

FILM THE BIBLE

reel news

Our Mission: To translate the Bible from the written word to film and to disseminate it throughout the world so that every person can experience the power of the Word of God.

Film the Bible & "The Passion"



By **Tim Donoho**
CHAIRMAN

As I write this article, Mel Gibson's "The Passion of the Christ" is approaching \$400,000,000 in U.S. box office revenues. The Wall Street Journal predicts that "The Passion" will do equally well in the overseas markets.

And, of course, there's the DVD's and pay-per-view, the music CD and jewelry and trinket sales to go along with it. All told, I can't imagine "The Passion of the Christ"

not exceeding the one billion dollar mark.

Many have asked me in the last month if I feel that "The Passion" will help in Film the Bible's quest to put the entire Bible on film, word for word. Before I answer that, let me give you, from my perspective, what "The Passion" is and is not. The Passion is not a literal representation of the last twelve hours of Christ's fleshly life here on earth. It was Mel Gibson's interpretation. "The Passion" shows how good the quality of a religious film can be. It also shows how captivating a film of the Bible can be.

One of the most powerful things "The Passion" illustrates is that the Bible can move you to change. No doubt most of you have read of the many criminals that

have confessed to previously committed crimes, including murder, after watching "The Passion" and being convicted of their own sin.

"The Passion" illustrates clearly that, if the Bible were put on film literally word for word, it will be actively attacked as bad by those whose nerves are stepped on by God's word.

"The Passion" shows that a great production value movie on the Bible will draw people to it who do not, for whatever reason, read the Bible, in addition to those who do read the Bible.

In my view, "The Passion" was not perfect. It had its flaws. I believe that it would have been just as powerful, or more so, if it had been literal. Also, for me, the

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The Gift of Encouragement



By **David Rutherford**
PRESIDENT

So encourage each other and build each other up.

I Thessalonians 5:11

Patient endurance is what you need now, so you will continue to do God's will. Then you will receive all that he has

promised. Hebrews 10:36 NLT

The story is told of a man who stopped to watch a Little League baseball

game on his way home from the office. He asked one of the youngsters what the score was. "We're losing 18-0," replied the young boy. "Well", the man said. "I'm impressed by the way you are cheering for your teammates! You don't seem at all discouraged" "Discouraged?" the boy said rather puzzled. "Why should we be discouraged? We haven't come up to bat yet!"

Encouragement is a powerful thing. Can you remember a time when someone encouraged you? Perhaps a friend or loved one had just the right thing to say at precisely the time when you needed to hear it the most. Proverbs 15:23 tells us that, "A word spoken in due season, how good it is."

I received a telephone call recently from a pastor and veteran leader within non-profit ministry here in the South Florida community. He said he felt led to call me following the radio interview he just heard with Mel Gibson. He said, "I just had to call and encourage you all for what you are doing." Upon learning that Mel Gibson had invested \$25-\$30 million of his own money to portray the final 12 hours of Christ's earthly life on film, he concluded that Film the Bible's target of \$660 million to film the entire Bible was right on the mark. More importantly, he said, "I know what you're

doing is difficult, *Continued on page 2*



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eyebrowless devil walking around in every scene was distracting.

My conclusion is simply that "The Passion of the Christ" is a big plus on the road to a filmed Bible, but not the real thing. Our goal is to recreate the Holy Bible on film, not one word added and not one word taken away, neither my interpretation nor yours but rather to allow everyone to have the Holy Bible speak to them through film.

One final point about "The Passion". Did you notice how no one

wanted to help Mel Gibson make "The Passion"? No one wanted to help Mel Gibson distribute "The Passion". And for nearly a year before it came out, the making of "The Passion" was the butt of tremendous criticism that, as we all know now, was completely unjustified. I couldn't be more thrilled that Mel Gibson is likely to pocket nearly a half a billion dollars as a result of having to carry the burden on his own back. But it is a real reminder that, when doing the Lord's work, it's often a very lonely road, filled

with risk and criticism. And being on the wrong end of many jokes.

While many of you reading this have joined us and support this great mission each and every month, many others of you have not taken that step yet. We would welcome you joining the rest of us on what may be looked back on as the most important event of the twenty-first century, the filming of the Holy Word of God.

