

**General Topics :: The Christian and the Theater****The Christian and the Theater - posted by savannah, on: 2014/1/7 19:52**

The Christian and the Theater

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The theater is an amusement which occupies much of the time and attention of multitudes in our large cities and populous towns; and, unhappily, attendance on this place of resort is not by any means confined to such as are commonly called the dissipated and licentious. Many sober citizens think themselves justified in appearing within its walls; and even some professed Christians are seen in that school of vice and debauchery; and a few of them openly and systematically attempt to vindicate the practice. How this has happened, it may be a point of some difficulty to ascertain; for nothing is more certain than that the ancient pagans always condemned theatrical exhibitions, as immoral in their character, and as utterly improper to be countenanced by the virtuous and decent part of the community. And it is equally certain that the Christian church, in all ages in which even a tolerable adherence to Christian principle was maintained, has still more pointedly condemned and denounced them. Nay, in early times, all who frequented the theater were excluded from the communion of the church, without respect of persons.

But, by some strange concurrence of circumstances, this evil, sinful and pestiferous as it evidently is, has crept, under a sort of disguise, into the Church of Christ; and has come to be considered by many, as an amusement lawful for Christians! With respect to most other sins which we are in the habit of reproofing, they are freely and generally acknowledged to be such; and when any of those who belong to the communion of our churches fall into them, they are dealt with as circumstances require. But we have here the strange phenomenon of a great and crying sin, which some professed Christians not only indulge—but which they openly endeavor to justify; to which they freely introduce their children; and, as if this were not enough, in behalf of which they take serious offence when the ministers of Christ speak of it in the terms which it deserves. Rely upon it, reader, this practice will not stand the test of examination. It is corrupt and indefensible throughout; and the more speedily you become convinced of this, and act accordingly, the better will it be for yourself, and the better for society.

Fellow-mortal, be persuaded to attend seriously to this subject. Do not turn away from it. It is a most important concern. And if there is in the practice in question all that evil which there may be demonstrated to be, it certainly will not alleviate the load of your guilt to be obliged to say, that, though warned, you refused to consider the subject.

Theatrical exhibitions, then, may be shown to be sinful, and productive of much evil, in a great variety of respects. Bear with a sincere friend to your temporal and eternal happiness, while he endeavors, with all plainness and fidelity, to state them. And,

I. To attend the theater is a sinful waste of TIME. You will not dare to deny, that every moment of your time is given you by the great Author of life; and that you must render an account to Him for the manner in which you spend it. Neither will you deny that life is short; that there is much important work to be done; and that no one can be sure that he has another day or hour to live. To creatures situated as we are, every hour which passes over us must be incalculably, nay, infinitely momentous; because we know not but there may be suspended upon it the destiny of our immortal souls, and all the never-dying interests of eternity. Placed in circumstances so solemn as these, can any rational, conscientious man consent to sit for a number of hours in a playhouse, attending to amusements which, to say the least of them, are as perfectly vain and frivolous as they can be? Can you appeal to the great Searcher of hearts, and say that you think this is right? Can you say that it is acting as an accountable and dying creature ought to act? No! The most determined advocate of the theater who lives, would not dare to say this. He would be shocked at the thought of seriously adopting such a principle. Either, then, the scriptural precept to redeem time, and the scriptural rules for disposing of time, must be utterly rejected, or theatrical amusements must be pronounced sinful. Either men are not accountable for the manner in which they spend their time, and are not bound to devote it to the glory of God and the promotion of their own moral and spiritual benefit, or it is a grievous sin to squander precious hours in an amusement, of which the lightest censure that can possibly be passed upon it is, that it is wholly unprofitable. But we go further.

