



{6}POPCORN, ANYONE?

Man of Steel
Hunger Games: Catching Fire
The Wolverine
Safe Haven
Anchorman 2
Riddick
The Hangover 3...

The list of blockbuster movies for 2013 could go on and on. I wouldn't consider myself a movie fanatic, but I definitely love taking in a great flick with popcorn and friends.

Technology like Netflix, tablets, Apple TV and smartphones have blasted open the ways we can enjoy movies. Watching Blockbuster close up their stores over the past few years truly signaled a change in the way we access our Hollywood films. But I will always remember the feel of a rental store because that's where God taught me something that has forever changed the way I think about movies.

I remember the situation clearly, I was looking for a VHS (yeah, I'm old) to rent with my buddies and I pulled one off the shelf as a suggestion. I don't remember what movie I selected, but I do remember my friend's response so clearly. He took a peek at the cover, checked out the details on the back...then he kinda shrugged and said "I dunno Curt, I'm pretty sure this is gonna have a bunch of nudity and stuff like that so it's probably not the best." I WAS SHOCKED!! Why does he care about that stuff? Isn't that part of the reason we want to watch that movie?!

You see, my friend had been at a Bible camp over the summer and he learned a really simple principle: garbage in, garbage out. He knew that if he wanted his life to reflect the beauty of Jesus, he needed to fill his mind with stuff that helps lead him towards that kind of life. He also knew that if he wanted to move past the sinful actions that Jesus wanted to save him from, he needed to stop filling his mind with that garbage. Pretty simple.

The apostle Paul teaches that the way we receive our new life in Jesus starts with what's going on in our mind. Romans 12:2 says, *"Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect."* In Philippians 4:8 he offers some direction for how we can change the way we think: *"Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise."*

Read that list again and consider the movies you are the most excited to see. God is trying to transform us and shape us into his likeness, and we can partner with the work God is doing by filling our minds with things that are pure and lovely and worthy of praise. And sometimes movies can be a wonderful way of doing this. There are many films that are inspirational and challenge us to think deeply about the world. But we know that there are many others that are crammed with filthy language, glorified violence, degrading sexuality, and on I could go.

I'm not suggesting that every movie you watch needs to be squeaky clean and produced by Faith Films. But simply remember garbage in, garbage out. Or perhaps another way to express it: praiseworthy in, praiseworthy out.



screen time

A Truth Matters
Ministries Resource
by Curtis Anderson

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Now go grab some popcorn and work on these next steps:

- Changing the way we think affects our whole lives, but starting with the movies we watch is a great place to begin. Open up the conversation with your friends, or youth pastor or parents. How can you choose movies together that will help you focus on things that are honorable and lovely rather than filling your mind with garbage?