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Doing Well ... by Doing Good

TURN ONE DOLLAR INTO TWO DOLLARS GIVE 100% OF YOUR ESTATE TO YOUR LOVED ONES AND 100% OF YOUR ESTATE TO A MINISTRY OR CHARITY

When we started this column a few months back, we indicated that as financial architects, we turn lose-lose financial situations into win-win-win. Also when we started this column, we said that we would follow the teachings of Stewardship found in Matt 25 and Luke 19. In these parables, one Steward gets a five to one or ten to one return on the Master's investment, and one Steward gets no return whatsoever. The first Steward is richly rewarded and the "no return" Steward is harshly punished. The ministry of Good Steward Ministries is to teach you to enjoy the joy and blessings as received by the Steward that multiplied the resources entrusted to him.

In today's case, the financial situation is a couple who desperately want to give a bequest to a ministry but are guilty about taking from what they can leave their children. Their total estate consists of their home, valued at \$150,000 and another \$150,000 in savings. Their income is \$20,000 from Social Security, and a few thousand dollars from their savings. They have three adult children and five grandchildren.

They want to leave their entire \$300,000 estate to their children. They would like to leave something to their min-

istry, but they do not see how they can do that without taking from their children and grandchildren.

Actually, there is more than one strategy to help this couple. One strategy that is available is to increase the return on their savings and let the extra money fund a \$300,000 life insurance policy to their ministry, thereby turning one dollar into two.

Another way would be to take their \$300,000 estate after both spouses pass away and use it to develop an income stream to their children and grandchildren totaling \$300,000 and then use it to develop another \$300,000 income stream to their ministry, and finally, then, transfer the original \$300,000 principal to the children and grandchildren.

A third way to get a two to one return would be to place the \$150,000 in the bank into an income trust that would increase their annual income and also establish a legacy trust that would return a total of \$300,000 to their children and an endowment trust that would return \$300,000 to a ministry.

These strategies are available because many times senior citizens keep their savings in CD's or similar accounts at a bank. This is analogous to the Third Steward in Matt 25:14, who was afraid to

invest his Master's money in fear of a decline in the market. Therefore, he put it into an investment that returned zero, which would be similar to money in a bank account today. The Master punished that Steward severely for his negative attitude toward investing the Master's money. The First Steward was rewarded greatly for investing his Master's money for a five to one return. And he received his Master's "Well Done."

As part of our ministry, we help you become better stewards of the resources that our Master has placed under your control. In this example, we make one dollar turn into two. Not as good as the five to one of the First Steward, but a lot better than a zero return.

These are some quick examples of accomplishing the "Good Steward" result of getting a two to one return by giving 100 percent of your estate to your children and 100 percent of your estate to charity.

Once again, using these strategies, we are faithful to the principles of stewardship in scripture in Matt 25:14 and Luke 19:15. Amen.

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The Gift of Encouragement - *Continued from page 1*

but I want to encourage you to stay the course. The impact will be incredible and I believe Mel Gibson's movie has in some respects paved the way for a project like this."

As you might imagine, I don't get calls like that everyday. As you might also imagine, I thanked him over and over for taking the time to voice his encouragement and told him that he literally made my day!

In his commentary on Paul's letter to the Hebrews, William Barclay wrote, "One of the highest of human duties is the duty of encouragement. It is easy to laugh at men's ideals; it is easy to pour cold water on their enthusiasm; it is easy to discourage others. The world is full of discouragers. We have a duty to encourage one another. Many a time a word of praise

or thanks or appreciation or cheer has kept a man on his feet. Blessed is the man who speaks such a word."

I am thankful for people like the Little League baseball player who refuse to be discouraged and I'm eternally grateful for the people of this world who make it the business of their lives to encourage and edify others.

When David was being hunted by his adversary, Saul, it was David's friend, Jonathan, who encouraged him by saying, "Whatever you want me to do, I'll do for you." (1 Samuel 20:4) What an amazing pledge of unconditional love and support. I think you'd agree that the world could certainly use more Jonathans and, quite frankly, so could Film the Bible.

Here are three simple and effec-

tive ways to be like Jonathan...

1. Pray. Pray daily that you will be a source of encouragement and inspiration to those with whom you come in contact and that you might be sensitive and responsive to the needs of others.
2. Take action. It is said that encouragement delayed is encouragement denied so we must act whenever we have the opportunity to do so. Taking an active role in the work of Film the Bible will be a great blessing to you as well as this ministry.
3. Affirm. Affirm the encouragers in your life. Our small acts of encouragement will undoubtedly yield enormous results.

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Pursuing the Vision details have moved

Praise the Lord we have simply run out of room to list the churches that have participated in the Pursuing the Vision Program. Look for a complete listing of Pursuing the Vision churches under the Events section of www.filmthebible.org

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