II. Theatrical entertainments are not merely unprofitable—not merely a sinful waste of time—but they also directly tend to dissipate the mind, and destroy all taste for serious and spiritual employments. Let me appeal to the experience of those who have been in the habit of attending the theater, whether this amusement is not strongly unfavorable to everything like a pious frame of mind? When you return from the playhouse, after witnessing the most decent play which was ever exhibited—have you any taste for prayer, for reading the Scriptures, or holding communion with God in any sacred exercise? Is there not something in the sentiments uttered in the theater, in the scenery displayed, in the dress, attitudes, and deportment of the performers, and in the licentious appearance and libertine conduct of many of the spectators, which is calculated, to say the least, to expel all seriousness from the mind; to drive away all thoughts of God, of eternity, and of a judgment to come; and to extinguish all taste for spiritual employments? Need we wait for an answer? Everyone, who has the least experience on the subject, knows that these things are so. He can bear testimony that few things have a more direct tendency to give the mind a vain and frivolous cast; to make it familiar with licentious images and objects; to destroy a taste for devotion; and to banish that spirituality which is at once the duty and happiness of the Christian.

And will any man, who means to stand on Christian ground, venture to deny that whatever has this tendency must be sinful? That whatever draws off the heart from that which is sober, useful, and pious—and inspires it with a prevailing taste for the vain, the romantic, the extravagant, the sensual, and the impure—cannot but be deeply pernicious? Alas! the theater does not properly instruct a man how to live, how to suffer, how to die. It does not tend to inspire those serious, practical sentiments which befit one who remembers that he may be called tomorrow to leave this transient scene. On the contrary, its direct and only tendency is, to make men forget their duty and their real happiness, and altogether to beguile the feelings proper for one who has no continuing city here, but who ought to be continually seeking one to come, whose builder and maker is God. But what has been said is not the worst.

III. The theater is now, and ever has been—a school of vice and profligacy. By far the greater part of the most popular plays, though they may, and, doubtless, often do contain many good sentiments, yet also contain much that is profane, obscene, and calculated to pollute the imagination, to inflame the passions, and instill the most corrupt principles, and the most pernicious practices. How common is it to find in the language of the theater the most unqualified profaneness, and even blasphemy! How often are mock-prayers and irreverent appeals to the Majesty of heaven, exhibited on the most trivial occasions! How often is the dialogue interspersed with such unchaste expressions or allusions as cannot but grievously pain the ear of modesty; and these pronounced and set forth in a way calculated to give additional force to the evil! Can such exhibitions be innocent? Are they such as a disciple of Christ can witness with safety, or encourage with a good conscience? If they are, then it is difficult to say what is sinful, or what may not be justified.

How shall we account for it, then, that decent females, who would be shocked at the least approach to obscene language in their presence in private, and who, if it were uttered, would think their reputation sullied, if not ruined, by being found in such company a second time; can yet go every week to the theater, and there listen to such language, and sometimes in very gross forms, without, perhaps, a blush, and without the smallest apparent consciousness of doing wrong? However painful the alternative, we must necessarily conclude that such females have less real delicacy, less truly virtuous principle, than they would wish us to believe.

Nor is this the whole of the evil. Of many plays which cannot be charged with profaneness or indelicacy of language, the general moral tone is detestable; such as no person of real virtue, to say nothing of the Christian, can contemplate without abhorrence. Piety and virtue are made to appear contemptible; and vice, in the person of some favorite hero, is exhibited as attractive, honorable, and triumphant. Folly and sin have commendatory names bestowed upon them; and the extravagance of sinful passion is represented as amiable sensibility. Pride, revenge, false honor, violence, the indulgence of unhallowed love, marital infidelity, and making the applause of men the governing rule of life—if not openly commended, are yet so depicted as to make them appear objects of envy rather than of abhorrence. Provided a man is frank, generous, and brave, he may be an abandoned libertine, an invader of marital purity, a spendthrift of other men's property, a defrauder of the fatherless and widow, a despiser of God, and a trampler on his laws; and yet, on the stage, may be, and often is, celebrated as the possessor of an excellent heart.

Now, can any man of decent character—above all, can any man who professes to be a disciple of Jesus Christ, go to a place, or encourage representations, in which sentiments such as these are almost continually brought into view, and often under the most alluring aspect? Is this a school to which we ought to be willing to introduce our sons and our daughters, even if we had no higher aim than to prepare them for virtuous, dignified, and useful activity in the present life? It is in deed, as astonishing as it is humiliating, that we are driven to the necessity of asking such questions; and still more so, that thousands, who call themselves Christians, act as if they might be confidently answered in the affirmative!

