

Picking Movies

LCDR R. C. Richards
Command Chaplain

I am no longer allowed to pick. More specifically, when my wife and I are picking out a movie to rent, I'm not allowed to choose. The reason for this is that the last couple of times that I have picked, the movies have been really bad. They looked good to me in the previews, but when we watched the movies, we realized that either the only good parts of the movie were put into the previews, or else the previews didn't give an accurate feel for what the movie was like.

I haven't always been bad at picking out movies. In fact, I used to be pretty good at it. In fact, I used to be very selective in what movies I picked out to watch. Even as far back to when I was in high school, I had a knack for passing up the bad movies.

When I was in high school, the movie *The Exorcist* was released. I realize that this movie is probably pretty tame by today's standards, but it caused quite a stir at the time. I didn't see the movie. In fact, I still haven't seen the movie. I was never told by my parents not to go see it. It was entirely my choice.

I can remember that a lot of my friends went to see it. After they saw it, they would be talking about it at school. I can still remember one of my friends saying, "It wasn't nearly as bad as everybody said it was." That, probably more than anything, helped me decide not to go see it. I decided that I didn't want to go see anything to see how bad it was. Rather, I wanted to see a movie to be entertained. I want to leave the movie feeling good.

Even now, I prefer to watch a comedy to a drama. I will even watch love stories, if the ending is good. I just don't like to watch movies that make me feel bad. There is one cable network that seems to have the worst movies. Every movie seems to center around someone's spouse having an affair or killing the other. The worst part is, the movies seem to be six or eight hours long. The pain never ends.

The Bible actually helps me decide what movies are going to be good to watch. Ephesians 4:8 tells us to fill our thoughts with things that are noble, right, pure, loved, admirable, excellent or praiseworthy. In other words, we need to focus on things that are not bad or harmful to us. If we continue to engross our thought with bad things, we will soon adopt them as part of our lifestyle. At the very minimum, we will soon become desensitized to behaviors that are not good. If we think about good and wholesome things, they become engrained within us.

If we think about the situations with movies, we know that we have movie rating systems. Parents are warned ahead of time that some of the subject matter in some movies is not suitable for children under a certain age. Other films are judged to be quality family entertainment. The reality is that we should make the same evaluations for ourselves. If something could be mentally, emotionally or spiritually harmful, we might want to look for other alternatives. There is no shortage of things we can do to uplift us. Sometimes, however, we have to make the effort to find them.

Fill your mind and your time with things that will make you a better person. It will pay off for you in the long term.

Semper Fi in the Lord and I hope to see you in church on Sunday.