobby Labonte's No. 18, be emblazoned with the Passion logo

Art. Carpentree in Tulsa is selling framed paintings and prints based on the movie for \$30 to \$100 as part of a three-year licensing deal with Icon.

Co-op commercials. Ad company faithHighway has the rights to a 20-second movie clip and has signed up 300 churches, at \$795 each, to air the trailer on TV with an additional 10-second plug for their church.

Mel Gibson's "The Passion of the Christ" took in \$23.6 million on opening day, positioning it as the biggest religious-themed movie since "The Ten Commandments" and "Ben-Hur." (CBSNews, 2-26-04)



"I think the prospects are certainly good for at least hitting \$100 million overall. Then again, we have to see how the rest of the weekend plays out," Schwartz said. "Hopefully, if we continue the torrid pace we're starting to set now, that's an achievable number." (USA Today, 2-26-04)

Billy Graham

Here is a very stupid statement by the late Billy Graham.

"Every time I preach or speak about the Cross, the things I saw on the screen will be on my heart and mind," said preacher Billy Graham, after viewing the film. "The Passion will stun audiences and create an incredible appetite for people to know more about Jesus. I urge Christians to invite their spiritually seeking friends to see this movie with



them," said Lee Strobel, author of *The Case For Christ* and *The Case for Faith*. But as Gibson himself commented, "I think it's the biggest love-story of all time. God becoming man and men killing God...the struggle between good and evil and the overwhelming power of love to go beyond race and culture. This film is about faith, hope, love, and forgiveness. This film is meant to inspire." (<http://www.gospelcom.net/glia/2004/wow/stm011204.shtml>)

John Hagee

For an evangelical to say these things is horrifying!

John Hagee was invited to join Gibson and his producer in Hollywood to see, "The Passion", and writes, "The movie is absolutely scriptural, graphic, and life-changing. Those who see the sufferings of Christ for our redemption will never forget it. I encourage you to go and take your friends and family. This movie will impact your life with what Christ endured for YOU!" (<http://www.baytoday.ca/content/editorials/details.asp?c=1693>)

Finally Someone Makes a Good Observation

Humphries-Brooks said preview clips of The Passion show a "downtrodden, suffering, bloody Jesus who rises triumphantly to lead us muscularly into the 21st century. Every Jesus movie out of Hollywood since 1927 has projected a different Jesus image for America, while claiming to be authentic, pious and historically true," he said. But, he added, "The best place to learn about Jesus is still the Bible." As a result he says that many people incorrectly base their knowledge of Jesus' life on those films, not on the Bible. (Steve Humphries-Brooks, RNS.com, 2004)

As for the charge of anti-Semitism? Let the Scriptures speak.

"As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, [and] one shepherd. Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father." (John 10:15-18)

I can tell you the crucifixion was probably worse than depicted. It might have been more gory than we can think. No, true believers in our Lord Jesus should not go see the movie. Not for its supposed charge of anti-Semitism (the Jews are paranoid and fail to understand it was Jews and Romans that carried out the mechanics of the crucifixion.) Not for its violence, or for religious reasons. I would not recommend it for it is in many places unscriptural, Catholic in many ways, and a disgrace for making money. If Mel truly wanted to show the world the crucifixion and be a promoter of his Catholicism why not make the movie and show it for free? Don't get me wrong as an actor I like Mel Gibson he has played some great movies.

But something is wrong when Christians, non-Christians, Jews, liberals, news people, popes, and Presidents like it. I leave you with the powerful words of our Lord Jesus.

"And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God." (Luke 16:15)

Watch out for the deception out there!