IV. Those who go to the theater, not only contribute to the support of an impious and harmful amusement, but also contri-

bute to the encouragement and support of a set of licentious play-actors.

That we ought not to countenance any class of wicked people in their sinful course, or, by any means, to encourage them to continue in it, will be acknowledged by all who believe that there is a difference between right and wrong—that there is any such thing as sin. But what are the prevailing character and lives of actors? Can anyone who values truth, say that they are commonly, or, indeed, are ever, excepting in very rare cases, people of decent, sober character? He certainly cannot. They are generally a licentious, immoral people. And, indeed, from the nature of their occupation, it is hardly to be expected that they should be otherwise. They are constantly engaged in personating different characters; and, perhaps more frequently than otherwise, very bad characters! In other words, a large portion of the time of all of them, is employed in impersonating, displaying, and recommending vice—which itself, can scarcely fail to corrupt their principles and habits! Add to this, that the nature of the fellowship which takes place, and must take place, between performers on the same stage, more particularly between those of different sexes, can scarcely fail of corrupting their morals. Were general purity, both of principle and of practice, to be maintained under circumstances such as these—it would be almost a miracle!

Accordingly, in all ages and countries, play-actors have been generally found triflers, buffoons, sensualists, unfit for sober employment, and loose in their morals. It is not pretended that there have been no exceptions to this character. But the exceptions have been so few, and their circumstances so extraordinary, as to confirm, rather than invalidate the general argument. And is it even true, that there ever has been a complete exception? Was there ever an actor who exhibited a life of steady, exemplary, Christian purity and piety? I never heard of such a person; and until I do, I shall venture to say there never was one. Yet this is the profession which all who frequent the theater contribute their share, to encourage and support. They give their presence, their influence, and their money—for the maintenance of a class of people whose business it is—directly or indirectly, to instill error and sin, to corrupt our children, and to counteract whatever the friends of piety and good morals are striving to accomplish for the benefit of society.

If this representation be just; if attending on the theater is a sinful waste of time; if it tends to dissipate the mind, and to render it indisposed for all sober, useful, or spiritual employments; if hardly any man living would DARE to retire, and, upon his knees, ask the blessing of God upon it before he went, or implore the sanctified use of it after he returned; if theatrical exhibitions are often—very often—indecent and profane, and always demoralizing in their tendency; and if their patrons, by every attendance upon them, encourage and support sin as a trade; then, I ask, can any man who claims to be barely moral—placing piety out of the question—can any man who claims to be barely moral, conscientiously countenance such a seminary of vice? Especially, can a disciple of Jesus Christ, who professes to be governed by the Spirit, and to imitate the example of his Divine Master; who is commanded to "live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present evil world;" who is warned to have "no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather to reprove them;" who is required to "crucify the flesh, with the affections and lusts;" and "whether he eats or drinks, or whatever he does, to do all to the glory of God;" can a disciple of Christ, I say, who is commanded to "shun the company of the profane," to avoid the very appearance of evil, and to pray, "Lead us not into temptation"—can HE be found in such a place without sin; without polluting his conscience, tarnishing his profession, and offending his God? I would sincerely hope that no one could hesitate a moment as to the answer which ought to be given to this question.

Perhaps some will consider this as taking an unnecessarily strict, and even puritanical view of the theater, as an amusement. This is so far from being the case, that the sentiments which have been expressed, are those in which the wise and the virtuous, in all ages, have been entirely unanimous, even from the origin of the practice. As was intimated at the beginning, all the sober Pagans pronounced the theater a school of vice. Plato tells us, that "plays raise the passions, and pervert the use of them; and, of consequence, are dangerous to morality." Aristotle lays it down as rule, "that the seeing of comedies ought to be forbidden to young people; such indulgences not being safe, until age and discipline have confirmed them in sobriety, fortified their virtue, and made them proof against debauchery." And even Ovid, in his most licentious poems, speaks of the theater as conducing to dissoluteness of principle and manners. And afterwards, advises the suppression of this amusement, as being a grand source of corruption.

In the primitive Church, too, as has been already hinted, both the actors and those who attended the theater were debarred from the Christian sacraments. All the early writers who speak on the subject, with one voice attest that this was the case. And some of them, as well as some of the early synods and councils, employ language, in reference to this amusement and the class of people who conduct it, expressive of the strongest abhorrence. Not only actors were excluded from the privileges of the Church, but also all who intermarried with them, or in any ways openly encouraged them; thereby declaring that they considered the whole institution, in all its connections and influences, as altogether pernicious, and to be detested.

And almost all the reformed churches have, at different times, spoken the same language, and enacted regulations of a similar kind. They have declared it to be "unlawful to go to comedies, tragedies, interludes, farces, or other stage-plays, acted in public or private; because, in all ages, these have been forbidden among Christians, as bringing in a corruption of good manners." Surely, this remarkable concurrence of opinion, in different ages and countries, ought to command the most serious attention of those who wish to know what is their duty.

To these authorities it may be of use to add the judgment of a few conspicuous individuals, of different characters and situations, all of whom were well qualified to decide on the subject: individuals, not of austere or illiberal minds, and who have never been charged with the desire of contracting, to an unreasonable degree, the limits of public or private amusement.

Tillotson, after some pointed and forcible reasoning against it, pronounces the playhouse to be "the devil's chapel;" "a nursery of licentiousness and vice;" "a recreation which ought not to be allowed among a civilized people, much less a Christian people." Collier solemnly declares, that he was persuaded "nothing had done more to debauch the age in which he lived, than the theater and the playhouse." Lord Chief Justice Hale informs us, that when he was a youth at college the actors visiting Oxford, he was so much corrupted by frequenting the theater, that, for some months, he almost wholly forsook his studies. By this habit he not only lost much time, but also found his mind filled with so many "vain images" and "false sentiments" that he began to be alarmed for himself, and determined to abandon a course which he saw was leading him to ruin. On going to London, he resolved never to see a play again; and rigidly adhered to his resolution. Even the infidel philosopher, Rousseau, declared himself to be of the opinion that the theater is, in all cases, a school of vice. Though he had himself written for the stage, yet, when it was proposed to establish a theater in the city of Geneva, he wrote against the project with zeal and great force, and expressed the opinion, that every friend of pure morals ought to oppose it.

After this amount of reasoning and of testimony against the theater, is it possible that any, who are not determined to set at defiance all considerations of duty, can hesitate a moment? Even if one-half of what has been said of this amusement is true, then every father of a family—every good citizen—every friend to social order and happiness, ought to set his face against it as a flint, and to discountenance it by all fair and lawful means. But, reader, if you call yourself a Christian, or have any desire worthily to bear that hallowed name—can you ever again be seen within the walls of a theater? Can you ever willingly permit anyone over whom you have any influence to be seen there? Say not, that the habits of society are such that you can scarcely avoid it. The question is plain, "Will you obey God, or man? Will you timidly or basely give way, to that which you must acknowledge to be wicked? or will you dare to do what is right, though all the world were against you? Will you take the Scriptures—or the maxims of a corrupt world—for your guide?" The question is left with your conscience in the sight of God.

Attendant on the theater, whoever you are, if the foregoing representations are correct, then your conduct carries with it a degree of guilt which ought, surely, to alarm you. Every time you go to that scene of temptation and vice, you sin against your family, if you have any, against the purity and order of civil society, and against God, as well as against your own soul. Can you think of this, and still go with a quiet conscience? It is related of the late Mr. Hervey, a well-known and eminently pious divine of England, that being once on a journey in a stage-coach, the theater became the topic of conversation. A lady in company, who was much attached to this amusement, expatiated largely on the pleasures attending it. She observed, that she found much pleasure in anticipating the performance, much in witnessing it, and much in recollecting and conversing upon it afterwards. Mr. Hervey listened with respectful attention, and, when she had done, said, "Madam, there is one pleasure growing out of the theater which you have omitted to mention." Delighted to think of her opinion being confirmed by a person of his respectable appearance, she asked him with eagerness to what he referred. "Madam," said he, gravely, "I refer to the pleasure which the remembrance of having attended on the theater, will give you on a dying bed!" This seasonable remark proved better than a thousand arguments. It made a deep and permanent impression. The lady never again went to the theater, and became eminently pious. Every lover and frequenter of the theater will soon lie upon a sick and dying bed. How will the amusement then appear? How will the remembrance of having yielded to its allurements then lie on the conscience? Think of that hour, and be wise in time!

Attendant on the theater, did you ever hear of that awful catastrophe which caused the tears of so many to flow, a few years since, in one of our cities—when a theater, in the midst of its performances, and unusually crowded, was destroyed by fire—and seventy-five people perished in the flames? Did you ever hear of that heart-rending scene? Did you ever try to image to yourself how you would have felt, if you had been there? Think of A THEATER IN FLAMES! and ask whether you would be willing to meet death in a playhouse—to pass, as it were in a moment, from all the polluted vanities of such company, and such a scene—to the immediate presence of a holy God! How tremendous the thought! yet no one can tell that a like calamity may not happen at any time when he allows himself to be present in such a place. But, fellow

w-mortal, if you never should see a theater in flames, you will see a WORLD IN FLAMES, and a holy Judge descending to his "great white throne;" and "the heavens and the earth passing away, that there shall be no place found for them." And you shall see "many great men, and rich men, and mighty men, hiding themselves in the dens, and in the rocks of the mountains; saying to the mountains and rocks, Fall upon us, and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of his wrath has come, and who shall be able to stand?" Will attendance on the theater, do you think, be a means of preparing any man to meet that Judge, and to stand the trial of that great day? May God, of his infinite mercy, open the eyes, and turn the hearts of infatuated men, that they may see their folly and danger before it is forever too late!

**Re: The Christian and the Theater - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2014/1/8 17:48**

Savannah, I am curious, why did you post this article?

As I read the article I was reminded how a well scripted story has the power to rope in your imagination where you are vicariously a participant in the story. You begin hoping, anticipating the object will succumb to whatever the aggressor is working to accomplish. The first time I experienced this I was appalled - it was historical fiction where the main character was working to seduce a young girl. I was shocked and never finished the book. But I did learn something: all these 'love making' scenes are not conducive to emotional purity. You take a picture where there is a couple kissing passionately - it has the power to make you wish you were a participant. This feeds lust and married folks are not exempt from this temptation.

Thanks for posting this Savannah. I feel like posting a link to FB for this, but suspect very few would read it..

God bless.

ginnyrose

**Re: The tract society - posted by Sidewalk (), on: 2014/1/8 19:28**

Written from such a different age, to a people of such different standards! If the author were to observe the average Christian home today and the daily onslaught of what TV has done to modern humans he (or she) would probably jump screaming off the nearest bridge.

Not to mention what modern church has become- talk about theatre!!

As I think about it, Jesus didn't do much to change the culture of his day. O'Reilly's book "Killing Jesus" details the culture of that day in very graphic terms, actually hard to read parts of it. Life was cheap, tyrants were brutal, debauchery was beyond the pale.

But Jesus was calling individual sinners in that day just as He is now, one at a time, out of whatever life a person finds themselves living. I so appreciate that He simply loves me for what I am, and as I respond to that love, other worldly loves fall away.

As in another recent thread, reverent reason takes me to the good things of my beloved Father!

**Re: This pleasure-loving, pleasure-seeking, and pleasure-inventing age - posted by savannah, on: 2014/1/9 10:34**

This pleasure-loving, pleasure-seeking,  
and pleasure-inventing age

A taste for worldly amusements will inevitably prove,  
wherever it is indulged--a powerful obstacle to growth  
in grace.

Man is unquestionably made for enjoyment. He has a capacity for bliss--an instinctive appetite for gratification; and for this, God has made ample provision of a healthful and lawful kind. But "a taste for worldly pleasure" means that this God-given capacity is directed to wrong sources, or carried t

o an excess.

Now there are some amusements which in their very nature are so utterly incompatible with true godliness, that a liking for them, and a hankering after them, and especially an indulgence in them--cannot exist with real, earnest, and serious piety.

The dissolute parties of the glutton and the drunkard; the fervency for the gambling-table; the pleasures of the race-course; the performances of the theater--are all of this kind. A taste for them is utterly uncongenial with a spirit of godliness! So is a love for the gay and fashionable entertainments of the ball-room, and the wanton parties of the upper classes. These are all unfriendly to true religion, and are usually renounced by people intent upon the momentous concerns of eternity.

We would not doom to perdition, all who are at any time found in this round of worldly pleasure--but we unhesitatingly say, that a taste for them is entirely opposed to the whole spirit of Christianity! They are all included in that "world" which is overcome by faith and the new birth.

True religion is, though a happy, a very serious thing--and can no more live and flourish in the uncongenial atmosphere of those parties, than could a young tender plant survive, if brought into a frigid zone!

But in this pleasure-loving, pleasure-seeking, and pleasure-inventing age, there is a great variety of amusements perpetually rising up, which it would be impossible to say are sinful, and therefore unlawful. Yet the 'supposition of their lawfulness' viewed in connection with their abundance, variety, and constant repetition, is the very thing that makes them dangerous to the spirit of true religion.

A taste for even lawful worldly amusements, which leads its possessor to be fond of them, seeking them, and longing for them--shows a mind that is in a very doubtful state as to vital piety.

A Christian is not to partake of the pleasures of the world, merely to prove that his religion does not debar him from enjoyment. But he is to let it be seen by his "peace which passes understanding," and his "joy unspeakable and full of glory," that his godliness gives far more enjoyment than it takes away--that, in fact, it gives him the truest happiness!

The way to win a worldly person to true religion is not to go and partake of his amusements; but to prove to him, that we are happier with our pleasures--than he is with his; that we bask in full sunshine--while he has

only a smoking candle; that we have found the "river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and the Lamb"--while he is drinking of the muddy streams which issue from the earth!

"Many are asking, 'Who can show us any good?'  
Let the light of your face shine upon us, O Lord.  
You have filled my heart with greater joy than  
when their grain and new wine abound!" Ps. 4:6-7

After all, it is freely admitted--

1. That true religion is not hostile to anything which is not hostile to it.
2. That many things which are not strictly pious, though not opposed to piety--may be lawfully enjoyed by the Christian.
3. That what he has to do in this matter is not to practice total abstinence--but "moderation".
4. Yet the Christian should remember how elastic a term "moderation" is, and to be vigilant lest his moderation should continually increase its latitude, until it has swelled into the imperial tyranny of an appetite which acknowledges no authority--and submits to no restraint!

by John Angell James

**Re: , on: 2014/1/9 13:12**

Looks like I'd better repent for going to see the Hobbit last week.....

**Re: - posted by rainydaygirl, on: 2014/1/9 13:46**

by Butters on 2014/1/9 13:12:20

Looks like I'd better repent for going to see the Hobbit last week.....

do you really feel as though you need to repent? Did you feel that way after you saw the movie or has this article you read made you feel this way now? Just wondering

rdg

**Re: The Christian and the Theater - posted by DEADn (), on: 2014/1/9 16:07**

This may offend some but the original post makes me puke/throw up. It is full of ultra fundamentalistic mind control that seeks to label things as sin which are not and I think I can safely say that this mindset joins the reason why many leave the church if it were preached from the pulpit.

I would liken the writer of this piece as someone who lives in the catacombs, away from society so that the sins of society do not get on their body as to stain them. Instead of confronting the darkness with the Power of the Gospel they simply label anything sin while denying any Power of the Gospel through supposed 'religious' virtues.

It makes me sick to know that this came from any Christian for it is PUKE in my opinion.

John

**Re: John! Don't puke just yet! - posted by Sidewalk (), on: 2014/1/9 22:38**

Whoa, easy big fella! I don't think this is going to become standard religious prose any time soon!

Having read other Christian thought from a hundred years ago, this is not too far afield. There was a lot of legalistic, so mewhat self righteous eloquence written by the religious folk of that time, way more words than necessary, and rigid standards. They were easily shocked.

Our generation has been all shocked out, we see Dennis Rodman in North Korea with the Hitler wannabe and we hardly raise an eyebrow.

Yes our culture is corrupt. All cultures are corrupt. But men of God hear the Shepherd's voice through any of them, because none of this shocks God either. He's seen worse, and He still manages to reach those who desire Him!

**Re: - posted by mama27, on: 2014/1/9 22:48**

I'm sorry some were offended by the original post. I found it refreshing. I actually have collected many of the books reprinted from the 1800's, and in all honesty, have found myself at times wishing I had lived back then. I am not in favor of legalism, but I think many believers have become the frog in the boiling water in this culture. Thank you for posting it....

**Re: - posted by Sree (), on: 2014/1/10 4:01**

Quote:

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As I read the article I was reminded how a well scripted story has the power to rope in your imagination where you are vicariously a participant in the story.  
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That is the main reason why I stopped watching movies and going to theater. The movies have this ability to capture our minds. I soon realized that I was supporting the hero and wanted the hero to defeat the villain. I wanted to see the villain's blood shed. Not to mention about the romance, though watching a good romantic movie might kindle your love for your spouse. It is still not the way God wants a believing couple to love one another. In short even a so called decent family movies still have many parts that are totally against the word of God like revenge. Letting our mind to be occupied by these thoughts even for 2 hours can cause spiritual damage. Once I came to this self realization, then I avoided them. I see so much spiritual growth after avoiding them.

**Re: - posted by rainydaygirl, on: 2014/1/10 8:11**

I have been thinking about this and just wanted to add that while I agree to what has been said to some degree, a well written story or acted out play, movie, can also capture our minds and point us toward Jesus. I have experienced this on more than one occasion. watching the scene in the first LOTR movie where Sam refuses to leave Frodo because he knows he can not make the journey alone was so gripping. As I watched it play out I thought about the bonds of friendship, and how Jesus wants us to care for one another, how he wants us to even be willing to lay down our lives for one another. I thought about how much the Lord loves us and how even in our darkest hours He comes along and is with us.

I have grown in Him because of some of the movies I have watched, and I have grown in Him because I have skipped the ones He has had me not watch. God gave us emotions and its a good thing to feel things when under His authority. A beautiful sunset, a blossoming flower, a song sung sweetly unto Him, or a narrative in a story or movie can all cause us to feel and reflect on Him if our focus is on Him.

rdg

**Re: The Christian and the Theater, on: 2014/1/10 11:32**

As our dear brother Leonard Ravenhill would say: Entertainment is the world's substitute for joy. I would agree with this whole-heartedly.

For 25 years before I was saved I was consumed with theater, plays, novels and concerts and considered this to be the highest form of joy in my life.

At age 25 I despaired of life. None of this entertainment and amusement had succeeded in changing my life or giving me reason to live. I cried out to God and shook my fist at him. DO YOU EXIST?????? If you do not exist there is no reason for me to go on in this futile world.

Then and there Jesus Christ revealed himself to me and I knew He was real. I opened an unused Bible to John 14..."Let not your heart be troubled..." and I never stopped believing or reading or knowing that our God is real and His ways are not our ways. Period.

I wasted so much of my life in a virtual unreality. Why would I ever want to go back? And yet over the years I have gone back and was sucked into worldly unreality. This struggle with the flesh has been unprecedented, but every time I walk a way from the world and its pleasures, God gives me immeasurably more than I can imagine.

I would just exhort all here that God is certainly in the story-telling business, but His ways do not mesh with man's ways who is under the influence of Satan and his dominion. Only you can discern these things with the mind of Christ.

A fellow saint,  
L. Manto

**Re: The Menace of the Religious Movie - posted by savannah, on: 2014/1/11 19:23**

For those who may be interested, sermonindex has made available for download, A.W. Tozer on the subject of religious movies. Click the following link -

<http://www.sermonindex.net/modules/mydownloads/visit.php?lid=13545>

**Re: - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2014/1/12 8:41**

L. Manto, thank-you for sharing your testimony. In essence, I can relate: the closer my walk with the LORD the less desire I have for novels...even historical novels. I love a true story that details how God worked in the lives of people.

On the practical level, there is too much stress, conflict to deal with in real life why would I want to let it entertain me when I am relaxing? It no longer entertains but contributes to more stress. SIGH And I used to enjoy it ...

The longer I walk with the LORD the more interesting, exciting the WORD becomes. I am reading Zechariah now - hey! these books' drama far exceeds any movie you may see because it has the added component of being TRUE! God is a very fascinating God and on top of it He loves me! WOW!

ginnyrose